

THE NEW TESTAMENT
Paraphrase/Exposition
vols. 1, 2, 3

JOHN GUYSE

1775

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THE NEW TESTAMENT, Paraphrase

THE PRACTICAL EXPOSITOR

Vols. 1, 2, 3

Translated by: JOHN GUYSE

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Jim Baden shares the reverence for Scripture that has moved the leaders of our Society to give so freely of their time and energy for the past thirty-five years. He has profound respect and gratitude for the heroes and heroines of Bible translation—from Wycliffe and Tyndale down to the present time—who worked so hard, even sometimes at the risk of life—to make the Bible so readily available to the world today. Like other members of the ISBC, Jim regards the Bible as more than just a great book to be collected. To use his own words, he speaks of the Scriptures as "God's method of communicating with his intelligent creatures . . . to be most carefully read and contemplated to discover its meaning and value for life in the present and future."

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THE
PRACTICAL EXPOSITOR.
IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOLUME the FIRST:

Containing the EVANGELISTS

MATTHEW and MARK,
PARAPHRASED, &c.

T H E

Practical Expofitor:

O R, A N

E X P O S I T I O N

O F T H E

N E W T E S T A M E N T,

In the FORM of a

P A R A P H R A S E,

W I T H

O C C A S I O N A L N O T E S

In their proper places for further EXPLICATION,

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At the Clofe of every CHAPTER.

To WHICH IS ADDED, AN

A L P H A B E T I C A L T A B L E

O F

The principal things contained in the PARAPHRASE,
efpecially in the NOTES.

For the Ufe of the FAMILY and CLOSET.

BY JOHN GUTSE, D. D.

THE THIRD EDITION.

E D I N B U R G H:

Printed by W. DARLING; and fold by him at his fhop in *Bridge-Street*; by W. GRAY, and J. DICKSON, front of the *Exchange*; and by all other bookfellers in *Great-Britain*.

M D C C L X X V.

T H E
P R E F A C E
TO THE
FIRST and SECOND VOLUMES,
CONTAINING THE
FOUR EVANGELISTS.

THE knowledge of the Holy Scriptures is so necessary to make us wise unto salvation, thro' faith in Christ Jesus, that it ought to have an uppermost place in our daily thoughts and desires, and in all our aims at keeping up vital religion in the family and closet, and in the whole of our conversation in the world. And as the sacred history, contained in the four evangelists, relating to the birth, life, discourses and prayers, miracles, death and resurrection, of the great Redeemer, carries the highest evidence of the truth and excellence of the Christian religion; and as it leads us to the foundation of all the doctrines of the gospel which were afterwards more fully revealed; it is of great importance to be well acquainted with these parts of the oracles of God. I have therefore set them in as plain, practical, and evangelical a light as I can; and have neither refused, nor confined myself to, helps of ancient or modern date, while my grand dependence has been on assistances from above; nor have I designedly slipt over any thing that I take to be the truth of the gospel, or given a wrong turn to so much as one passage in the whole, either from a desire of pleasing, or a fear of offending, much less from an inclination to disoblige, any party of men whatsoever.

THOUGH some inconveniences attend the paraphrastic way of interpretation, there are advantages in it that amply make amends for them: The true connection may therein be most easily discovered, and false constructions detected; and the explained text may be read in a regular series, in much less time than most of the admirable expositions which abound amongst us; they are generally too long for any considerable number of verses, with their explication, to be read at once, in the ordinary course of personal or social devotion, even on the Lord's day.

In this Paraphrase, I have endeavoured to comprize all the senses that seem probable to me, and, mostly, to keep up the order of the

several parts of the text itself; and the whole is disposed in such a manner, as may at once answer the design of a Commentary and Annotations, with practical, and sometimes critical enlargements, in a continued thread of discourse, without any other breaks than of the chapters and verses themselves. For this purpose I have drawn as much as I could into the paraphrase, to save notes, because they are seldom turned to by the bulk of common Christians, and cannot be so well read out to company in due connection: And where Notes seemed necessary to support the given sense, or to add things that could not be brought into the paraphrastic form without making it too tedious, I have laboured to render them intelligible, not only to the learned, but likewise to the English reader, for whose benefit the whole of this work is chiefly intended.

WHEN the same things, for substance, are recited in two or more of the evangelists, I have attempted to reconcile seeming contradictions; and, as often as it appeared to be of any great moment, to adjust the harmony: And instead of transcribing from a former gospel when the same things occur in another, I have taken some pains to alter the phrases, and to set the same thoughts in different views, and with various enlargements; for this, under the Spirit's guidance and influence, may be more likely to strike the mind, and to afford profitable and delightful entertainment, than if just the same ideas were to be repeated, and represented in the same turn of expression. These parallel places are often to be found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke: But the greatest part of John is in a manner a gospel by itself, containing new particulars relating to the same grand subject. And, as this divine historian wrote last, he not only supplies what the others had omitted; but the gospel-dispensation being then further advanced, and several errors broached in opposition to it, I cannot help observing, that he recites more of the evangelical parts of John the Baptist's testimony, and of our blessed Lord's discourses and prayers, and exhibits things of that nature in a stronger light, than they had done who wrote before him. And, with a view correspondent to this, I have ventured to break so far in upon the strictest rules of paraphrase, as sometimes to insert passages from the Acts and the Epistles, tho' they were written after the days of Christ's ministry on earth, that I might take the advantage of New Testament light when it came to shine with brighter glory; and might explain things in the language of the Holy Ghost, by whom all scripture was inspired, tho' some of those things were not so well understood in their full evidence and extent when they were first delivered:

livered: And, for the like reason, I have given an interpretation of such things as our blessed Lord did not think proper at that time to explain; and, to enliven the reading, have often anticipated his own explication of parables. See the note on Mat. xiii. 3.

EVERY one who hath any acquaintance with the Greek language, knows, that several particles, (such as *καί*, *εἰ*, and *νῦν*;) in profane as well as sacred writers, are of divers acceptations, the determinate sense of which is to be learnt from the coherence of the discourse. Thus *καί* and *εἰ* are often put promiscuously one for the other, as appears by comparing the same discourses in different gospels. *καί* is frequently used for but, yea, even, yet, &c. as well as and; *εἰ* for and, then, yet, &c. as well as but; and *νῦν* for then, now, &c. as well as therefore: And all these are sometimes particles of transition; and at others expletives, (as *οὕτως*, it came to pass, also is.) See Blackwell's Sacred Classics, Vol. i. p. 143. &c. and Whitby's notes on John xvii. 11. & Rom. vi. 11. I therefore give such a sense of these small words as I apprehend may best preserve the connection; and when there is any departure from our translation, the Greek is usually inserted, as it likewise is in other instances, that it may be instead of notes, for men of letters to see the word, and judge about its force: And when the connection would be rather disturbed, than improved, by giving the forementioned and such like particles any place in our idiom, I look upon them as pleonastic, and leave them out. And tho' *οὐαί*, behold, may sometimes be allowed to be expletive; yet it seems to me, that it is most frequently used for emphasis sake, and to awaken attention; accordingly I have most commonly given it a cast of that kind.

SEVERAL Greek words, and citations of other passages of scripture, and references to notes, are, to save room, inclosed in parentheses in the body of the paraphrase; and so they may be easily passed over in reading, and consulted at leisure as occasions require. In reading to a family, it may be best to omit them; but in retirement, every one may take the method that pleases him most.

As to what I call Recollections, because they sum up in a pathetic and practical strain the principal things contained in the chapter, they are generally longer or shorter in some proportion to the variety and importance of the preceding contents; and I hope the parts referred to may be easily discerned, though they are not recollected exactly according to the order in which things are laid down in the several chapters, but are sorted together in such a manner as seemed most convenient for a short and moving discourse.

And when, in secret or family exercises of religion, there may not be time enough for going through the paraphrase, the recollections at a medium may be read in two or three minutes, and the longest of them in four at most; and may be of good use, by the grace of God, for exciting pious affections after reading the chapter itself, and may throw some light upon it. But I hope frequent opportunities, especially in the closet, may be found to go through a middling chapter, with the paraphrase and recollections, which may be dispatched in less time than a sermon of common length: And I would beg leave to point out the Lord's-day evenings, as proper stated seasons, for this way of reading the word of God in Christian families, that they may be led into a familiar and impressful acquaintance with his mind and will therein, and that the children of the household may be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

I HAVE long wished for a work of this nature to be undertaken by some better hand; but hearing of no such design being on foot by any one whatsoever, I was persuaded by several friends, and began to set about it, at leisure moments, in its present form, as God might enable me, several years ago: And I trust it has not been altogether without such divine assistances as have given me great pleasure, and some religious improvement, in composing it.

AND as many friends, whose favour I own with gratitude, have far exceeded my expectations in so readily encouraging this service of their own accord; I would hope it may be a token for good, that God will own it with some degree of usefulness, for spreading the favour of the knowledge of Christ, where it comes, notwithstanding all the defects, which I am sensible must be many, that attend it.

I HAVE so much exceeded the proposed number of sheets, that, for the bookseller's sake, several things must be left out that were designed for the preface: And therefore I shall only add, that as, if I know myself, I have uprightly intended this labour for the glory of the great Lord of all, and for the good of the present and rising generations, without any sinister views, I now humbly lay it at his feet, looking up to him for a blessing upon it, that spiritual fruit may abound to the account of many, and that it may turn to my own salvation, through their prayers, and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ.

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A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE

Evangelist MATTHEW,

In the form of a PARAPHRASE.

CHAP. I.

Christ's lineage from Abraham by Joseph, 1,—17. His conception and birth, 18,—25.

TEXT.

THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.

PARAPHRASE.

AS the *Old Testament* begins with an account of the creation of this world; so it is proper to introduce the *New Testament* with a narrative of the genealogy and birth of Jesus Christ, according to the flesh, in the line of † *Joseph* his reputed father; by which it appears, that the great Head and Author of a yet more glorious and abiding creation was the legal seed of *David*, who should sit on his Father's throne, (Luke i. 32.); and of *Abraham*, in whom all nations were to be blessed *.

N O T E.

† This genealogy is given in the line of *Joseph*, because Christ was born of the virgin *Mary* in lawful wedlock with him; accordingly the *Jews* commonly accounted and called him *Joseph's* son. And as it was a rule with them to reckon genealogies by the family of the father; so this account of Christ's pedigree, by *Joseph*, from *Abraham* and *David*, was a sufficient proof of his descent from them by his mother, too, because *Joseph* and *Mary* really were of the same tribe and family, as appears by their going to the same city of *David*, viz. *Bethlehem*, to be taxed, Luke ii. 4, 5. And the genealogy in his mother's line is also given by the evangelist *Luke*, chap. iii. See the notes there.

But it would carry us beyond the nature and compass of my design to enter into all the particular difficulties which attend these severally, and as compared with each other. The enemies of Christianity have started and urged them; and many learned men have laboured with good success in accounting for them. But if there were any that could

not easily be removed, they rather affect the *Jewish* tables, than any point of our faith: For the evangelists herein only act the part of historians, setting down the genealogies as they stood in those public and allowed records; and therefore they were to take them as they found them. Nor was it needful that they should be inspired to correct the mistakes, if there were any; for these accounts sufficiently answer the end for which they are recited, as they unquestionably prove the grand point in view, viz. That Christ is of the family from whence the promised seed was to spring: And they had more weight with the *Jews* for this purpose, than if any alterations had been made by inspiration itself; for such alterations would only have introduced endless disputes between them and the disciples of our Lord, to no advantage. It was therefore highly prudent in the sacred writers, to avoid all foolish questions and genealogies, &c. for they are unprofitable and vain, Tit. iii. 9.: And for the like reasons, it becomes us to avoid captious inquiries about them.

blest * , (Gen. xii. 18.); and to his lineage stands in the following order.

1 Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judas, and his brethren.

2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac of Jacob, and Jacob of Judas and his brethren.

3 And Judas begat Phares and Zera of Thamar, and Phares begat Ezrom, and Ezrom begat Aram.

3 Judas had Phares, and Zera, by Thamar or Tamar: Phares was the father of Ezrom, and Ezrom of Aram.

4 And Aram begat Aminadab, & Aminadab begat Naasson, and Naasson begat Salmon.

4 Aram was the father of Aminadab, and Aminadab of Naasson, and Naasson of Salmon.

5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rahab, and Booz begat Obed of Ruth, and Obed begat Jesse.

5 Salmon had Booz by Rachab or Rahab, and Booz had Obed by Ruth, and Obed was the father of Jesse.

6 And Jesse begat David the king, and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias.

6 Jesse was the father of king David, and king David of Solomon by Bathsheba, who had been the wife of Urias.

7 And Solomon begat Roboam, and Roboam begat Abia, and Abia begat Asa.

7 Solomon was the father of Roboam or Rehoboam, and Roboam of Abia, and Abia of Asa.

8 And Asa begat Josaphat, and Josaphat begat Joram, and Joram begat Ozias.

8 Asa was the father of Josaphat or Jehosaphat, and Josaphat of Joram or Jehoram, and from † Joram was lineally descended Ozias or Uzziah.

9 And Ozias begat Joatham, and Joatham

9 Ozias was the father of Joatham or Jatham, and Joatham

NOTES.

* As this evangelist wrote particularly for the use of the Jews, he carries his genealogy no further back than to David and Abraham; for this sufficiently answered his end, which was to prove, that, according to the scriptures of the Old Testament, and their own expectations, Christ descended from both these eminent men.

† Azariah, Josph, and Amaziab, were intermediate descendants between Jehoram and Uzziah. But it was usual with the Jews to speak of remote posterity, as begotten by their ancestors; accordingly the progeny of Hezekiah,

after several generations, were called the sons, that should issue from him, which he should beget, (Isa. xxxix. 7.) And either the three above-mentioned persons were not found in the Jewish public genealogies of the kings of Judah; or the evangelist, designing for memory's sake to cast Christ's ancestors into three fourteens, might chuse to omit the offspring of the detestable Athaliah to the third generation; she having been the daughter of Ahab, and Jehoram's wife; and having introduced Ahab's idolatry into the family of David, 2 Kings viii. 18, 19.

‡ Among

Joatham begat Achaz, and Achaz begat Ezekias.

10 And Ezekias begat Manasses, and Manasses begat Amon, and Amon begat Josias.

11 And Josias begat Jechonias & his brethren about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel, and Salathiel begat Zorobabel.

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud, and Abiud begat Eliakim, & Eliakim begat Azor.

14 And Azor begat Sadoc, and Sadoc begat Achim, and Achim begat Eliud.

15 And Eliud begat Eleazar, and Eleazar begat Matthan, & Matthan begat Jacob.

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

Joatham of Achaz or Abaz, and Achaz of Ezekias or Hezekiah.

10 Ezekias was the father of Manasses, and Manasses of Amon, and Amon of Josias.

11 Josias was the father of Jechonias or Jeboiachim and his brethren, about the time that the Jews were carried into captivity in Babylon.

12 And after they were carried captive into Babylon, Jechonias had Salathiel, who was the father of Zorobabel.

13 Zorobabel was the father of Abiud, and Abiud of Eliakim, and Eliakim of Azor.

14 Azor was the father of Sadoc, and Sadoc of Achim, and Achim of Eliud.

15 Eliud was the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar of Matthan, and Matthan of Jacob.

16 And Jacob was the father of Joseph, who was the husband of Mary, the mother of our Lord, Joseph having been lawfully married to her before the time of her delivery; and the child, which she brought forth, was, according to the admonition of the angel hereafter mentioned, (ver. 21.) called Jesus; he being that Saviour, who is properly styled *the Messiah*, or *the Christ*; the first of which in the *Hebrew*, and the last in the *Greek*, signifies *the anointed*, because God anointed him to his office †.

17 Ac-

N O T E.

† Among the ancestors of Christ, in the direct line of descent, several others are named. Judah's brethren are mentioned with him, (ver. 2.) to encourage the faith and hope of the other tribes descended from them, that though they were not, strictly speaking, our Lord's ancestors; yet he was born a Saviour to them, as well as to those of the tribe of Judah. And for a like reason, Zarah of Thamar, a twin-brother of Phares, is mentioned with him, (ver. 3.) though the birth-right fell to Phares, he being the first-

born, Gen. xxxviii. 27,—30. And perhaps to shew that the *Babylonish* captivity made no alteration in the interest that the several families of the tribe of Judah had in our Lord, the brethren of Jechonias are mentioned with him.

We may likewise observe, that among the ancestors of our Saviour, there are only four women recorded. Two of these were *Gentiles*; Rahab, who was a *Canaanite*, and a harlot; and Ruth, who was a *Moorish*, (ver. 5.); to give an early intimation, that

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David, are fourteen generations: and from David until the carrying away into Babylon, are fourteen generations: and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ, are fourteen generations.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise; When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold,

17 According to this genealogy of the blessed Jesus, the descents are cast into † three fourteens, which ran through the three famous periods of the rising, the prosperous, and the declining state of the Jewish church and nation: The first fourteen were under the government of patriarchs, prophets, and judges, from Abraham to David; the second, under kings, from David to the Babylonish captivity; and the third, under captains and priests, from the captivity to the birth of Christ, including him as one of the last fourteen.

18 Now, as to the conception and birth of Jesus Christ, the following things are very remarkable. After his mother Mary, according to the custom of the Jews, was contracted with Joseph by solemn promises before witness, that, God willing, they would marry one another in proper time, she appeared to be with child; which, in fact, was by a miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost, before ever they were actually married, or came together as man and wife; but was after the contract, to save her character from reproach.

19 Hereupon Joseph, her espoused husband, not knowing how this came to pass, was greatly perplexed; for he was a holy good man, who durst not marry an adulteress, and yet was not willing to expose her to open shame and danger of being put to death*, whom he so tenderly loved, and always believed to be a virtuous young woman: He therefore thought it best to break off the contract, in as silent a manner as possible, without giving his reason for it.

20 But whilst he was contriving this matter in his mind, a surprising and seasonable occurrence prevented him; for an angel of the Lord evidently appeared in a super-

NOTES.

Christ's salvation should extend to the Gentiles; and that there could be no just objection to this, since Gentiles were among the ancestors from whom he sprang. The other two women taken notice of were Thamar, (ver. 3.) and Uriah's wife, (ver. 6.); who were both adulteresses, and seem to be particularly mentioned in Christ's pedigree, to shew how deep an humiliation he submitted to, and how near he came to the likeness of sinful flesh without being defiled by it; and to shew what riches of grace the chief of sinners may hope to obtain through faith in him, who derived his human nature from some that had been exceeding vile.

† In the foregoing list of names, one seems to be wanting to complete the third fourteen. In answer to this, Dr. H. tells us that by Jechonias (ver. 11.)

is meant Jehoiakim, the first-born of Josiah: and that the Jechonias mentioned (ver. 12.) was Jehoiakim's son, who begat Salathiel while he was in Babylon: And so this Jechonias being taken into the account of the last series, makes it exactly fourteen. But if any should not be fully satisfied with this solution, Dr. Lightfoot tells us, that it was a custom, yea almost an axiom, in the Jewish schools, to reduce things and numbers to the very same when they were near alike: And he recites several examples of it. See Whist, and Lightfoot's Har. Hebr.

* Under the law of Moses, a virgin betrothed was called the wife of him to whom she was espoused; and was to be stoned to death, if she voluntarily lay with another man, Deut. xxii. 23, 24.

hold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

22 (Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, (which being interpreted, is God with us)

24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her

supernatural dream, (which was one way of God's revealing his mind to the ancients,) and spake to him after this manner: *Joseph*, thou descendent of *David* from whom the Messiah is to derive his birth, be no longer afraid to have *Mary* for thy married wife, nor to take her home to thine house; for she has not been guilty of adultery, as thou art apt to suspect, but the child she has conceived is begotten in her, not after a carnal manner, but by the immediate miraculous power of the Holy Ghost.

21 And when she has gone her full time, she shall be delivered of a son; and thou, as his legal father, shalt give him the name *Jesus*: For he shall be indeed the Saviour, who is to rise up in the family of *David*; and, according to his name, shall save his people, not in their sins, but shall deliver them from all their iniquities, by the sacrifice of himself, and by the power of his Spirit that shall attend his word.

22 Now all that the Holy Ghost did herein, was designed to be, as it really was, an exact and literal accomplishment of that remarkable † prediction, which God spake by the mouth of the prophet *Isaiah*, (chap. vii. 14.) saying,

23 "Behold with admiration, faith and joy! a virgin, one who never knew man, shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, whose name shall be called *Emmanuel*, which, in the *Hebrew* language, signifies *God with us*. This name shall express what he really is, viz. The Son of God, who, being in this wonderful way united with the son of man, shall be in very truth both God and man, to appear in the world among men, and to act the part of a mediator of reconciliation between God and them."

24 Upon this vision and admonition of the angel, *Joseph* awoke out of sleep, and, being fully satisfied in his own mind that this was a revelation from God, he joyfully hastened to solemnize his marriage with *Mary*, and took her home as his wife, in testimony of his faith therein, and of his ready obedience to the divine command.

25 And so strict was his regard to what had been told him by the angel, that he cautiously abstained from performing the marriage-duty toward her, according to the law (*Exod. xxi. 10.*), till she was delivered of her first-born Son, as the scripture styles the first male birth, whether

N O T E.

† The evangelist *Matthew*, accommodating his gospel to the *Jews*, alleges the Old Testament prophecies, and takes notice of their accomplishment in Christ, more frequently than any of the other evangelists.

her first-born son;
and he called his
name Jesus.

whether the mother has afterwards any other child or not: And *Joseph*, according to the angel's order, called his name *Jesus*, who was in dignity, and in a spiritual sense, *the first-born among many brethren*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How convincing is the evidence that our Jesus is the true Messiah, the Son of God, and the Son of Man, in whom the prophecies of the Old Testament, and the promises made to *Abraham* and *David*, were fulfilled; that as there were persons of all characters among his ancestors, so *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, high and low, males and females, may look to him and be saved; and that there is salvation for the worst of sinners through faith in him! Blessed be God, the joyful day has shone upon our world, in which to us a *Child was born, and to us a Son was given, whose name is Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace*. How miraculous was his conception by the immediate power of the Holy Ghost! how honourably testified by an express from heaven! and with what admirable wisdom was it conducted to a legitimate birth, in such a manner as effectually took of all suspicion of human influence toward it, and all reproach to the virgin-mother and her Son!—How seasonably doth God appear for the direction of his people in their greatest straits! and what a lovely view does *Joseph's* temper and conduct give us of a good man, whose piety towards God, fidelity to his engagements with others, and tenderness of their reputation, should ever go hand in hand?

CHAPTER II.

The wise-men coming to worship Christ in his infancy, 1,—9. Herod's rage against him, and the care God took of him, 10,—23.

TEXT.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

‡ Saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and

PARAPHRASE.

NOW soon after Christ was born in an obscure city of Judæa, called *Bethlehem*, in the days of *Herod the Great*, who at that time was king of Judæa; behold, certain men of wisdom and learning †, especially in their observations of the sun, moon, and stars, came to *Jerusalem*, from a country that lay east of Judæa.

2 And they inquired after the place where the infant was to be found, who, they were well satisfied in their own minds, was lately born to be king of the *Jews*: For while they were in their own country, they had seen † an extraordinary appearance of a star, beyond all they had ever seen before; and, as it hung like a comet over Judæa, they concluded it was the signal of a great king's being born in that land *. And under this apprehension

NOTES.

‡ The word *Mages* properly signifies *Magicians* in a bad sense, and so the Scripture frequently uses it: But it was commonly taken, among the eastern nations, for any wise men, whether priests or philosophers, and especially for astronomers; and the persons here mentioned were probably *Astrologers*.

† Whatever luminous body this was, it had the appearance of a star, and was formed and conducted by the divine power on this special occasion.

* They were probably persuaded of this by a divine impression upon their minds, and by the general expectation at that time

and are come to worship him.

3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born,

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet;

6 And thou Bethlehem in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise-men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

sion they declared that they were come to seek him, and to pay their solemn homage to him.

3 When king Herod and the people of Jerusalem had heard the account that these wise-men gave of this matter, they all in general were amazed; and he more especially was exceedingly perplexed in mind about it, lest this new-born child should create troubles which at length might issue in the loss of his kingdom.

4 And as Herod could not but know something of the general expectation among the Jews that the Messiah would appear about that time, he called a council of all † the chief priests and scribes that he could get together, they being the interpreters of the law to the people, and inquired of them where the ancient prophecies said the Messiah should be born.

5 In answer to which, they readily told him it was to be in Bethlehem of Judea; and referred him to a passage of the prophet Micah (chap. v. 2.) to prove it, where it is written to this purpose:

6 Even (ναὶ) thou Bethlehem in the land of Judea, (which was also called Bethlehem-Ephratah, either of which names plainly distinguished it from another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulun,) thou art by no means (οὐκ ὀλίγη) the least in honour, tho' thou be least in riches and in numbers of people, among the cities that have given birth to the princes of Judah, (whose tribes were divided into thousands, each of which had a prince over them:) For out of thee shall come a Governor superior to all others, even Messiah the Prince; who, says God, (τοιοῦτος) shall take care of, feed, and reign over my people Israel, as their Saviour and their King."

7 Herod, having received this account from the chief priests and scribes, called the wise-men to him in a private manner, that the people might not take umbrage at it, as if he were afraid; and (ἐκπεύσας) he very critically examined them about the exact time of the star's first appearing to them, that the better guess might thereby be made at the age of the child.

8 And

N O T E S.

in their country, that such a king was quickly to be born in Judea, who would be ruler over all the earth: And they came to pay him homage, either in a civil way, as a temporal prince; or rather in a religious way, as the Messiah, according to the notions they might have about him.

† The chief priests were not only the high-priest, and the sagan his deputy; but also the heads of the twenty-four sacerdotal families, 1 Chron. xxiv. 6. and 2 Chron. xxvi.

14; and it is probable, that any priests were so called who were members of the great sanhedrim: And the scribes of the people were their rabbies or doctors that explained the law to them, Ezra vii. 6,—10. and Matt. vii. 29.; and perhaps such of them as were members of the sanhedrim, but were not of the sacerdotal order, were called scribes of the people, in distinction from those that were also priests.

8 And he sent them to *Bethlehem*, and said, Go, and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed, and lo, the star which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God in a dream, that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take

8 And when they had satisfied him in that point, he ordered them to go to *Bethlehem*, where the chief priests and scribes had said the Messiah should be born, and to search with the utmost care for the infant; and as soon as they should find him, to come back again and tell him of it, pretending that he wanted to go and worship him too, though he meant nothing less, but said this to conceal his fears and jealousies, and to cover his cruel designs.

9 When they had heard what the king had to say to them, they set out on their journey toward *Bethlehem*: And behold, the same miraculous star, which they had seen in their own eastern country, appeared again, and moved on before them in the air (like the pillar of fire before the *Israelites* to direct their various journeyings,) till at length it came over the very house where Jesus was, and descended † pointing downward toward that house.

10 When the wise-men saw the star in this direction, they were filled with an exceeding joyful ecstasy at the thought that God had now certainly conducted them to the glorious Person they were seeking after.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the royal Infant with Mary his mother; and, being led into a further knowledge of him by divine suggestion, and by accounts that were then given them of the extraordinary circumstances of his conception and birth, they, according to the custom of the eastern nations, fell prostrate before him, and paid him their adorations; and then, opening the stores they had brought, made an offering of their richest treasures to him as their King and the incarnate Saviour, such as gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and so shewed forth the praises of the Lord, (*Isa. lx. 6.*)

12 And being admonished in an extraordinary dream, not to obey Herod's order in going back to tell him what they had seen, God thereby designing to prevent the murder of Jesus by his cruelty, they returned another way, and not by *Jerusalem*, into their own country.

13 And when they were gone, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared again in a dream to Joseph, as he had before, (*chap. i. 20.*) and ordered him to arise out of his sleep, and, taking the infant and its mother with him, to go with all speed into *Egypt*: and continue with them there, till he should have another divine order

N O T E.

† This account intimates that the star directed them to the very house where our Lord was; but it is not easy to conceive how this could be, without its pointing downwards toward it, or descending low, and standing still exactly over it.

take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise-men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise-men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

der for removing from thence: For he told them that Herod would certainly endeavour the destruction of the young child, to rid himself of his own fears concerning him; and that therefore all proper precautions were to be taken for his preservation.

14 In obedience to this command, Joseph got up, and, notwithstanding the visible dangers, difficulties, and inconveniencies that might attend it, took the young child and his mother, secretly by night, that it might not be discovered whither he was going, and carried them into Egypt:

15 And there he abode with them till Herod's death, that the word which the Lord had spoken by the prophet Hosea, (chap. xi. 1.) might be fulfilled a second time, saying, *Out of Egypt have I called my Son*; for God's only begotten eternal Son was now to be called out of Egypt, as the antetype of Israel his adopted son, who had been called out from thence before.

16 When Herod had waited a good while for the return of the wise-men, and found that they were gone home another way, and so had deceived his expectations from them, he was terribly enraged; and having barbarously resolved to cut off this new-born Prince at any rate, he, to make sure of his death, sent a party of soldiers, and by their cruel hands massacred all the male children, that were not above two years old, in Bethlehem and the villages round about; being assured in himself, by what the wise-men had told him, that this child had not yet attained that age.

17 This astonishing event was over-ruled by the providence of God, to fulfil a second time another prophecy, delivered by the prophet Jeremiah, (chap. xxxi. 15.) to this purpose:

18 "A voice was heard as far as Rama", which was situated near Bethlehem; lamentation, weeping, and great mourning was heard there; the descendents of Rachel, whose grave was also at that place, bitterly lamented the loss of their children, and refused to be comforted because they were dead."

19 But

N O T E.

* It is probable that this massacre of infants extended to the territories of Rama, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 25,—25; and so cut off some of Rachel's posterity.

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

19 But after Herod's decease, behold another divine admonition to Joseph in the usual way; the angel of the Lord again appeared to him in a dream in Egypt, where he continued till this time,

20 And ordered him to go back again with the young child and his mother to his own country, and reside among the *Israelites* there, because Herod and some of his most cruel instruments, who were bent upon taking away its life, were now themselves dead.

21 Accordingly he cheerfully complied, without objecting against the difficulty or danger of the journey; and, in obedience to the angel's command, came back with the young child and his mother into the land of *Israel*.

22 But upon information that Archelaus succeeded his father Herod* in that part of his dominions which included Judea, he was afraid it would be too hazardous to settle in that province, under the government of a man of his fierce temper: But, having another intimation from God in a dream, he went to live in Galilee, under the dominion of Herod Antipas, where he, with Jesus, and his mother Mary, might dwell with more safety.

23 And in order to their settlement in that country, he came and took up his abode in one of its cities, called Nazareth; which was ordered by the providence of God, that what was spoken not merely by one, but by many of the prophets, concerning the Messiah, might be fulfilled in Jesus; as, that he should be *Netzer, the Branch*, according to the signification of the word *Nazareth*; and a *Nazarite*, most eminently holy and devoted to God from the womb, and so the great Antitype of all the legal *Nazarites*, and particularly of *Samson*, of whom it was said, (*Judg. xiii. 5.*) *The child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb*; and that he should be treated with the greatest infamy and reproach, when, because of his having been brought up at Nazareth, he was usually called, by way of contempt, the *Nazarene*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How deeply was the dear Saviour abased, and how early exposed to sufferings, in being thus persecuted and harassed about in his tender infancy! And yet how highly was he honoured by a star formed on purpose to lead to him; by the long journey which the wise-men took to find him out, and pay their devotions to him; and by the repeated appearances of the angel of the Lord to give directions

NOTE.

* Upon the death of Herod the Great, his kingdom was divided between Archelaus, Herod Antipas, and Philip, his sons; Archelaus had Judea, Idumea, and Samaria; Philip, Agripa, Trachonitis, Pontus, and Bithynia; and Herod Antipas, Galilee and Perea. *Prin. Council. Vol. III. pag. 657.*

for his safety! O how should we rejoice in the better and more abiding light of the gospel, that leads us to Jesus! And how will the wise-men of the east, that came so far, and took so much pains to seek and worship him, rise up in judgment against them that will give themselves no trouble to inquire after him, and that slight and disregard him! With what cheerfulness should we present ourselves, and all that we have, to him! And how should we adore God's over-ruling Providence, that disappoints the devices of his most crafty, powerful, and cruel enemies, and turns them into means, or at least occasions, of fulfilling his own predictions and designs!

C H A P. III.

The life, doctrine, and baptism of John, 1,—12. And Jesus baptized by him, 13,—17.

TEXT.

IN those days came John the baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

PARAPHRASE.

IN the days of Christ's living privately with Joseph and his mother at Nazareth, before he entered into the thirtieth year of his age, and in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar, (Luke iii. 1, 23.) John, who was styled the Baptist, because he was the first that came with a divine commission to baptize, appeared and preached in a part of the country of Judea, which was called the wilderness on account of its having fewer cities, towns, villages, and inhabitants, than were in other parts of that province.

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

2 And the sum of his ministry was, "Bethink yourselves, and change your minds; (*μετανοεῖτε*) entertain other sentiments than ye have had about your sins, and your legal righteousnesses; lay aside your prejudices about the Messiah whom ye expect, and about the ground of your acceptance with God; and, with deep contrition, turn from your iniquities, and from your proud conceit of yourselves and of your privileges, to that Jesus whom I am come to point out to you †: For a new dispensation of grace by the gospel, under the Messiah's king-

N O T E.

† Repentance, in case of sin, is a natural duty, the obligation to which necessarily results from the relation of the offending creature to God, as his Creator, Benefactor, and rightful Sovereign; and it is dictated by the very light of nature, as a reasonable service: But the Saviour's grand directions, motives and encouragements to, and assistances for, a due performance of the duty, in a spiritual and acceptable manner through Jesus Christ, proceed from gospel-grace; and therefore both John the Baptist, and our Lord himself, chap. iv. 17. began their ministry saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of God,

are used in the evangelists as terms of the same import. And though sometimes they signify the heavenly state of perfect blessedness, or the kingdom of glory; yet they most frequently denote the gospel-dispensation, inclusive of all its gracious institutions, privileges and blessings, or the kingdom of grace, which is said to be of God, and of heaven, because its original is divine, its nature, design, and tendency are spiritual and heavenly, and its true subjects are formed and trained up for heaven, till they are transplanted thither: And therefore, at other times, these expressions seem to take in both the kingdom of grace and of glory. See *1st* *Thy.*

kingdom, which comes from heaven, and leads to heaven, is just now ready to be revealed, and set up among you."

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet *Esaiah*, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

3 The reason why *John* began his ministry in this manner was, because he was that forerunner of our Lord, of whom *Isaiah* prophesied, saying, (chap. xl. 3.) "The voice of one that hereafter shall speak with earnestness to the people, as the Messiah's harbinger, in the wilderness, shall be this: Let my ministry concerning the necessity of repentance, and the grace of the gospel-kingdom to encourage it, be acceptable to you, that ye may be ready to receive the Lord himself, who is coming after me; and may abandon the carnal security, lusts and passions, pride and prejudices, that willfully oppose his way to your hearts."

4 And the same *John* had his raiment of camels hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

4 And this *John* appeared in the garb of a prophet, just like *Elias*, in whose spirit and power he came; a hair-cloth was his covering, with a leathern belt to gird it about his loins; and his diet was of the meanest fare, such as locusts * and wild honey, which the wilderness abounded with: And so he was an example of mortified appetites toward this world, and of raised affections and hopes toward a better, as became a preacher of repentance and of the kingdom of heaven.

5 Then went out to him *Jerusalem* and all *Judea*, and all the region round about *Jordan*,

5 When it was known that he appeared and preached in this manner, the general expectation of the Messiah at that time brought vast multitudes of all ranks, degrees, and sexes, to hear him, from *Jerusalem*, and from all parts of *Judea*, and from every place in the country that lay round about *Jordan*, whether in the tribe of *Judah* or not.

6 And were baptized of him in *Jordan*, confessing their sins.

6 And they were so far affected with his doctrine, that they made a public profession of repentance, and were baptized by him in the river *Jordan*, both he and they, according to the custom of the country, going a little way into the water, either barefoot, or with sandals, for the greater convenience and expedition in baptizing them †.

7 But

NOTES.

* *Aspidæ*, rendered *locusts*, some suppose were a sort of large flying grasshoppers; but others think they were a certain kind of green herb that grew in the wilderness.

† I cannot think that such prodigious numbers as came to *John*, could be baptized in the way of immersing their whole bodies under water; or that they were provided with change of raiment for it, which is nowhere intimated, nor seems to have been practicable for such vast multitudes; and yet

they could not be baptized naked with modesty, nor in their wearing apparel with safety. It seems therefore to me, that the people stood in ranks, near to, or just within, the edge of the river; and *John*, passing along before them, cast water upon their heads or faces with his hands, or some proper instrument, by which means he might easily baptize many thousands in a day. And this way of pouring water upon them most naturally signified Christ's baptizing them with the

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

7 But when he perceived that many of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* came, and that some of them offered themselves to be baptized by him, he severely reproveth them, saying, O ye hypocritical *Pharisees*, and irreligious *Sadducees* †, who are the seed of the old serpent, and full of malignant enmity to all real goodness, one sort of you imagining that ye have religion enough already, and the other thinking that there is nothing in religion; who could have thought that either of you should come to my baptism, for the remission of sins, and escaping the wrath to come through a Redeemer? Who has brought you hither? And what has put you upon pretences of this kind? However, I now warn you to flee from the wrath that will certainly come upon all the impenitent and unbelieving.

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.

8 And as your coming hither is a practical profession of repentance, and of believing the doctrine I teach; bring forth fruits of righteousness, suitable to the nature and evidential of the sincerity of repentance, or else my baptism will be of no advantage to any of you.

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And as to you *Pharisees* in particular, do not flatter yourselves, as ye are apt to do, with the thoughts of your being descendants from *Abraham*, and not sinners of the *Gentiles*, and that this will secure you from divine vengeance: For let me tell you, that God can easily raise up a seed to *Abraham*, who shall walk in the steps of his faith and obedience, by turning the very stones, that your eyes now behold, into such children; or by adopting these *Gentiles* into his family, (meaning the *Roman* soldiers that were then present with them;) and

N O T E S.

the Holy Ghost and with fire, which *Jesus* spoke of as prefigured by his baptizing with water, (ver. 11. and *Mark* i. 9, *Luke* iii. 16. *John* i. 33.) and which was eminently fulfilled when the Holy Ghost sat upon the disciples in the appearance of cloven tongues, like fire: And this is expressly called baptizing them with the Holy Ghost, in opposition to *Jesus*'s baptizing with water; and is spoken of as the Holy Ghost's coming upon them, and as God's pouring out his Spirit, and shedding him forth upon them, *Acts* i. 5, 8. and ii. 3, 17, 18, 33. And with a direct reference hereunto, when the Holy Ghost fell on *Cornelius* and his friends, *Peter* said, Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how he said, "John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost;" (*Acts* xi. 15, 16.) The apostle *Paul* likewise, in a manifest allusion to baptism, speaks of God's saving us by the washing of regeneration, and

renewing of the Holy Ghost, which be shed on us abundantly through *Jesus Christ* our Saviour, (*Tit.* iii. 5, 6.) Now whether plunging the body into water, or pouring water upon it, was the likeliest emblem of this effusion of the Spirit, let the reader judge; especially since βαπτίζω, the word constantly used for baptizing, signifies any sort of washing, and often sprinkling; not being restrained to dipping, as its primitive (*βαρύνω*) is; but this last word is never used to express baptizing.

† The *Pharisees* were a superstitious sect among the Jews, that pretended to extraordinary holiness; but placed the chief of their religion in ritual observances, and in zeal for the traditions of the elders: And the *Sadducees* were the free-thinkers of the age, that denied the resurrection of the dead, and the existence of angels, or human souls in a separate state; and so supplanted the foundation of all religion.

and he will sooner do this than save any of you, if ye persist in your iniquities.

10 And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees : therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And things are now coming to a decisive point with you all : The last dispensation of grace, thro' the Messiah, is now approaching, and God is hereby trying you once more ; but if now ye reject his offers of mercy, he will bear with you no longer ; his vengeance, like the ax that is levelled at the root of a tree, is just ready to strike at you : Every one therefore among you that continues unfruitful under these last means of grace, shall soon be cut down as cumberers of the ground, and cast into everlasting burnings ; and the whole church and nation of the *Jews*, if they persist in impenitence and unbelief, shall be utterly destroyed.

11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance : but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear : he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire :

11 I am indeed come to baptize you with water, as a sign of what ye may hope for, and of the repentance which ye are obliged to : But this will not suffice for your safety and happiness ; it is only preparing the way for One, who is so much my superior, that I am not worthy to do the meanest office for him, such as taking away his shoes, or carrying them after him in a journey. And when he comes, he shall pour upon you his Holy Spirit, who will make a visible appearance in the form of fire, (*Acts* ii. 3.) and whose operation will be enlightening, warming, powerful and purifying, like that of fire.

12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner ; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

12 And he shall thoroughly try mens spirits, purify his church, and separate the precious from the vile ; as when a man winnows his corn with a fan or with a sieve, and cleanses it from the chaff : And then he, putting a value upon all sincere believers, as his treasure, will gather them to himself in heaven ; not one of them shall be lost ; but, rejecting every hypocrite and unbeliever, as light and vain, worthless and unprofitable, like chaff, he will cast them into hell, there to be consumed for ever *

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

13 While *John* was thus baptizing and preaching at *Jordan*, Jesus came to him from *Galilee*, and offered himself to be baptized by him :

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me ?

14 But *John*, knowing by an immediate divine suggestion, that this was the person upon whom he should presently see the Holy Ghost descend as a signal that he was the Messiah, (*John* i. 33.) and being at the same time

N O T E.

* This *unquenchable fire* may likewise relate to the unbelieving *Jews* being burnt to death, at the destruction of *Jerusalem* ; and to the bodies of the wicked being consumed by fire, at the general conflagration of the last day.

* Many

time sensible of his own great unworthiness to baptize him, modestly declined it, saying, in the audience of the people, How surprising a condescension is this! Alas, I am a poor sinful wretch, that needs still further supplies of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, with which thou wilt baptize. How is it then that thou, who art altogether sinless, and needest no repentance, and who art the Author and Giver of all the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, shouldest desire to be baptized with water by me? I am amazed at it; and cannot tell how to think of going about it.

13 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

15 But (1.) Jesus, in return, said to him, Whatever you may think of the matter, I insist upon it, that now, in my state of humiliation, and under the present dispensation, in which I am to be made manifest to *Israel*, you shall perform the office to me; and there are important reasons for it: For in this, as well as in all other points, it is proper and necessary for me to fill up my obedience to every divine institution and command, as the circumstances of things require. Upon *John's* hearing this, he submitted his own thoughts to the wisdom and will of Christ, and, without any further dispute, proceeded to baptize him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straight-way out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

16 And as soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up the rising ground from the river, (*ἀνέβη ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ τῆς ὕδατος*;) and behold, according to the signal that had before been given to *John*; (*John* i. 33.) there was a visible opening in the clouds of heaven in Christ's view, and on his account; and he, together with *John the Baptist*, (*John* i. 32.) saw the Spirit of God visibly descending in a corporal, bright appearance, after the manner of the hovering of a dove (*ὡς τὸ περιστερῶν*;) and at length resting upon his head *.

17 And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

17 And what is further observable, is, that this appearance was attended with a most extraordinary and audible voice of God the Father from heaven, saying to Christ, in *John's* hearing, This is, by way of eminence, my only begotten Son †, in whom were my delights from everlasting; in whose person, as he is mine

N O T E S.

* Many have supposed, that the Holy Ghost descended in the visible shape of a dove; but I rather think the allusion is not to the shape, but to the hovering of a dove, according to the paraphrase. See *Hammond* on the place; and *Whitby* on *Luke* iii. 22. who critically observes, that had it related to the shape or form, it should not have been (*ὡς τὸ περιστερῶν*) as a dove, but (*ὡς τὸ περιστερῶν*) as of a dove, as the likeness of fire is expressed, *Acts* ii. 3. "There appeared cloven

tongues (*ὡς τὸ περιστερῶν*) as of fire."

† *Mark* and *Luke* report these words as directed to Christ himself, saying, *Thou art my beloved Son*, &c.; and it seems as if this were the form of expression used on this occasion, in answer to Christ's prayer (*Luke* iii. 21.) But as it was likewise designed to give satisfaction to *John*, that he might bear witness of it, I apprehend *Matthew* reports it as if it were said of Christ, in *John's* hearing.

mine own likeness, every way excellent and amiable, and in whose mediation, as he is come to do my will, I have the utmost complacency; as I also have, on his account, in all that are united by faith to him, and beheld in him, I having made them accepted in the Beloved.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Behold the dreadful danger of all hypocrites and unfruitful hearers of the word, whatever their pretences of their external privileges may be; and the indispensable necessity of true repentance, arising from apprehensions of gospel-grace through Jesus Christ, and working unto a thorough change in heart and life, under the influence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost! Happy souls that are partakers of this grace! God will take effectual care of them, and will receive them to himself in glory. But O miserable wretches, that shall be found in their sins! Their covenant-relation to *Abraham*, their baptism with water, and their professions, will not save them: God will abandon them to unquenchable flames; he will one day make an evident, important, and everlasting separation between the righteous and the wicked, how undistinguished soever they may now live together in the visible church, the members of which ought to be baptized, though, as in Christ's case, some of them may not be capable of answering all the ends for which that ordinance was instituted.---Behold the Sacred Three distinctly appearing in the characters of personal and divine glory, and concurring in a design of salvation! How inconsiderable and unworthy are the best of men compared with Christ; and what exalted and endearing thoughts should we have of him as the Son of God and Saviour of sinners, and as the Beloved of the Father, who makes us accepted in him!

C H A P. IV.

Christ's temptations, 1,—11. His beginning to preach, 12,—17. His calling some of his apostles, 18,—22. His curing diseases, and the people's resorting to him, 23,—25.

TEXT.

THEN was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil.

PARAPHRASE.

IMMEDIATELY after Jesus was baptized, and filled with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit moved him, by an inward suggestion, to go further into a more desolate part of the wilderness, that he might engage in a close combat with Satan, the chief of devils, and defeat him, before he entered upon his public ministry; thereby teaching his disciples and servants, at their entrance upon his ways and work, to expect great temptations; and giving them an example of overcoming the evil one by the word of God.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungry.

2 Here, like *Moses* the giver, and *Elias* the restorer, of the law, (*Exod.* xxxiv. 28. and *1 Kings* xix. 8.) he continued without eating or drinking any thing for forty days and forty nights together; and was, in some way unknown to us, tempted of the devil, (*Luke* iv. 2.)

During

During all that time, he was miraculously upheld without any uneasy appetite for food; but at the end of those days, he, like other men, was hungry.

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

3 Satan took this opportunity to come to him in some visible form, and, accommodating his temptation to the circumstances Christ was then in, said to him, If, as has been published at your baptism, you be indeed the Son of God, let me see a proof of it, in your now doing something for your own relief: Command these stones in the wilderness, or some one of them, to be turned into bread, that you may at once shew your power, and eat and be satisfied.

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

4 But Jesus, knowing that his design herein was to put him upon a needless proof of his relation to God the Father, and upon distrusting his care, replied in the words of scripture, (*Deut. viii. 3.*) the purport of which was, 'That the life of man is not sustained merely by bread, but by the will and command of God, and by his blessing upon whatever his providence shall appoint and afford to support it.

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

5 When the devil found himself baffled in this temptation, he moved Christ to go along with him to *Jerusalem* †; who consenting, went; and when they were come to the top of the temple, he suffered himself to be placed on the upper part of one of its wings or battlements, (*αἱ γωνίαι*).

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

6 And the devil having raised him to such a dangerous and formidable height, said, If you be the Son of God, throw yourself down to the ground; and see whether God will interpose to preserve you from mischief by the fall: For, since you pretend to make the scripture your rule, it is written, in a promise particularly of the Messiah, (*Psal. xci. 11, 12.*) *He shall give his angels charge over thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.* Here is your warrant: Why then should you not give me this proof of that character? If you are indeed the Son of God, what should make you afraid?

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

7 But as Satan had craftily left out that part of the text which relates to Christ's being kept *in all his ways* to which God should call him; Jesus replied in the words of another scripture, (*Deut. vi. 16.*) where it is written,

N O T E.

† It is too curious and frivolous to inquire whether our Lord went with Satan through the air, or upon the ground: But whichever it was, there is no occasion to suppose that he so far put himself into the power of the

devil, as to go in any place without his own consent. Satan only led him, or took him along with him to *Jerusalem* (*εἰς Ἱερουσόλῃμ*), as it is expressed, *Luke ix. 9.*

written, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*: * i. e. Thou shalt be satisfied with proper and reasonable proofs of his fatherly care of thee; and shalt not, from a distrust of his power and goodness in the ordinary way of providence, wilfully or unnecessarily throw thyself into danger, to try whether God will work a miracle for thee or not.

8 Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

12 Now when Jesus had heard that John the Baptist was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee.

8 When Satan was disappointed in the attempt, which he made under a shew of religion, he turned horribly impious; and, carrying Christ up to a very high mountain, represented to him all the states and kingdoms of this world, in their most glittering pomp and grandeur, as if they had really been before his eyes;

9 And at the same time made him an offer of all the honour, riches, power, and pleasure, that the whole world could afford, in case he would prostrate himself before him, and pay him religious worship, as many of the *Gentile* idolaters had used to do.

10 Then Jesus turned short upon him with indignation and abhorrence, saying, O thou enemy of the Divine Majesty, begone; I can bear with you no longer: For what you now suggest is an attempt upon the imperial crown of heaven, and directly contrary to the eternal law of all religious worship, which confines it to God alone, as appears from what is written, (*Deut. vi. 13. and x. 20.*) the plain meaning of which is, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

11 The devil was now entirely vanquished; and, having no further hope of success, nor yet being able to resist Christ's word of command, quitted the field to the great Conqueror: And as soon as he had left him, the holy angels † came to him, not to assist him in the conflict, for the battle was now over, but to congratulate his glorious victories, and to supply him with the refreshments of nature that were needful after his great fatigue and long fasting.

12 Some considerable time after these things, Jesus hearing that *John the Baptist* was thrown into prison, he, to avoid the fury of the *Pharisees*, withdrew to a great distance in the *Upper Galilee*, that there he might have an opportunity of continuing to preach the gospel during *John's* confinement.

13 And

N O T E S.

* Some suppose, that Christ, in alledging this passage of scripture, intimated himself to be the *Lord God*; and that therefore it was insolent in Satan to tempt him. But the sense given in the paraphrase seems to make the

answer most suitable to the nature of the temptation.

† This was probably in some visible appearances.

13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Naphthali:

14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Naphthali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:

16 The people which sat in darkness, saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

18 And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: (for they were fishers.)

19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

13 And quitting his abode at Nazareth, (which lay in the Lower Galilee, near the confines of Issachar,) where he had been brought up, and dwelt till his baptism, (Mark i. 9.) and where the people afterwards rejected him in his public ministry, and offered violence to him through their unbelief, (Luke iv. 29.) he went and took up his residence at Capernaum, a large city of the Upper Galilee, near the sea of Tiberias, (which is also called the sea of Galilee, and the lake of Gennesaret,) in the tribe of Naphtali, bordering upon that of Zabulon:

14 And he removed thither, that by his abode, and preaching, and working miracles there, the prophecy of Isaiah might be fulfilled, (chap. ix. 1, 2.) saying,

15, 16. The inhabitants of the country of Zabulon, and the country of Naphtali, seated by the sea beyond the river Jordan, even Galilee of the Gentiles, where they resorted for traffick, and were mixed with the Jews: This people, that sat in gross darkness and great distress, under the power of sin and Satan, have seen an excellent and important light by the Sun of righteousness's rising upon them; and they that were in so extremely miserable and dangerous a case, and continued so long contented in it, that they might be said to sit in the very region and shadow of death, just upon the confines of eternal destruction; to these the light of the glorious gospel of the blessed God has appeared, shining more and more to the perfect day.

17 From the time of Christ's coming into these parts, he began to preach to the people in the same manner as John the Baptist had before, saying, The grace of the gospel is now brought near to you; and let this excite and encourage you to repent of your former evil thoughts and ways, and turn to God from all your iniquities, (See the note on chap. iii. 2.)

18 And as he was walking near Capernaum, upon the shore of the sea of Galilee, he saw two fishermen, that were brethren, casting their net into the sea: One was Simon, who was called Peter; and the other was Andrew; men in low life, and of mean education, but industrious in their business.

19 And he said to them both, Give yourselves up to my authority, doctrine, and example, and I will put you into a more excellent calling, and employ you in a much more honourable work; for instead of catching fish with nets, I will make you the instruments of gathering souls to me by the gospel, and translating them from the power of Satan into my kingdom.

20 And they straightway left their nets and followed him.

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and he called them.

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

23 And Jesus went about Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sicknesses, and all manner of diseases among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers

20 And such power went forth with his word to their hearts, that it immediately gained their consent; for, in obedience to his call, they instantly left their fishing trade, and, cleaving with full purpose of heart to him, surrendered themselves to his disposal and command.

21 Soon after this, as he was going from that place with these disciples, he met with another pair of brethren, who were also fishermen, and were not idle, but mending their nets in a boat with their father *Zebedee*; one was *James*, whom *Herod* afterwards killed with the sword, (*Acts* xii. 2.); and the other was *John*, who became both an apostle and sacred historian; and Jesus called these, just as he had called the other two before, and for the same purpose, that he might employ them in the nobler services of his kingdom.

22 And he no sooner spoke to them, but they felt the extraordinary power of his grace upon their souls, which engaged them immediately to leave their secular trade, profits, and relations, and to follow him, that they might learn of him, and give themselves up to the work to which he called them.

23 And with these disciples Jesus travelled through all parts of *Galilee*, instructing the people publicly in their places of religious worship, and privately every where else, as opportunities offered; insisting, in all his discourses, on the things that relate to the kingdom of grace and glory; and confirming the divine authority, truth, and excellence of his doctrine, by merciful and miraculous cures of all sorts, even of the greatest and most dangerous diseases, as well as of the lesser infirmities, that any people were afflicted with.

24 By this means his renown spread abroad through the neighbouring country of *Syria*: So that all who had any chronical and languishing, or acute and raging diseases, of what nature or kind soever; and all that were corporally possessed by devils*, and such as were di-

N O T E.

* Let it be observed once for all, that the possessed with devils cannot mean only persons afflicted with some strange disease; for they are here, and in other places, evidently distinguished from the diseased: And Christ's speaking on various occasions to these evil spirits as distinct from the persons possessed by them; his commanding them, and asking them questions, and receiving answers from them, or not suffering them to speak; and several circumstances relating to the terrible preternatural effects they had upon the possessed, and to the manner of Christ's casting

them out, and particularly their asking and obtaining leave to enter the herd of swine, and hurrying them headlong into the sea; can never be accounted for by any disemper whatsoever. And whereas instances of such possessions are not so commonly to be met with before or since the days of our Saviour on earth; it seems to have been ordered by a special providence, that they should be suffered to be more frequent then, that he, who came to destroy the works of the devil, might the more remarkably and visibly triumph over him; and that all the legions of hell might

diseases, and torments; and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25 And there follow'd him great multitudes of people, from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.

distracted at certain changes of the moon, and paralytic persons, whose distempers were reckoned among the incurable, were brought to him; and he, in the greatness of his divine power and commission, freely and perfectly healed them in an instant: He only spake the word and it was done; just as, in the creation of this world, *God said, Let it be so, and it was so.*

25 And abundance of people, being moved by these wonderful appearances, crowded after him from all parts far and near, even from *Galilee*, and *Decapolis* (a country which contained ten cities bordering upon *Syria*, and was chiefly inhabited by *Gentiles*,) and from *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, and from beyond *Jordan*, to see his miracles, and hear him preach; some out of curiosity, others out of envy, others to get cures, and others to learn of him for their own spiritual and saving benefit.

RECOLLECTIONS.

God alone is the object of all religious worship; and to them whose trust and dependence are fixt on him in the way of duty, his word and providence will afford every needful security and supply. How artfully would Satan turn us off from God, by perverting the scriptures, and setting before us the allurements of this world; and how powerful are his assaults! But how easily can the superior wisdom and power of our great Lord confound and overcome him! Christ's conquests are the ground of the believer's hope and safety; and in his strength, and after his example, we should use the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and is divinely sufficient to defeat all the temptations of the evil one, and bring us off with victory and advantage. How wonderful were our Lord's works, and how glorious was his fame! With what eagerness did innumerable multitudes flock about him, though with different views, and many even from *Gentile* countries! And O what a blessed Saviour have we! The grace of his kingdom is the most engaging motive to true repentance: For he has brought life and immortality to light by the gospel, dispossessed Satan, and shed the light of the glory of God in a dark world, and in the darkest souls; yea, he speaks to the very heart, that he may gain to himself a willing people in the day of his power; and when Christ calls, it is our duty, honour, and advantage, to leave all and follow him, whether it be in the service of the sanctuary, or in the faith and obedience of private life.

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might be put to the more open and dismaying shame, at a time when their power was as its highest both in the souls and bodies of men; as also that plain facts might be a sensible confutation of the *Sadducean* error,

which denied the existence of angels or spirits, (*Acts* xxiii. 8.) and prevailed among the chief men of figure and learning in those days.

C H A P. V.

The former part of Christ's sermon on the mount. The blessings he pronounces. 1,—12. The duties he enjoins, 13,—20. And the mistakes he corrects, by his interpretation of the law, 21,—48.

TEXT.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain : and when he was set, his disciples came unto him.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN vast multitudes were brought together by the same of Christ's miracles, his heart was moved with compassion to perishing souls, as well as to diseased bodies : And for the convenience of getting out of the press, and of being the better heard, he went up a hill that was near him in *Galilee* ; and, sitting down after the manner of the *Jewish* doctors, his disciples drew nigh, and stood before him to hear his discourse.

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

2 Then, in the audience of the people, he lifted up his voice with great solemnity and earnestness, giving the following instructions, some of which were peculiar to his disciples, and others common to all. And, like the Saviour who was come to make his people happy, and to encourage their obedience, he began his sermon in pronouncing blessings upon them under various characters and circumstances, saying,

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit ; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

3 They are truly blessed, and I will make them so, who have low thoughts of themselves, are humbly sensible of their own ignorance, sinfulness, and insufficiency, and are desirous to be taught of God ; whose hearts are likewise weaned from the riches, honours, and pleasures of this life, and are ready to part with all things here for the gospel's sake ; and who, though they may be poor in this world, are not high-spirited and dissatisfied with the disposals of God's providence, but humbly submit to his will, and esteem heavenly blessings as the best of all treasures : These are already blessed, and shall be so for ever ; for they have a share and interest in all the riches and honours of the kingdom of grace here, and of the kingdom of glory hereafter.

4 Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted.

4 Blessed are they that are now mourning after a godly sort, with contrite hearts and broken spirits, under a sense of their sins, and of the miseries which they deservedly feel or are exposed to : For their wounded spirits shall be healed, and they that thus sow in tears, shall reap with joy ; they shall in due season be revived with the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and shall enter at length into the everlasting joy of their Lord.

5 Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth.

5 Blessed are they who, sensible of their own unworthiness, and of God's great goodness and pardoning grace, take every thing well at his hands, and quietly bow to his holy and sovereign will in all things, without murmuring and fretting ; and who are affable, gentle and patient to their fellow-creatures, hardly provoked and easily appeased : These meek souls are happy ;

happy; for they, by the blessing of Providence, shall have as much of this world as is best for them, and shall quietly enjoy it with the good-will and friendship of God and man, and with the greatest tranquillity and satisfaction in their own minds.

5 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

6 Blessed are they who have a high value for, and deep concern about, the everlasting righteousness I am come to bring in to justify them that believe in me, and about their being renewed in holiness after the image of God for all obedience to him; and who are as earnestly and heartily desirous of these things, as an hungry and thirsty man is of meat and drink, so that they cannot be satisfied without them: They shall have the desire of their souls; my righteousness shall answer for them, and my grace shall make them holy in heart and life; and all the blessings of the gospel shall be theirs.

7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

7 Blessed are they who put on bowels of mercy, and, upon truly pious and evangelical principles, are compassionate, and ready to deal tenderly with, and relieve the miserable; to forgive injuries, and forbear severities, when they have an advantage against any; to distribute to the necessities of the poor; to sympathize with and succour the afflicted; to pity the ignorant, and do what in them lies to convert sinners from the errors of their ways; and to comfort such as are of sorrowful hearts: For they are under the promise, and shall obtain mercy of God and man, answerable to their wants.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

8 Blessed are they whose religion is pure and undefiled, whose hearts are purified by faith, whose consciences are purged from guilt, whose tempers are formed for holiness and obedience, and who are cleansed from all allowed hypocrisy, pride, and sensuality: These are blessed indeed; for God will manifest himself to them here, so as he doth not to the world; and they shall have the beatific vision and enjoyment of him for ever.

9 Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God.

9 Blessed are they who are of a peaceable disposition, who love and endeavour to maintain and promote peace, and to repair its breaches among their families, neighbourhood, and acquaintance, and in all religious and civil societies, as far as they have opportunity, and can do it in consistence with truth and purity: These are blessed; for this character proves them to be the children of God, that bear his likeness; and they shall be owned as such, and enjoy all the privileges that belong to the adoption of sons.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

10 Blessed are they who with faith and patience undergo the severest persecutions for my sake and the gospel's, and for their conscientious adherence to, and profession of my truths and ways: For they are indeed my subjects, and shall have the comforts and blessings of my kingdom.

11 As to you, my disciples, ye shall be truly blessed when ungodly men shall load you with reproaches, and persecute you even to imprisonment and death, and shall give themselves liberty to raise all manner of calumnies against you, with lies and falsehood, on my account, because ye keep a good conscience toward me; as they particularly will those of you, whom I have chosen to preach my holy doctrine, in opposition to their lusts and prejudices.

12 Do not be discouraged at it, but count it your glory, rejoice and triumph in it: For God will make you a rich amends; and *your light affliction, which is but for a moment*, shall, by his gracious ordination and influence, *work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. And do not think that God deals hardly with you in suffering these things to befall you in the way: For just in this manner the holy prophets, your predecessors of old, were called to cruel mockings; hardships and sufferings, and bore them patiently; but they are now got above them all, and are exalted with peculiar marks of honour in heaven.

13 Besides, it is proper for you to consider, that as salt is used for seasoning; so ye, as teachers and examples to the world, are to diffuse the favour of my knowledge in doctrine and practice, where-ever ye go: If, therefore, your hearts are seasoned with grace, your doctrines sound, and your lives exemplary, ye will be indeed blessings to the world, the means of purging out its corruptions in faith and manners, and of making great multitudes of converts acceptable to God, and useful to men. But if ye should disgrace your character, and degenerate into an unfaithful, cold and carnal temper, corrupt notions, and licentious lives; what can ever make you good and profitable? There will be little or no hope of your recovery; but ye will become the most worthless and contemptible of all men, and be treated accordingly.

14 Ye are to make me known, and spread abroad the light of my gospel in a dark world, and by instruction and example to direct sinners into the way of salvation; and what ye say and do will be exposed to every one's observation, like a city that is built upon a hill, and can-

cannot but be taken notice of by them that are near it.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel; but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

15 And it is indeed for this purpose that I have called you to be my disciples and servants: For as men do not use to light a candle with design to conceal it, by whelming it under a bushel, or shutting it up in an obscure place, that none may see it; but they set it in a candlestick, that it may give light to all the room where it is, and that the company may have the benefit of it;

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

16 So ye ought to take care that the light of your doctrine and conversation shine with conspicuous lustre and purity, in the view of all men, where-ever ye are; that they, beholding them, may be brought, under the influence of divine grace, to esteem, acknowledge, and admire the great excellence of real religion as displayed in you, and to embrace and practise it themselves, to the glory of your heavenly Father.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

17 Do not imagine that I am come to abrogate the moral law, or to set aside the prophets, or teach any thing contrary to the design of the writings of the Old Testament. No; so far from this, that my great aim and work is to confirm them: I am come to establish the moral law as an everlasting rule of righteousness, to explain and enforce it, and to vindicate it from the false and injurious glosses that have been put upon it; I am likewise come to fulfil all righteousness, by a personal and universal obedience to it, and by submitting to the ordinances, and answering the types, of the ceremonial law, and to accomplish the ancient promises and prophecies; in a word, I am come to fill up (πληρῶσαι) all the defects of the Old-Testament dispensation.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

18 For I, with the greatest solemnity, assure you, that no part of the typical ceremonies of the law shall be unfulfilled, and no obligation of the moral law shall be waved: But I will go through a course of exact obedience in every thing incumbent on me, as made under the law, to the end of my days upon earth; and will furnish my disciples with new motives and assistances to answer their natural and moral obligations through all ages, till time shall be no more.

19 Whoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but

19 Whoever therefore shall wilfully set aside and transgress any one, even of the least of these moral commands, as if they might be dispensed with, and shall encourage or teach others to do so likewise; he shall forfeit his character of being my disciple, and shall be looked upon as unworthy to be a subject, and much more an officer, in my kingdom: But, on the other hand,

but whoſo-ever ſhall do, and teach them, the ſame ſhall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I ſay unto you, That except your righteousneſs ſhall exceed the righteousneſs of the ſcribes and Pharifees, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21 Ye have heard, that it was ſaid by them of old time, Thou ſhalt not kill; and whoſo-ever ſhall kill, ſhall be in danger of the judgment.

22 But I ſay unto you, That whoſoever is angry with his brother with-

hand, he that ſhall maintain the neceſſity of the law's being fulfilled, and ſhall have a conſcientious reſpect to all God's commands, upon a principle of love to him, and of faith in me, and ſhall inſtruct and encourage others to do the ſame, ſhall be highly honoured among the chief of my ſubjects and ſervants.

20 For I tell you, that * unleſs ye be intereſted in the everlaſting righteousneſs, which I as the Meſſiah am come to bring in by fulfilling the law, and which is every way perfect and ſuperior to the righteousneſs † of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; and unleſs your personal righteousneſs be more excellent, ſpiritual, and extenſive, in conformity to the moral law, than that which is found in thoſe high pretenders to holineſs, who are hypocritical and partial in their obedience, and truſt in themſelves that they are righteous; ye ſhall on no account whatſoever be admitted to the bleſſings of the kingdom of grace here, or of the kingdom of glory hereafter.

21 Now to give you ſome ſpecimens of theſe menſe defects, chiefly relating to their interpretations and obſervances of the moral law, Ye cannot but have heard, that in this law, as delivered by *Mofes*, it was ſaid to the people of old ‡, *Thou ſhalt not murder*; and whoever is guilty of this crime ſhall be adjudged and put to death; (Exod. xx. 13. xxi. 12.): And ye hereby apprehend, that there is no guilt in any thing of this nature and tendency, except a wilful murder be actually committed.

22 But I ſay unto you, that, by the true intent of God's law, whoſoever ſhall ſo much as indulge raſh, wrathful, and cauſeleſs anger †, or a malicious revengeful

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* As it was prophesied that the Meſſiah ſhould make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlaſting righteousneſs, (Dan. ix. 24.); and our Saviour, in the two next foregoing verſes but one, had ſpoken of his coming to fulfil the law and the prophets; I do not ſee why what he here ſays about the righteousneſs which exceeds that of the ſcribes and Pharifees, may not refer back to all thoſe verſes, and ſo take in the righteousneſs of juſtification as well as of ſanctification, to give a hint of what was afterwards to be more fully explained, about his being the end of the law for righteousneſs to every one that believes; and the righteousneſs of God being by faith of Jeſus Chriſt unto all, and upon all them that believe, Rom. iii. 22. & x. 4.

† The ſcribes were the Jewiſh doctors that expounded the law; and were either judges

in their ſanhedrims, or teachers in their ſchools or in their ſynagogues: They are the ſame ſort of men that at other times are called lawyers; and are frequently mentioned together with the Pharifees, becauſe they were moſtly of that ſect, and profeſſed like ſtrictneſs with them in obſerving the law. *Prudeau's Commen. Vol. II. p. 343.*

‡ *Τὸς ἀρχαίους*, in the dative caſe. See *Whitby*.

§ Our Lord here does not condemn all ſorts of anger; but only that which is cauſeleſs and revengeful: For anger is a natural paſſion of human nature; and Chriſt himſelf, on juſt occaſions, was angry; and the order given to us about it is, to be angry and ſin not, (Ephes. iv. 26.) Nor does our Saviour here condemn juſt and charitable reproof, as expreſſing the vanity and folly of others, and de-

without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and who-so-ever shall say to his brother, *Raca*, shall be in danger of the council: but who-so-ever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.

23 Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

ful temper in his own mind against another, though it be (*μαρ*) ineffectual to his hurt; he, in the divine account, is guilty of murder in his heart, and so exposes himself to the righteous wrath and judgment of God, who has made the wages of sin to be death: And he that shall suffer his passion to rise still higher, and in the pride of his spirit shall break out into opprobrious language, and scornfully say to his brother, Thou worthless, vain, empty fellow, contracts yet greater guilt, and is obnoxious to the censure of the *Jewish* sanhedrim, as well as to the righteous judgment of God: But he that, under the dominion of sin, shall so far give himself up to his wicked passions, as bitterly to censure and revile his brother with respect to his spiritual and eternal state, and call him a profane reprobate wretch, a fire-brand of hell, and the like, as if he were such a fool as says in his heart *There is no God*, sins more grievously still, and shall himself be in danger of that hell-fire to which he damns or condemns his brother.

23 Since therefore God forbids rash, revengeful, and causeless anger, and evil-speaking, as well as actual murder; if you are about to offer † any gift or sacrifice, or perform any act of religious worship, and recollect that you have given just cause of offence by a breach of this law, do not think to atone for it by your offering, on one hand; nor yet despair of obtaining mercy for the forgiveness of it, on the other:

24 But, persisting in your design of paying the solemn homage to God, like one that leaves his gift before the altar instead of taking it away with him, go and seek reconciliation with the brother whom you have offended, by humbling yourself to him, asking his pardon, and satisfying him for any wrong that you may have

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designed for their good: For he himself styled the *Pharisees*, yea, and his own disciples, on urgent occasions, *Fools*, (*Mat.* xxiii. 17. and *Luke* xxiv. 25.); and the apostles used the terms, *Vain man*, *Thou Fool*, and *Unbelieving Galatians!* (*Jam.* ii. 20. 1 *Cor.* xv. 36. and *Gai.* iii. 1.) But we should have a strict guard upon our tempers, and be very cautious of using any such sort of words, and much more of a wrathful censorious spirit, opprobrious language, and peremptorily passing judgment upon a man's state before God.—*Raca*, in the *Jewish* language of that age, which was composed of *Hebrew*, *Syriac*, and *Chaldee*, expressed the utmost contempt, as if a person were to be spit at. And in describing the punishment of all these crimes, there seems to be an allusion to the three courts of judicature among the *Jews*, and the

various degrees of penalties inflicted by them: One court consisted of three judges in every village, where there were not an hundred and twenty persons; and these sat upon inferior causes: The second consisted of twenty-three, who sat in the gates of their cities, and judged the common criminal causes: And the third consisted of seventy-two, six out of every tribe; or, as others say, of seventy and their president; these sat only at *Jerusalem*, and judged causes of the greatest weight, both of a civil and ecclesiastical nature. See *Werneri's Christian Synagogue*, pag. 176, &c. and *Seid. de Synedr. Lib.* ii. cap. 4, 5, 10.

† This is applicable to prayers as well as other religious services, though expressed in ceremonial language with reference to the altar.

have done him; and then return to offer your gift, as becomes one who is encouraged to hope that he shall also obtain forgiveness of God.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in her heart.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right

25, 26. When therefore at any time you have committed a fault against your Christian brother, be as speedy as possible to get the breach made up again, especially considering that God is hereby offended too. For as common prudence, to prevent extremities, would put a man upon doing his utmost for an amicable timely agreement with his adversary, who is about to bring him before a civil magistrate, lest in the issue of the trial the judge should pass sentence against him, and order an officer to carry him to jail, after which there would be no hope of an accommodation; so it is your highest wisdom, interest and duty, to seek peace and reconciliation with God, as well as with your offended brother, without delay, while you are in the way of mercy, and before it be too late, lest you should be cut off by death, and forced to appear at the awful bar of the great Judge of all in your sins: For I assure you that then you must suffer the severest punishment in the prison of hell, from whence there can be no release till you have fully satisfied all the demands of divine justice, which you will never be able to do.

27 Again, ye have heard that it was said in the law to the people of old, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*, (Exod. xx. 14.); and ye suppose that this relates only to a person's actually lying with a woman who is not his wife.

28 But I tell you, That, according to the genuine purport of this law, whosoever shall look upon any woman with unchaste desires after her, and contrivances how to accomplish them; in the first of these cases, lust has conceived in his mind; and in the second, it is finished in his will: And so, in the judgment of God, he is guilty of adultery in his heart, though he has been restrained from, or has not had opportunity to commit the fact.

29, 30. If this or any other sin be ever so dear to you; if you think it ever so pleasant or advantageous, and through long custom and habit should find it as hard and self-denying to part with it, as it would be to pluck out a right-eye or cut off a right-hand that had offended or been an occasion of sinning; yet, as it would be an offence to God, and would be defiling and dangerous to yourself, and expose you to his just and everlasting wrath, to love, harbour, or practise it; it is surely much better for you to part with it, though you should suffer

right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.

33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.

34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne:

suffer the greatest uneasiness and temporal loss by so doing, than that the whole body, together with your soul, should be cast into hell, there to be tormented with inexpressible pain all over for ever: If you cannot bear the uneasiness of crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, how will you bear the torture of everlasting burnings?

31 It has likewise been said, That in case any man shall dissolve the marriage-relation to his wife, on what he takes to be a just occasion, he shall give her a bill of divorce, that she may have it in her hand to shew, as circumstances require, (*Deut. xxiv. 1.*)

32 But I say unto you, God did not command a divorce, as the *Pharisees* would understand it, (*chap. xix. 7.*) nor was it according to his design in the original institution of marriage; but he only permitted it to your fathers for preventing greater evils, which, thro' the perverseness of their hearts, they were strongly addicted to: And as I am come to reduce God's laws to their primitive standard, I declare that henceforth whosoever shall divorce his wife for any other cause, † than that of fornication before marriage, and of adultery after it, which in its own nature breaks the matrimonial bond, shall be chargeable with the guilt of the adultery that is committed both by her and the man who afterwards marries her: For she is, in God's account, still the wife of him that divorced her; and it is unlawful for her to be married to any other whilst her former husband is living.

33 Again, ye have heard that it was said to the people of old, You shall not be guilty of perjury in swearing falsely by the name of God, which would be to profane it, (*Levit. xix. 12.*); but that, when you are come under the obligation of an oath, you shall look upon it as taken in the sight and presence of that God who is the avenger of falsehood, and shall perform it as to the Lord, (*Numb. xxx. 2.*); and if it be a promissory oath, you shall stand to it without changing, tho' it should afterwards appear to be to your own hurt in your temporal concerns, (*Psal. xv. 4.*)

34 But the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* having taught you to think, that in common conversation ye may swear several sorts of oaths without any scruple, and without looking upon yourselves to be bound by them;

29,

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† Fornication is a breach of chastity in the single, and adultery in the married state: But I have taken both into the paraphrase, because the argument for a divorce holds stronger, if this crime is found to be committed after, than before marriage, and is only brought to light after it.

‡ These

as, particularly, that you may swear by the heavens, by the earth, by *Jerusalem*, and by your own heads †, innocently enough, provided the name of God be not invoked in those oaths: I say unto you, Do not swear in your ordinary discourse at all; no, not by any of these things, which is virtually swearing by God himself, because they are related to him in a more general, or more peculiar manner, as the great God and governor of all: Do not swear by heaven; for that is the throne of God's glory:

35 Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool: neither by *Jerusalem*, for it is the city of the great King.

35 Nor by the earth; for that is his footstool, it is his property and under his government: Neither swear by *Jerusalem*; for that is the city of God, peculiarly related to him as its great King, and sanctified by the temple, which was built for his special residence, and was consecrated by him and to him.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

36 Nor shall you swear by your own head, which is more his than yours: For he made, furnishes, and preserves it; whereas you have no power over it, nor over the natural life of which it is the fountain; it is therefore at his dispose, and not yours; nor are you able to procure even so trivial an alteration in it, as to make any of its hairs † grow white before their time, or, when they become grey through age, to make them black again.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.

37 But let your speech in common conversation be only affirming or denying in plain terms, without ambiguity; or at most with repeated expressions of this sort, when the importance of things, and the evidence of one's being in good earnest, may require it: For whatever goes further than these, to gain credit to what you say in the common affairs of life, is of the devil, (ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ,) or proceeds from a bad habit, or from some evil principle or passion that ought to be suppressed, or from a distrust of yourselves as if ye were not to be believed, or of them that ye speak to as if they were unreasonably incredulous.

38 Ye have heard

38 Ye have furthermore heard, that in retributions of

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† These particular forms of swearing were usual among the Jews in their common conversation; but they did not look upon these sorts of oaths to be binding, as appears from several of their ancient writers. *Vid. Whitty in loc.* And what our Lord says on this occasion equally condemns the too customary forms of swearing in common discourse among some in our days; such as, *by my soul, by my life, by my truth, by my faith, &c. George, by all that is good and great, and the like*: But it by no means

forbids solemn oaths in a judicial way, which are designed for confirmation, to put an end to all strife, (*Heb. vi. 16.*); though, alas! through the unnecessary frequency and severe impositions, and through light thoughts of these kinds of oaths, as well as through profane cursing and swearing in common conversation, our land grievously mourns.

‡ Here seems to be a reference to the black hair of the eastern nations, and to their growing grey in old age.

heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

of justice, an eye shall go for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, which has been beat out by an offender, (*Exod. xxi. 24.*) so that, by the law of retaliation, losses and injuries shall be punished in kind; and this, which related only to the magistrates power for maintaining public justice in case the plaintiff insisted upon and would admit of no other satisfaction, is understood by your scribes as if private persons might justly indulge a malicious temper, and take their revenge, either in a law-suit or otherwise, as opportunities offer.

39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

39 But I say unto you, Do not study to avenge yourselves by rendering evil for evil; and if a vindication of your characters or properties be necessary, let it be done consistently with the law of charity: Do not resist evil, by returning the same in kind, when it would be cruel to insist upon it; and, in lesser matters, bear even repeated affronts and injuries with patience, and pass them by, rather than retaliate; as for instance, if any man give you a slap on the face, rather venture his doing it again, than return blow for blow, or right yourself in any way of revenge.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

40 Nay, if any man be litigious and would go to law with you to trick you out of your coat, however hard this may seem, yet it is in itself a thing of small value; and you should rather let him take as much more, than with a contentious and revengeful temper to stand a vexatious law-suit with him.

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

41 And if any one that has got an advantage over you, would oblige you, without right and reason, to keep him company for a mile together; rather go with him twice as far, than furiously quarrel with him, and oppose force to force.

42 Give to him that asketh thee; and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.

42 And that you may as much as possible promote the welfare of others, be ready, according to your ability, to relieve the necessities of such as apply to you for help; and if they desire you to lend them any thing that they greatly want the use of, do not deny them, in case you can let them have it without the hazard of a loss too great for your own circumstances to bear; or if you cannot conveniently grant their request, yet deal tenderly with them, and do not turn away in a huff.

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

43 Once more, ye have heard that it has been said in the law of God, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour*, (*Lev. xix. 18.*); and that your interpreters of this law restrain the word *neighbour* to their kindred and friends; and have added, that it is lawful to hate our enemies, by which they mean all who are not of their own relations, country, and religion.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you:

44 But though ye ought not to think well of, much less to delight in, the treacherous and injurious designs and sinful practices of your enemies; yet I say unto you, Bear all good-will to their persons, as they are partakers of the same human nature with yourselves; wish a blessing upon them, for their real and everlasting happiness; and speak well of every thing that is commendable in them, who wish a curse and damnation to you, and unrighteously reproach you: Take all opportunities of doing every office of beneficence and kindness to them, who discover the greatest enmity against you; and earnestly pray for their conversion and salvation, who maliciously traduce and persecute you.

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

45 In this way you will both be, and appear to be, children of your heavenly Father's likeness: For he bestows the kindly influences, comforts, and benefits of the shining sun, and of seasonable fruitful rains, on the wicked as well as on the righteous; on them that are enemies to him, as well as on them that love him; and ye cannot by a contrary way of acting, prove yourselves to be his genuine offspring.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

46 For if your love be entirely confined to your friends that are affectionate and kind to you, what extraordinary excellence is there in this? what is there distinguishing in it for your honour as Christians? is this anything more than even persons of the worst and meanest characters, such as publicans, think themselves obliged in common gratitude to do?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

47 And if ye are kind and friendly only to those of your own sect, kindred, or religion, what great matter is this? do not all mankind, and even such as ye count the most vile, infamous, and injurious among them, think themselves bound, by the common ties of nature and society, to do the same?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

48 Let therefore your principles and behaviour go vastly beyond all this, that ye may rise to the highest resemblance possible of your heavenly Father in his goodness, as well as in all his other moral perfections, who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How excellent is the genius and design of Christ's gospel, which is calculated to raise our hopes of the truest happiness, and so to support us under all trials, and allure us unto cheerful obedience! They are blessed indeed whom he blesses, whatever they may suffer for his sake. See how the dear Saviour begins with opening his mouth in blessings of rich variety to his disciples under their numerous sorrows, persecutions and reproaches, fears and dangers, to animate and encourage their holy desires, faith and hope, meekness and patience, humility, love and peace, self-denial, hope and joy: And O how great shall their honour and felicity

felicity be at last to their utmost satisfaction; in the full enjoyment of God and of his glorious kingdom! What leading hints did our blessed Lord give of gospel-grace, which after his death and resurrection were to be discovered with clearer evidence, and more at large! How perfect was his obedience; and with what wisdom and authority has he drawn out the beauties and obligations of that law, which is the rule of duty, in all its spirituality, exactness, and wide extent! What a becoming reverence of God, and of his great and awful name; what chastity and purity, and mortification of all sin; what a happy dominion over our appetites and passions; what a sacred guard upon our speech and behaviour; what forbearance under injuries; and what a diffusive beneficence to mankind, and imitation of our heavenly Father, does it enjoin, that God in all things may be glorified! But how unworthy are they of the name of servants or disciples of Christ, that relax the obligation, or encourage a disregard to the least of God's commands! And what will become of them for ever, if death and judgment seize them in their sins! How stedfastly then should we adhere to the pure word of God, in opposition to all corruptions of men! How concerned should ministers and Christians be to spread the favour of the knowledge of Christ in all places, and to act up to their characters and engagements with all integrity, and without reserve! How honourable would this be to him and themselves; and what a blessing would it make them to the church and the world! And yet, alas! in how many things do we all offend, and come short of the glory of God! How should this humble us, and put us upon desiring truth in the inward parts, and on believing in him with the heart unto righteousness, who has perfectly fulfilled the law for the justification of every one that believeth!

C H A P. VI.

The continuation of Christ's sermon about alms-deeds, prayer, and fasting, 1,—18. And the preference of heavenly to earthly treasure, 19,—34.

TEXT.

THAT ye heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; or otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

PARAPHRASE.

AS the corrupt glosses which the scribes and Pharisees have put upon the law are carefully to be guarded against, so are their hypocritical and vain-glorious practices in religion. In the first place, be very careful that ye do not perform any of your good deeds, and particularly works of charity and liberality to the poor, in an ostentatious manner, on purpose to be observed and applauded by your fellow-creatures: For if ye do them to this end, they cannot be called acts of piety toward God your heavenly Father; nor will be regarded by him as such, either in providential returns of the blessings of this life, or in the gracious recompense that is to be made at the resurrection of the just.

a Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men.

2 Whenever therefore you are about to do an act of charity, be not like the hypocritical Pharisees, who study to do it in as public a manner as if they were to call the people together by sound of trumpet to be eye-witnesses of it; and who take their opportunities for it in sight of the greatest concourse of people, as in the synagogues and public streets, that they may be admired by them and have their praises. I tell you of a truth,

men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

as this is all the reward they aim at, in having this they have their all: A poor reward! and they shall have no better.

3, 4. But on the other hand, study to do your acts of charity in a private manner, that they may be observed as little as possible; hide them even from the applauses of your own mind, that you may not have high thoughts of yourself for them, or imagine that there is any merit in them; and hide them from the observation of others, even of your most intimate acquaintance, that they may not feed your vain-glory: Let them be no further known, than you sincerely apprehend may sometimes be needful for the glory of God, and setting a good example to others: And your heavenly Father, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and the most concealed actions of life, will graciously observe and accept these genuine fruits of faith and love, and will take the work of rewarding you into his own hand; he will appear for you, and make you shine in a better character than the *Pharisees* in this world; and will bring all to light, and publicly own and honour you as his child, before men and angels in the day of judgment.

5 And as to the duty of private or solitary prayer, wherein you have personally to do with God only, take heed of being like the hypocritical *Pharisees*; who chuse the most improper and public places of resort for their private devotions; sometimes affecting to offer up their secret prayers in the synagogues, while they ought to be joining in the solemn addresses of the whole assembly: and at others presenting themselves to every one's view in the most open and frequented places abroad, such as where two streets meet at a corner-house, that they may be observed and admired by men, as if they were the highest favourites with God. I tell you of a truth, this is the reward they seek, and this is all that they shall have.

6 On the contrary, when you go to offer up private prayers to God, let them be private indeed: Retire into some room apart from company; and when you have shut yourself up to prevent others breaking in upon you, pour out your heart to God as your father; not with a voice loud enough to be heard by any that might stand without to listen, much less on purpose to make others hear you; but with mental conceptions, or with a low pronunciation, knowing that the God you are speaking to is near at hand, and can as easily hear the softest whisper as the loudest noise; and he, who is fully acquainted with the most secret desires and petitions of your

your heart, will return such answers to your prayers, as shall openly witness that he heard and accepted them.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

7 But whenever ye pray, whether it be alone or in social worship, though sometimes, in the great fervency of your spirits, ye may with good propriety and emphasis repeat some important and affecting expressions; and, as occasions offer, and ye find assistances from above, may be more enlarged in your requests and pleadings, and spend more time, than at others; yet take special heed of empty, formal, weak and superstitious tautologies, and of multiplying words to no good purpose, (*μὴ βασιλογεῖσθε*,) as the idolatrous *Gentiles* do in worshipping their gods: For they abound in vain repetitions; and sometimes, like *Baal's* priests, (*1 Kings* xviii. 26.) lengthen them out from morning till noon, imagining that many words are needful to make their deities understand them, or to work up their passions that they may hear and answer them.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

8 Take heed therefore that no such absurd sentiments of the true God enter into your minds; and that ye do not treat him as if, like the heathens, ye thought he did not understand your requests, or were unwilling to answer them: For your heavenly Father, who loves you, and takes pleasure in blessing you, is thoroughly acquainted with all your wants and desires, even before ye express them to him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

9 That therefore ye may avoid vain repetitions, and pray only for needful things, reduce your supplications and pleas to what may be included in the following heads, which I am going to mention for your special direction; or let your prayers be to this effect. O most high and glorious God! thou art the creator and preserver, owner and benefactor, of all men, and in a special manner the father of them that believe: Thy throne is established in the heavens, where thou dwellest amidst the exalted adorations and praises of saints and angels; and thou hast made thyself known under these characters to us, that our hearts and affections may mount up to thee in heaven, and that we may think of and speak to thee with all the awful solemnity and reverence, humility and self-abasement, holy trust and confidence, that become sinful nothing creatures in their approaches to such a God and Father: O let thy infinite perfections be gloriously exalted in the eyes of all intelligent creatures, especially of the human race, that they may admire and adore, praise and bless thee, suitably to the various discoveries thou makest of thyself to them in thy

works and in thy word, that thou mayest be owned and honoured in their hearts, speech, and behaviour, as their chief good and highest end.

9 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

10 Let thy kingdom, even the Messiah's, which we are looking for, and in which thou wilt be most illustriously glorified, come amongst us in all its light and power, spirituality, purity and glory, to the utter ruin of the kingdom of sin and Satan; let his gospel be preached far and wide, and be heartily embraced by all nations, that his throne may be set up in their souls, who in the day of his power may be a willing people unto him; and let us and them grow in light, love and peace, in faith, comfort, hope and holiness, under the blessed influences of thy Spirit, in the kingdom of grace here, till we shall triumph together in the kingdom of glory hereafter. And O grant that we, and all who profess Christ's name, may have such rich supplies of grace to enlighten our minds, incline our hearts, and strengthen our executive powers, as shall enable us to yield most unfeigned, cheerful, and universal obedience to thy commands at all times, and to approve of and comply with thy providential will in all things, in the nearest imitation possible of the spirits of just men made perfect, and of the sinless angels in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

11 And as to what concerns our present condition in the house of our pilgrimage, we humbly beseech thee to grant us, together with the rest of thy children, and others of our fellow-creatures, a daily supply of food and such other good things as thou seest are most needful and convenient for us, in subservience to thy glory and our own everlasting happiness, during our abode in this mortal life †.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

12 And that our iniquities may not separate between thee and us, and hinder these or any other good things from us, we earnestly beg that thou wouldest graciously pardon our great and numerous sins of omission and commission, in heart and life, which have forfeited all enjoyments, and brought us under a debt of punishment to thy injured law and justice: And as thy thoughts and ways of mercy are as much above ours as the heavens are above the earth, we are encouraged to hope for this forgiveness from thee; because thou hast made it our duty, and thy grace has inclined our hearts, to forgive the offences and injuries which others have committed against us.

13 And

N O T E .

† Bread is put for all sorts of provision; and daily bread (*epiousion*) may signify either the food that is needful for the present day, or from day to day as long as we live.

† This

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

13 And that we may not still further sin against thee, we humbly intreat that thou wouldest keep us out of the way of such trials as might prove too hard for us; or if at any time temptation lies before us, grant us help against and victory over it, that we may not be entangled and ensnared by circumstances of prosperity or adversity, or by any allurements or terrors of this world: Deliver us likewise from the power of Satan, that evil one, from the corrupt inclinations of our own hearts, from all practices of iniquity, and from the troubles and sufferings that sin in ourselves or others might bring upon us; and at last raise us up to that blessed state, where we shall be entirely free from all temptation, sin and sorrow, for ever: For universal dominion, almighty power, and every thing that is great and glorious, be long unchangeably without beginning or end to thee; thou hast an undoubted claim to them; and it is our earnest desire, that we, with all thine, as in duty bound, may everlastingly celebrate their praises. Amen. So let all this be; and so we humbly hope it shall be, in answer to what we have been praying for †.

14 I

N O T E.

† This may justly be esteemed an excellent model of the petitionary part of prayer, together with such pleas to enforce it, as are taken from God's infinite and exalted perfections, from his universal dominion, and from his kind dispositions and benefactions, as a heavenly Father, to whom belong the kingdom, power, and glory, for ever; and all this is admirably and most peculiarly fitted to the then present dispensation, which was introductory to the Messiah's kingdom, that was soon to break out in illustrious light and grace, to the overthrow of all the powers of sin and Satan: And as these petitions seem to have been introductory to the then approaching dispensation, in which Christ's person, mediation, and benefits, were to be clearly manifested by the gospel, and all blessings were to be explicitly asked in his name; so it was too soon as yet for him to give directions to his disciples about expressly mentioning his name in their prayers, as he afterwards did when he came to settle the manner of evangelical worship. It therefore seems very evident, that this plan of prayer cannot be looked upon as completely fitted to gospel days: And I would humbly propose it to consideration, whether, instead of the paraphrase I have given upon it in conformity to the concurring judgment of all the expositors I have seen, the following short sketch may not express its chief and more immediate sense, consonant to the circumstances of the time and dispensation in which it was delivered, as well as to the occasion of

Christ's directing to a proper method for preventing vain repetitions and a multitude of words in prayer.

“ O Father of thy people *Israel*, who art not confined to any temple or place upon earth, but hast thy habitation by way of eminence in heaven, let thy name now be sanctified in a more glorious manner than it ever has been in ages past: Let the kingdom of the Messiah, which we are looking for, be set up without delay amongst us; and under its light, grace and power, let thy will be done with all sincerity, cheerfulness, and universality, on earth, as it is in heaven: In the perilous times that will attend the erecting of this kingdom, give us a daily supply of such good things as shall be needful for the body; and forgive our sins, which make us unworthy of this and every other mercy, and which might justly obstruct thy setting up this kingdom amongst us, or might exclude us from its blessings: Forgive these in like manner as, under this new dispensation, we are especially called, and hope to be inclined, heartily to forgive others offences against us. And let no temptations of Satan, or of this present world, ever prevail to keep us out of this kingdom, or to make us act contrary to its obligations, and deprive our souls of its blessings: But deliver us from the evil one, that great enemy, who will do all he can to prevent the Messiah's interethal king place in our selves, or in the world;”

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

14 It is after this manner that your petitions are to be offered up to God; and here ye have one thing in particular, which ye never heard of before, but is matter of great necessary and importance, viz. That ye are to beg of God to forgive your offences, even as ye should and do forgive the offences of others against you: For if God has made this your duty, it shews *there is forgiveness with him that he may be feared*, (Psal. cxxx. 4.); and if ye have obtained so much mercy from him, as to have this disposition wrought in your own hearts towards them that offend you, this is a comfortable evidence of the efficacy of his grace in you, and may warrantably encourage your expectations that he will also bestow forgiveness upon you, according to his promise, that *with the merciful he will shew himself merciful*, (Psal. xviii. 25.)

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

25 But if your own hearts are implacable, and disinclined to forgive others, ye in vain expect that God should be merciful in forgiving your much greater provocations: Let no such man deceive himself; for while this is his indulged and prevailing temper, all his prayers for the pardon of his own sins are a contradiction to the design of my gospel, a mockery of God, and an abomination to him.

16 Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.

16 There is likewise another hypocritical practice which I must caution you against: When at any time ye keep a private fast, on a religious account, be not like the ostentatious and dissembling *Pharisees*, who take pains to make people know which are their fasting days; and put on outward appearances of sorrow, instead of being truly humbled before God by inwardly afflicting their souls: They chuse to go abroad, though the chief work of those days lies at home; and they affect melancholy, mournful, and dejected looks, dirty faces, and negligent slovenly airs, that they may be cried up for wonderfully pious and mortified men, on account of their often setting apart days for solemn humiliation and extraordinary devotion: I tell you of a truth, this is the reward they seek, and this is all that they shall have.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

17, 18. But when you would keep a private fast, do not make any remarkable alteration in your countenance,

N O T E.

“ Deliver us likewise from the evil lusts of our own hearts that would oppose it, and from the terrors of this evil world that would discourage our embracing it. And we humbly present these petitions, O heavenly Father, to thee, in hopes of

“ being heard and answered; because it is thy kingdom that we desire may be established, and thy power is able to establish it, and thou wilt have the glory of it. Amen, to let it be uncontrollably and for ever.”

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

nance, dress, and public behaviour; nor affect any shew of humiliation and fasting, for others to take notice of it; but conceal it as much as may be from men: And though you are to abstain from the delights of nature, and its usual repasts, that you may thereby exercise self-denial, and be the fitter for the other duties you are then called to; such as great searchings of heart before the Lord, ingenuous confession of sin; deep contrition and humiliation for it, serious meditation and solemn prayer; yet let all this lie between God and your own souls alone, while no other eye sees you; and your heavenly Father, who is intimately acquainted with all your most secret transactions with him, will publicly own and bless you in this world, and in that which is to come.

19 One great means of preserving you from all this hypocrisy is, to take heed of too highly esteeming and being carried away with the honours and advantages of this world: Let not therefore your chief solicitude and pains be laid out in getting and hoarding up earthly treasures, which are of a decaying nature, like the richest garments that are consumed by moths; and like silver and gold, which are eat up with canker and rust, and are continually a temptation to thieves to break in upon you and rob you of them, and are exposed to numberless other hazards.

20 But, above all things else, esteem, and let your chief solicitude and pains be laid out in a pursuit after, heavenly treasures; such as the favour of God, and the graces of his spirit here, and a complete enjoyment of him hereafter, which are subject to none of these uncertainties, losses, and decays:

21 For that which ye reckon upon as your chief treasure, will command your thoughts and affections, your aims and pursuits; and so ye will be either earthly or heavenly minded, and all your happiness will be either mean and perishing, or great and everlasting, according as earthly or heavenly things are the chief good in your account.

22 A true spiritual judgment to discern things that differ, is of vast importance in this case; for as the eye guides the body, so the judgment directs the will and affections. As therefore, if the eye be clear and free from vitiating humours that would give it a wrong view of objects round about it, the whole body will be regularly conducted to perform the various offices of life; so if, the heart being weaned from this world, your mind hath a right and clear discerning of the excellency of spiritual things, all the other faculties or

the soul will be well directed in their pursuits after them.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?

23 But as, on the other hand, if the eye be blind, or tinged with any vitiating humour, the whole body will be in the dark, or directed very wrong; so if, thro' an inordinate affection to this world, your understanding is blind to spiritual things, or makes a corrupt or wrong judgment about their truth and excellence, all the other faculties of the soul will be misguided and perverted by it, to your own unspeakable loss and perdition.

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

24 No man can, at one and the same time, heartily and truly serve two masters of contrary tempers, demands, and interests; for he will in his own inclination, and must of necessity in the nature of things, disrelish and neglect the service of one of them, whilst he chooses and cleaves to the service of the other: 'This is the case with respect to God, and the treasures † of this world, which, in direct opposition to each other, demand that the soul, with all its powers, be entirely devoted to themselves respectively; and if ye herein give the preference to worldly things, your hearts are not right with God, and cannot possibly love and serve him, who will not admit of any rival, much less of any supreme, or superior to himself.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

25 Therefore I say unto you, Do not rend and cut your hearts with care; (*μη μεριμνήτε*) nor to be anxiously, uneasily, and distrustfully solicitous, even about the necessities and conveniences of this present life, such as meat and drink, and raiment for the body; much less be so about its superfluities, dainties, and fine apparel, as if your happiness were bound up in such sort of things as these; but in the way of dutiful diligence, to which the providence of God calls you, depend with quiet and undivided hearts upon him for a supply of such things as in his infinite wisdom he sees are best for you: And in case his providence, by sickness or otherwise, disables you from following any secular business to get your bread; or calls you off from it, that ye may spend your time and labour in his service, as ministers in my kingdom; still calmly commit yourselves by faith to him for all the temporal supplies that are requisite for the body: For what reason can there be to doubt that he, who at first was the Author of your life and being, without your own care or concern about them, or any way contributing towards them, will not afford you such

N O T E.

† *Mammon* is a Syriac word, signifying riches, gains, or treasures, which are the idols of carnal hearts in opposition to the true God.

such things in the way of his providence as are needful for their maintainance and preservation as long as he designs to continue their existence? he who has done the greater, shall not he do the less?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye much better than they?

26 Consider the various ranks of creatures that are below you: And as to *food*, observe how the birds live and are provided for merely by the kind hand of God: For they neither provide for themselves, by preparing their own meat, or heaping up stores against a day of want; and yet your heavenly Father preserves and supplies them with necessary and convenient provisions. And do not ye think, that ye, my disciples and my ministering servants, are creatures of a more excellent make, and greater consideration in the world, than they; and that your heavenly Father loves you better, and makes a higher account of you, than them? why then should ye suspect that his providence will not take good care to feed you with food convenient for you?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

27 Besides, all your anxious, carking, distracting and distrustful cares can be of no advantage to you; for, after all, none of you can possibly, by any contrivances of your own, or by any means within the power of your hands, add the least measure to the stature of your bodies, or to the length of your age, (*WHICH IS THE MAXIMUM*;) all these things, with whatsoever else concerns your body and life, entirely depend upon the providence of God, who, without any care of your's, at first gave them. Why then should ye not still rely upon his all-governing management to nourish and preserve them?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin.

28 And as to *cloathing*, why should ye be solicitously concerned or over-thoughtful about that? Think of the flowers of the field: However exposed they are to many dangers that surround them abroad, from the air, and from men and beasts; yet, under a divine care, they grow up in all their beauties, without any thought in themselves, or any pains to get and put on their various rich adornings.

29 And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

29 And yet I tell you, that even the greatest and most splendid king, *Solomon* himself, in the midst of all his delicacy, pomp and grandeur, was in no comparison so fine as one lily or tulip; so inimitably superior are the beauties of God's works of nature to those of all the works of art.

30 Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to-morrow is

30 If therefore God so curiously decks these flowers, which are indeed but poor vegetables, that may be called the grass of the field, and that are designed but for a very short continuance, one day flourishing in the field,

is cast into the oven, *shall* be not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

field, and the next consumed in heating the oven; what room have ye to distrust his fatherly care in providing suitable apparel for you, who are sent into the world for nobler purposes, and are the objects of his special providence? Surely your faith is exceeding low indeed, if ye cannot rely upon him for so small a thing as this: And as your bodies must ere long be consumed in the grave, it is shameful unbelief to distrust him for so little a while as ye have to live upon earth.

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed?

31 Be not therefore anxiously and distrustfully solicitous at any time about worldly things, troubling yourselves with thoughts about what ye shall do for meat, drink, and cloaths; or in what manner, and with what sort of provisions and apparel, ye shall be supplied:

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

32 For these are the poor, low, mean things, that the heathen, who know not God and his government of the world, and have no trust in him, nor assuring prospects of a better life, are perpetually teasing themselves about, and hunting after, as their all; but this is utterly unworthy of, and beneath you, my disciples, who know better, and have nobler hopes, under the light and grace of divine revelation. It is a shame for you, who have the promises of this life, as well as of that which is to come, and profess to trust God with your souls, not to trust him with your bodies too; for your heavenly Father is thoroughly acquainted with all your wants, and with the proper methods of relieving them. Do not therefore so far dishonour his fatherly love and care, as to suppose that he will not give you what he knows is needful for you, relating to this present state and world, as well as the next; and do not distress yourselves with a care, that is so needless for you, and so easy to him.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

33 But let it be your first and principal concern to mind the things that pertain to the glory of God and the salvation of your own souls, as set before you in my gospel: Seek without delay, and with the utmost earnestness, before all things else, the rich advantages of the kingdom of grace and of glory, and the righteousness which belongs to that kingdom; both the righteousness of faith, which I am sent of God to bring in by my obedience and sufferings unto death, and the righteousness of personal holiness and obedience in heart and life, which I am come to enjoin upon my disciples, and to propagate in them by a work of regeneration and sanctification: Begin every day with seeking these, by the aids and assistances of my spirit, and lay hold on every opportunity for it; be sure that ye take up with nothing

short

short of a saving knowledge, experience, and enjoyment of them: And as for all the necessaries and comforts of this life, so far as God sees them best for you, he will certainly add them by way of overplus.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

34 Upon the whole, therefore, be content with such things as ye have; and, going on in the way of present duty, take heed of anticipating troubles by unbelieving fears and distracting cares about time to come; for God, *whose mercies are new every morning*, (Lam. iii. 23.) and who has promised, that, *as your days, so your strength shall be*, (Deut. xxxiii. 25.) can easily prevent the evils ye fear, or enable you to bear them, and carry you through them with rich advantage: To-morrow's miseries will bring along with them to-morrow's mercies; and it will be time enough to be distressed with future wants and trials, when they unavoidably come to be present, and could not be prevented by any prudent foresight: The troubles of the current day are enough to exercise all the strength and grace of that day; and therefore it is not only needless and foolish, but injurious and unwarrantable, to add the imaginary evils of the morrow to the real difficulties that already attend you.

RECOLLECTIONS.

A shew of piety is all mere pretence and mockery, and does not deserve to be called religion; much less can it be evangelical, and acceptable to God, unless the heart be in it with governing aims, not at our own reputation and worldly interests, but at his glory. In every thing our requests should be made known to God as a Father, according to his direction and will; not with vain repetitions, as if we were to be heard for much speaking; but with earnest pertinent addresses, under a sense of duty, and of his being able and ready to answer us. And what need have we to look inwards and upwards, that our hearts may be right with God under the influence of his Spirit; that our principles, motives, and views, may be sincere and spiritual, in our fastings, prayers, alms-deeds, and all religious duties and services, as being always under his eye; and that we may be approved of him, and accepted in his sight through Jesus Christ, however we may stand in the opinion of men! Alas, what a poor reward is the vanishing breath of popular fame, compared with the love and savour of God, and the honour that comes from him! And yet this is all the advantage that hypocrites will get by their religion. And what is all this pitiful, perishing, and uncertain world, compared with the great, solemn, and eternal realities of the heavenly inheritance! And yet, how fond are we naturally apt to be of things here below; how eager in our contrivances and labours, hopes and fears, wishes and cares, about them; and how indolent and unmoved about the things of God and glory! but that which commands our hearts, is the treasure we chuse.—A little of earthly things is really enough to answer the wants of animal nature: How moderate then should we be in our appetites, desires and cares, about food and raiment, and the good things of this life; how contented with such a share of them as God orders us; and how satisfactorily may his children trust in him, that they shall never want any thing which he knows is best for them! He that takes care of birds and flowers, will never neglect them, who are so much higher in his account. It is sinful and heathenish to distrust him, and all our carking care about the body is unprofitable and vain. But we must have spiritual and heavenly blessings in abundance, to satisfy

tisfy the cravings of an immortal soul: Here then is a loud call to be earnest and early in our inquiries and pursuits; and here is room enough for growing desires, cares, and pains, in God's way, to amass together as much as possible of these sure and incorruptible treasures; and he that can be contented with but little of these, is like to have none at all. O with what superior impression should Christ, and the righteousness and blessings of his kingdom of grace and glory, command the believer's faith and hope, love and joy!

C H A P. VII.

The conclusion of Christ's sermon about rash censures, importunate prayer, the difficulty of getting to heaven, and the danger of false teachers, 1,—20. The application of the sermon, and the effects it had upon the hearers, 21,—29.

TEXT.

JUDGE not, that ye be not judged.

PARAPHRASE.

TAKE heed that ye be not unmerciful and severe in censuring others, and indulging unreasonable jealousies about them; and never venture upon peremptorily judging of their eternal state, as if ye were the arbiters of life and death, lest they be as severe against you, and especially lest ye provoke the righteous God to pass judgment without mercy upon you.

2 For with what judgement ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

2 For in the same manner that ye deal with others in judging them, whether it be with rigour, or with charity, ye must expect to be dealt with by men, and especially by God in the great day of account.

3 And how unreasonable, unbecoming, and unrighteous is it, for any of you to be ready to spy every little fault, and aggravate it with severity, in your brother; and at the same time (as is usual with censorious persons) to take no notice of, or to excuse, extenuate, and indulge, much greater crimes in yourself?

4 Or with what face, and to what good purpose, would you offer to condemn, correct, or reprove your brother for lesser sins? or indeed how can you see to do it, with due discerning, while your own heart and life are corrupted, and your own judgment is blinded, with much more heinous crimes?

5 What is this but the grossest hypocrisy, under a pretence of zeal against sin? If therefore you would attempt any thing of this kind with judgment and conscience, with decency and authority, and to good purpose; in the first place begin at home, and reform what is amiss in yourself, and then you will be well qualified to set about the reformation of others.

6 And

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† Dr Lightfoot tells us that this was a known proverb among the Jews; the *mote* signifying a small sin, and the *beam* a great one.

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and read you.

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son aske bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts

6 And yet, even then, it is to be managed with prudence and discretion: The best counsels and reproofs are not to be unseasonably thrown away upon hardened, profane, and incorrigible sinners; who, instead of taking them well, or being the better for them, would be enraged by them, and turn upon you with reproaches, scorn and fury, like snarling dogs, that are unworthy of, and defy all attempts to sweeten them; and like filthy and surly swine, who would be as much offended at flinging a pearl before them as if it were a stone thrown at them, would trample it under foot with indignation and contempt, and would run at you to tear you in pieces; and they, after all, would still continue to be like a dog, that returns to his own vomit again, and like a sow to her wallowing in the mire.

7 But that ye may be enabled to put the instructions I have been giving into practice, do not set about these duties in your own strength, but with a constant dependence on divine grace. Be instant in prayer, with faith and fervour; ask wisdom and assistance of God, as well as all the other blessings ye need, and he will grant them; seek them in the way of duty, and in the use of all appointed means of grace, and ye shall surely obtain them; knock importunately and repeatedly at the door of mercy for them, and God will open it to your relief.

8 For whosoever thus prays with faith and fervour, and wrestles with importunity and perseverance in prayer, for what is agreeable to the will of God, shall not pray in vain: He asks, and has; he seeks, and finds; he knocks, and the door of mercy opens to him; whilst he is yet speaking, his heavenly Father hears him; and all the blessings of the promises are made his own; he has an interest in them, and shall be partaker of them, in God's way and time, as far as is fit and needful for him here, till all shall be perfected hereafter.

9 Is there, even among yourselves, any man so morose and ill-natured as to deny the petition of his own child when he begs what is proper and necessary for him, or to put him off with some other thing that would be as useless as if he were to give him a stone instead of a piece of bread?

10 Or were his son to persist in his importunity, would he do any thing so injurious as to give him a serpent to wound and destroy him, instead of a fish to feed and nourish him?

11 If therefore men, who are depraved, perverse, and froward creatures, have nevertheless so much natural af-

gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

11 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

12 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction; and many there be which go in thereat:

13 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.

14 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravelling wolves.

section for their children as to be ready to grant them such things as they know are good for them, how much more will your heavenly Father, who has put all the compassion into the hearts of parents that is found in them toward their offspring, and whose tender mercies are infinite, freely bestow upon his own children such things as his unerring wisdom sees are really good for them, when they, relying on his care and conduct, faithfulness and grace, earnestly beg them of him.

12 If then God is so gracious as infinitely to exceed the expectations of kindness which ye might reasonably hope for from the most affectionate and tender earthly parent; and if ye, under his influence, would act up to the various particular instructions that have been given you; see that in every thing your dealings with others be just in the same manner, and with the same upright, kind, and compassionate temper, as ye reasonably would expect from them toward yourselves, were they in your circumstances, and ye in theirs: For this is the sum of all that is contained in the law and the prophets, concerning the duty ye owe to your neighbour.

13 And, as ever ye would be holy and happy, according to the design of my kingdom, ye must enter in at the strait gate of regeneration, faith and repentance, however self-humbling and self-denying it may be: For the entrance into, and progress in the way of sin and self-seeking, that leads to everlasting misery and ruin, is wide and open; it is agreeable to the corrupt inclinations and indulgences, pride and hypocrisy, that mankind are naturally fond of, and puts little or no check or restraint upon them: And there are great multitudes that go into, and go on in this way, to their dreadful and eternal perdition.

14 But the entrance into my kingdom, by the new birth, is painful and difficult; and the way of true religion and holiness, the end of which is everlasting life, is a way of restraint, being hedged in by God's law; and a way of affliction, (*εὐλαβία καὶ πόθος*) beset with many tribulations, as with a hedge of thorns: It is rough and disagreeable to flesh and sense, and to the pride of human nature; and there are but few that care to press into it, and go on with perseverance.

15 Take heed of false teachers who preach any thing contrary to this doctrine, and pretend to lead you in an easier and wider path to eternal happiness: They put on specious appearances, wear a distinguishing garb, and make outside shews of sanctity, meekness, and concern for your good, which carry the likeness of my prophets, and

and of the qualities of sheep; but they have indeed the temper and design of rapacious wolves; they are under the dominion of their own lusts, and seek to pervert and make a prey of you, to their own carnal ends, and to your eternal destruction.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

16 But as ye may discern one tree from another by the fruit it bears; so ye may distinguish these from my faithful servants, by the evil tendency and influence of their doctrine; and by the pride, covetousness, or sensuality of their lives and conversations. For as thorns cannot produce grapes, or thistles figs; but they, and all other trees, bear such sorts of fruit as are answerable to their nature and kind:

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

17 Even so every good man, whose principles are right, and whose heart is changed and sanctified by the grace of God, brings forth fruits of righteousness and holiness in spiritual, useful designs and actions; and every unregenerate man, whose principles are wrong, and whose heart is under the dominion of sin, brings forth fruits of unrighteousness and iniquity in evil intentions and works.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

18 The good man cannot carry on designs and practices of wickedness either in a private or public character, it is contrary to his renewed nature so to do; and the unregenerate man cannot carry on designs and practices of true religion and holiness, he has no principles capable of producing them.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

19 How fair soever peoples professions and appearances may be; yet if their principles are unsound, and their lives immoral; if their doctrines do not tend to holiness, and their conversation be not answerably good; they, like barren trees that only cumber the ground, shall in the righteous judgment of God be cut down by death, and cast into everlasting burnings.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

20 By these different fruits, therefore, of sinful and holy principles, dispositions, and actions, ye may distinguish false teachers and pretenders to religion from my servants and true disciples; and by these ye may know their different ends.

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

21 For it is not every one who makes an outward profession of religion; no, nor who in words owns me for his Lord and Master, and calls upon my name with a seeming zeal and fervour; much less is it any one who does these things only in a cold and formal manner, that shall enter into my kingdom of grace and glory: But they shall be admitted thither who are brought heartily to embrace and comply with the will of my heavenly Father, by believing in me whom he has sent, and by yielding unfeigned obedience to his commands.

21 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them

22 Many will flatter themselves with vain hopes; and, when their fears begin to rise in the awful days of death and judgment, will betake themselves to false refuges, and with horror and surprise will plead in an appeal to me, saying, Lord, have we not preached the gospel under thy commission? and have we not had even the faith of miracles to cast out devils, and to do many other great and marvellous works in thy name? wilt thou not therefore now receive and own us for thy disciples, and bestow upon us the reward of eternal life which we expected?

23 But (saith) I will reject all their vain pleas, as utterly insufficient, saying in a judicial way to them, I all along knew you to be secret hypocrites, while ye were professing and preaching in my name, and doing the miraculous works which I ordered to be wrought by your hands, not for your own sakes, but for the confirmation of my gospel and the good of others; and therefore I never esteemed or approved of you as my true disciples and servants; nor will I now own or accept you as such: I now banish you from my blessed and glorious presence, to everlasting misery and despair, O all ye wilful transgressors.

24, 25. Since therefore something more than a bare profession and external privileges is necessary to salvation, whoever hears, and seriously considers, embraces by faith and love, and acts according to the doctrines I have been delivering, he may be compared to a thoughtful, prudent and skilful man, who, in prospect of danger, builds his house upon a rock that it may be secure, and whose expectations are answered in the event; for when storms, and rains, and floods, come to beat ever so furiously upon that house, it stands fast, because its foundation is immovable: So he who receives and observes my instructions, builds upon a firm and solid bottom that will never fail him; I will be like an eternal rock underneath him, and his hope in me shall never make him ashamed; for whatever temptations and persecutions, doubts and fears and dangers, may assault him, in life or death, he shall not miscarry, but shall stand in judgment at last, because he is founded upon the Rock of ages.

26, 27. On the other hand, whoever hears my instructions, but disregards them, and never puts them into practice, may very properly be compared to an in-

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† As our blessed Lord could not be ignorant of their characters, this is a plain instance of knowledge being put for approbation; as it likewise is in *Psalms* i. 6. and *1 Cor.* viii. 3. Accordingly (*a ymnos*) I know not, is rendered *I allow not*, *Rom.* vii. 15.

them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blow, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

considerate careless man, who builds his house upon a loose and sandy foundation; for when storms and rains beat upon the superstructure, it is easily overturned and utterly destroyed, as having no good bottom to keep it from sinking and falling in its own ruins: So the mere, empty, hypocritical professor of religion, has nothing to support or secure him in an hour of temptation and danger, much less in the day of death and judgment; but must inevitably perish, and that with great aggravation of his sin and folly, and to his dreadful disappointment for ever.

28 When Jesus had concluded this sermon, the common people that heard him were filled with wonder and admiration at the excellence of his discourse, though without any saving effect upon many of them.

29 For the nature of his doctrine, and the manner of his delivering it, were such, that he appeared, even to them, to speak with surprising majesty and authority, and with an evidence of truth and importance which could not be contradicted; and not with the trifling formality, and according to the uncertain traditions, of their *Rabbies*.

RECollections.

All our religion should begin at home; and instead of being uncharitably severe in censuring others, we should be carefully looking into our own hearts and ways, observing and condemning all that is amiss in ourselves, and labouring by divine grace to reform it: Without this, what will all our pretended zeal, professions of Christ's name, gospel-privileges, prayers, and either preaching or hearing of the word, come to? And what a dreadful disappointment will many formalists in religion meet with at the last day! Our corrupt hearts must be changed by renewing grace, before we can be truly holy in our lives; and our principles must be right, before our practices can be so. The best way therefore of knowing persons and doctrines, is by their fruits, according as they are agreeable to the word of God or not.—How should we dread the thoughts of following the multitude to do evil, lest we follow them into hell; or of building our hopes of happiness on insecure grounds, lest they fail us to our final destruction! And how earnest should we be in our applications to a throne of grace, that we may go along with the happy few to everlasting life, or may be wise unto salvation! Blessed be God for the high assurances we have, that the humble, importunate prayer of faith shall not be in vain; that our heavenly Father will, in the riches of his mercy, hear and answer us, and freely bestow the best of blessings upon us; and that by a faith that is productive of real holiness, we shall rest on a sure foundation, weather every storm, and get safe to glory. But O how concerned should we be, not only to hear and admire the doctrines of Christ, but to be savingly acquainted with them!

C H A P. VIII.

Christ's cleansing a leper, 1,—4. Healing a palsy and fever, 5,—18. Discouraging with two persons about following him, 19,—22. Stilling a tempest, 23,—27. And casting out devils, 28,—34.

TEXT.

WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

4 And Jesus said unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

5 And when Jesus was entered into

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had made an end of his sermon, and come down from the mount where he preached it, vast multitudes of people went after him.

2 And as he preached to them, so he frequently took opportunities of confirming his doctrine by miracles: Among these, we have a remarkable instance of one wrought on a man over-run with leprosy, which the Jews used to look upon as an unclean distemper that was inflicted by the immediate hand of God in token of his displeasure, and could not be cured by human art, (2 Kings v. 7.) This leprous person came to Jesus; and, throwing himself at his feet for mercy, begged that he would take pity on him, saying, Lord, I verily believe that, if thou pleasest, thou art able to cleanse me from this otherwise incurable disease.

3 And he no sooner applied to Christ with this faith, but he effectually answered it; and, touching him with his hand, said, with the majesty and authority of a God, I am as ready as thy faith can be; *I will*; what thou askest is granted; I say unto thee, Be thou clean. And so powerful were his words, that the man was in that very instant cleansed of his leprosy: He spake and it was done; he said, Let it be so, and it was so.

4 Hereupon Jesus, as was customary with him, charged the man that he should not immediately divulge the miracle to any one, thereby designing to avoid all appearances of ostentation, and all unnecessary occasions of provoking the envy and rage of the *Pharisees*: But he bid him go directly and submit himself to the examination of the priest, who by divine appointment, (*Lev. xiii. 2, &c.*) was to judge of lepers and of their cleansing; and upon the priest's pronouncing him to be clean, Jesus further enjoined him to offer the sacrifice which in such cases was required by the law of *Moses*, (*Lev. xiv. 4, &c.*); And he ordered him to do all this, that it might be a legal proof to the *Jews* of the truth of the miracle, of his own divine power who had wrought it, and of his regard to *Moses's* law; and that it might be a witness against them, if after this they should reject him.

5, 6. And when Jesus returned back to *Capernaum*, where he now dwelt, (*chap. iv. 13.*) there came a centurion,

NOTE.

† It appears from *Luke vii.* that the centurion in his great humility thought himself unworthy to come to Christ; and therefore did not at first come himself, but sent others

whom he looked upon to be more worthy; and as these were his proxies, and spake the words he ordered them, some suppose that they, according to the language of the *Jews*,

into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.

9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel.

tion; that is, a captain over an hundred of the *Roman* soldiers, to intreat him on the behalf of a servant, for whom he was greatly concerned, saying, Lord, a servant of mine lies at my house dangerously sick of a palsy, in very great distress, and past relief from physicians; I humbly beseech thee to shew thy power and compassion in healing him.

7 And Jesus, designing to make this man's faith still more manifest, and thereby to reprove the obstinate infidelity of the *Jews*, immediately declared his willingness to go to his servant, and restore his health.

8 The centurion hereupon answered, saying, Lord, this is too great an honour for me, who am a *Gentile*, and a great sinner; I am utterly unworthy that thou shouldest so far condescend as to come into my house; neither is there any need that thou shouldest do this in order to the cure which I humbly beseech thee to work: I believe that thou canst heal at a distance, as well as where thou art present; and if thou wilt please only to command it, I am satisfied my servant shall be recovered from his sickness: Thy saying it, I know, will be thy doing it.

9 For such a poor creature as I, who am only a little inferior officer, can order the soldiers under me to go, and come, and do this or that, as I please; and they immediately obey me: How much more canst thou, who hast sovereign power over all distempers, command off this from my servant, wherever thou art, and whenever thou wilt.

10 When Jesus heard this answer, though he could not be surprised at it as if he had not foreseen it; for he both wrought the faith that discovered itself in so wonderful a manner, and knew what was in all men; yet he publicly expressed himself with an air of great admiration at it, to intimate that it was exceeding rare and excellent, and to make it the more taken notice of, saying to the disciples, and others that were with him, This is a noble instance of strong and humble faith indeed! truly, I have not met with any thing like it, no, not among those that I have healed of the children of *Abraham* themselves, to whom pertain the covenants and the promises, and who have had the advantage of sitting under my ministry, and seeing more effects of my power than this man was ever acquainted with.

11 And

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were reputed as the man himself, and he was said to do that, which he did by them: But it seems probable that at last, as Christ drew

nearer, the centurion himself came, and spake in this manner to him.

11 And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

11 And I assuredly tell you, that this is only a pledge of what shall be hereafter: For many of the *Gentiles* shall come from all parts of the world, at the greatest distance from each other, even from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same; and shall be admitted into the covenant made with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, to inherit the blessings of the kingdom of grace here, and to be received to a state of rest and honour, and delightful entertainment with them, in the kingdom of glory hereafter.

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

12 But, on the other hand, many of the natural seed of *Abraham*, who glory in their privileges, and are visibly in covenant with God, shall for their obstinacy and unbelief be cut off from their federal relation to him, and excluded, like out-cast *Gentiles*, from the privileges and blessings of the gospel-kingdom here; and shall be banished from the kingdom of glory hereafter, to that hideous darkness that is without †, where they must dwell who are shut out of heaven; and there they shall bitterly lament, with the utmost rage, horror and despair, to think what blessedness they have sinned away, and what miseries they have brought upon themselves.

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

13 And when he had spoken thus to them that were with him, He turned to the centurion, and said, Your petition is granted; go back to your house, and be assured that, according to your faith, I have spoken the word, and your servant is restored. And so the event proved; for at that very time it was found that he was miraculously healed.

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

14 After this, Jesus withdrew from the multitude, and went into the house where *Peter* dwelt, his wife's mother living with him; and there he saw her lying on the bed, sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose and ministered unto them.

15 And, his compassion being moved, he took her by the hand, not to feel the pulse as physicians use to do, but to raise her up, (*Mark* i. 31.) or to give the signal of his healing her: And his touch was as effectual in this case, as his word was in others; for the fever immediately went off, and her strength was entirely restored at once; so that she instantly got up, and went about the business of the family, to provide for and serve their welcome Guest, as a demonstration of the surprising miracle Christ had wrought upon her, and as a testimony of her love and gratitude to him.

16 This

N O T E.

† Some think that here is an allusion to marriage-feasts among the Jews, who used to have them at night in a room, adorned with abundance of lights; and they that were not admitted among the guests, were shut out in the dark, and deprived of all the delights of the entertainment.

† The

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick;

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by *Esaiah* the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20 And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

16 'This being on the sabbath-day, (*Mark* i. 21,--31.) as soon as the evening came on, and the sabbath † was ended, the people came to him, and brought with them abundance of sick persons, and such as were possessed with devils, that he might relieve them: And so great was his mercy toward them, and his power for their help, that barely by speaking a word, like the sovereign Lord of all, he dispossessed the evil spirits, and healed the diseases of all that came to him for cure, how bad soever their condition had been;

17 That *Isaiah's* prophecy of the Messiah, saying, (*chap.* liii. 4.) *He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows*, might be fulfilled in him, not only by his bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, (1 *Pet.* ii. 24.) and so suffering for them in our room and stead; but likewise by his sympathizing with us under our sorrows, and healing us of those diseases that were the fruit of sin, and so taking it away with all its dreadful consequences.

18 At another time, (*Mark* iv. 35.) when great multitudes were gathered together, and crowded about our Saviour, more out of curiosity, and from secular views, than any design of receiving spiritual benefit, he ordered his disciples, whom he had chosen to be apostles, to get a boat, and carry him over to the other side of the sea of *Galilee*.

19 And while they were preparing for it, a certain doctor of the law, who, according to the notions of that day about the Messiah, thought he would soon appear with great power and grandeur, to set up a temporal kingdom in the world, said unto him, Master, I am resolved to be thy disciple, and, where-ever thou goest, to go along with thee.

20 But Jesus, knowing his heart, answered him, *Alas!* your expectations of worldly advantage by following me will meet with a great disappointment: For even the foxes have their holes of retreat for rest and safety, and the birds of the air have their nests to lodge in and cherish their young; but I, who am truly a man, and appear under the character of the promised Messiah as the Son of man, (*Dan.* vii. 13.) have no settled place of abode, nor any house of my own, wherein to lodge myself, much less to entertain my followers; and tho'

20

N O T E.

† The Jews sabbath was from the evening or sun-setting of the day before, to the evening or sun-setting of that day, *Lev.* xxiii. 32. And as the *Pharisees* objected against, and they themselves scrupled carry-

ing about their sick on the sabbath-day; so as soon as the evening or sun setting had put an end to it, they brought their diseased to Christ to be healed.

at this very time I want to lie down and take my rest, being wearied with the fatigues of the day, I have no convenient place for it †.

21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father,

21 Another, who was one of his disciples at large, upon his calling him to the ministry, desired to be excused for a while, (*Luke ix. 59, 60.*) saying, Lord, only let me first go home, and take care of my father's funeral, and settle the affairs of my family, and then I will be at your service.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.

22 But how lawful and commendable soever his attending to those things might be in itself; yet as his motion about it was unseasonable, and discovered a backwardness of mind to follow Christ, and an undue hankering after earthly concerns, our Lord looked upon this delay as a denial, and said, I will admit of no excuse: Give yourself up to me and my work *now*; and leave it to them, who are dead in trespasses and sins, to bury their relations that are corporally dead, without hindering yourself in the more important affairs to which I call you. See the note on *Luke ix. 60.*

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

23 By this time the disciples had got a boat ready, and our Lord went into it, they, as usual, accompanying him.

24 And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

24 And as they were crossing the sea toward the country of the *Gadarens*, (*ver. 28.*) it is very remarkable, that, though Christ was with them, there arose on a sudden a terrible storm of wind, and the billows raged and swelled, and tossed the boat about, so that it was almost filled with water, and seemed just ready to sink: But Jesus himself was at that time asleep, for the refreshment of his weary body, and the trial of their faith.

25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

25 Then (*ver.*) his disciples, being in great surprise and terror, immediately ran to him, and waked him, crying out with a mixture of faith and fear, and with great vehemence, Lord, arise for our help; we are in the utmost danger of being cast away, and, unless thou hast mercy upon us, are all lost men, and must unavoidably perish.

26 And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then

26 And he answered them, Why are ye, who have seen so much of my power and tender care, afraid of any mischief whilst I am with you? What, do ye imagine

N O T E S.

† As our blessed Lord had been before much fatigued by his preaching, and by the crowds of people that came to him to be healed, he may be supposed to have referred in general to his mean circumstances, and in particular to his being tired, and wanting to lie down to sleep, when he spake of *having no place to lay his head*; accordingly, as soon as he went

into the ship, he lay down with his head on a pillow, and fell asleep, *ver. 24.* compared with *Mark iv. 38.*

‡ Whether his Father was aged, or dangerously sick, or already dead, is variously conjectured; and so it is uncertain for how long he desired to be excused.

Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

28 And when he was come to the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs; exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

29 And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

gine that because I was asleep, I could not save you? did this shake your trust in me? or what just reason could there be for fear, O ye doubting trembling believers? surely your faith is very low. And having thus gently reproved them, he got up and rebuked the storm, like the God of nature, who *gathers the wind in his fists, and binds the floods from overflowing*, (Prov. xxx. 4. Job xxviii. 11.); and immediately there was a perfect calm.

27 At this, they that were with him in the boat were astonished, saying, What a surprising person is this, (*ποτανος τον νεκρον*;) who in such a sovereign way, by his own authority, commands the wind and the sea, and they so suddenly and so absolutely obey the voice of his word! surely he must be more than a man; he must be likewise that God, whose property it is to *still the noise of the sea, and make the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still*, (Psal. lxx. 7. and cvii. 29.)

28 When he had passed over the sea of Galilee, and was landed in the country of the Gergesenes, which included the region of the Gadarens, (see the note on Luke viii. 26.) and was inhabited by Gentiles as well as Jews, there met him two men possessed with devils, who, for the greater terror to themselves and others, were usually made to rove about in lonely places, and in caverns of rocks and mountains, among the sepulchres of the dead †; and were so exceeding strong and furious and mischievous, by the power of the devils in them, that there was no dealing with them, and every one was afraid to go that way upon their account.

29 And as soon as they saw our Lord, the devils that possessed them, being by this time convinced of his divine power, and terrified at the thought of it, cried out with dread and horror, Jesus, we know that thou art indeed the Son of God, and that we are no match for thee; and as we have no interest in thee, we desire to have nothing to do with thee; let us alone to range at pleasure and do our will: We own indeed, that we are now like persons in chains, and are reserved to more miserable tortures, which we despair of escaping at the great day: But as at present we are prisoners at large, what means thy following us even into an heathen country? art thou come to retrench our liberty here, as well as among the Jews, and to increase our torment or to shut us up in hell before the day appointed for the final judgment? (See the note on Mark v. 6)

30, 31. And

N O T E.

† The tombs in those days were usually in desert places distant from towns; and were often made in the sides of caves and dug in the rocks and mountains.

30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine, feeding.

31 So the devils besought him saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing; and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34 And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.

30, 31. And as a great herd of swine were then grazing in a distant field; so the devils earnestly intreated, that, if he would not suffer them to keep possession of these men, he would permit them to enter into that herd; being fully assured in themselves, that they could neither stay where they were, nor go where they would, without his permission.

32 And he, for wise and holy ends, suffered them to go †; just as God had formerly done in *Job's* case, when Satan desired to afflict him, (*Job* i. 12. and ii. 6.) And upon their coming out of the men, whom they could no longer possess, they being at liberty entered of their own accord into the whole herd; and such was their surprising power in them, that the swine all immediately ran with fury down a precipice into the sea, and there were drowned.

33 Then (Jr) the keepers of the herd, being filled with terror and amazement, hastened with all speed into the city ‡, and reported the whole of what they knew about the sudden possession and destruction of all the swine by the devils, and about the leave they had obtained of Christ for it, after he had entirely dispossessed them of the two men, and restored those demoniacs to as calm and sober a use of their reason, and to as regular behaviour, as ever before.

34 And upon these amazing tidings, either curiosity, or fear and vexation, carried great multitudes out of the city to see Jesus; and their carnal hearts were so much disturbed at the loss of the swine, that as soon as they saw him, so far were they from begging his presence, grace and favour, for their spiritual benefit, or from being affected with his wonderful mercy to the miserable demoniacs, and thereupon bringing their sick to him to heal them, that they were afraid of him, and earnestly intreated him to quit their country without delay, lest they should suffer some further loss.

RECOL-

N O T E S.

† Our Lord here gave an opportunity for the most sensible proof that could be, against the *Sodœtœes*, of the existence of evil spirits; as also of their formidable power over animals as well as men, and of his own superior, absolute and uncontrollable authority over them. And if the swine were kept by the *Jews*, their destruction by the devils was a righteous rebuke upon them, perhaps for eating swine's flesh directly contrary to God's law; or at least for bordering upon the breach of that law, by putting themselves into the way of temptation to transgress it, and that in contradiction to their own constitutions after the

days of *Antiochus*, which severely forbade so much as their keeping swine. *Vid. Spencer, de Legib. Hebr. Lib. I. Cap. V. Sect. IV.* Or if they were kept by the *Gentiles*, who were worshippers of devils, it carried strong conviction to them of their folly and madness in worshipping such impure and mischievous spirits, who, had Christ permitted them, would as willingly have destroyed them as their swine. But whoever were their owners, Christ hereby put them on a trial whether they had more regard to them than him. See also the note on *Mark* v. 6.

‡ This was most probably *Gadara*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How high and how low did Christ appear in the days of his flesh, like the Son of God, and the Son of man! He behaved like the God of nature and of grace, in commanding distempers, devils, winds and waves, and giving indications thereby that he was come to save his people from spiritual as well as temporal evils. But O astonishing humiliation and self-denial for our sakes! How low and poor was he, with regard to the accommodations of this present life! and how fatigued with labour, and in want of sleep to refresh him!—All that we hear of him, will turn as a testimony for, or against us. The devils believe him to be the Son of God; what will become of them that deny him? The devils believe and tremble; what will all our faith come to, if it do not work by love? Ah self-deceiving souls, that aim at secular advantages by their following Christ, or take up with external privileges and a mere profession of religion! They shall be excluded the joys of heaven, and thrust into all the darkness and horror of hell. And ah foolish and ungrateful creatures, that form excuses to keep them off from his service, and that prefer their swine, their sordid gains and traffick, to him! How worthy is he of our faith and love, adoration and obedience! And what a prevailing interest with him has a humble faith, though we are unworthy! In all our sorrows, fears and dangers, we may hereby fly to him as able and willing to save, and shall not meet with a disappointment: He will help even *Gentile* believers in the way; will give them *Abraham's* blessing, and gloryify them with him at the end.—Who that knows his name would not trust in him? The weakest in faith has Christ for his friend, and should not be afraid; and strong believers shall receive tokens of his highest pleasure in them. Whilst he is with and for us, Satan shall have no power over us, nor shall any evil harm us; but wo to us, if he depart from us!

C H A P. IX.

Christ's healing a palsy, 1,—8. Calling Matthew, and eating with publicans and sinners, 9,—13. His defence of his disciples for not fasting, 14,—17. Curing the bloody-flux, and raising Jairus's daughter from the dead, 18,—26. Restoring two blind men to sight, 27,—31. Casting out a devil, 32,—34. And his preaching, and compassion to the people, 35,—38.

TEXT.

AND he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

PARAPHRASE.

THE *Gergesenes* having desired Christ to leave their coast, alas for them! he took them at their word, and went back again into the boat; and crossing over the sea of *Galilee*, returned to *Capernaum*, the city where he usually dwelt.

2 And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.

2 And it is worthy of notice, that even in his own city, where prophets usually have the least honour, he met with a signal instance of faith: For there was a man so enfeebled with the palsy, that he could not possibly get to him without being carried; but was brought with great difficulty through crowds of people on a bed, (*Mark ii. 4.*) And Jesus, observing the faith of the sick man, as well as of his friends that brought him, said, Son, (*Mark ii.*) be confident of my mercy, and rejoice; for

3 And behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.

4 And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier? to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee? or to say, Arise and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto man.

† As on occasion of Christ's healing diseases, a hint was given before (*chap. viii. 27.*) of pardoning grace through him, that the prophecy of *Isaiah* might be fulfilled, saying, *Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses*; so here he more openly asserted his power to forgive sins, as well as to take away their penal effects: And this is evidently to be understood of a proper for-

for I discharge thee from the guilt of thy sins †.

3 And behold how ready the *Jewish* doctors were to be offended at him. Some of them, upon hearing these words, thought in their own minds, This man, taking upon him to forgive sins, is guilty of downright blasphemy; he hereby assumes a power to himself, that belongs to God only.

4 Then (*ἐπεί*) Jesus, knowing the most secret murmurings of their hearts, expostulated with them, saying, Why do ye reason so perversely and injuriously in your own minds against me as if I were a blasphemer? These are all envious and sinful thoughts.

5 For let me propose this fair question to you: Is it not as easy to remove the cause as the effect? or to forgive sins, as to take off their punishment by my own power and authority? One of these is no more difficult than the other; and he that has authority in himself to do one, can as easily do the other.

6 But I chose to express my divine power in this manner, to lead your thoughts to the principal design of my coming into the world: And that ye may see that I, who am truly a man, and the Messiah, have indeed authority in my self, even now whilst I am on earth, to forgive sins, I will immediately take off this effect of sin in such a manner as is equally impossible to any but God. Then, turning to the man sick of the palsy, he said, with an air of absolute sovereignty, without any signs of address to God, Arise this instant; and, as a demonstration of perfect recovery, take up your bed, and carry it home.

7 And he no sooner spake, but it was done. The man immediately got up; and was so perfectly restored to his strength, and to the use of his limbs, that he took up his bed in the sight of all the multitude, and carried it away.

8 And(*ὅτι*) though the common people did not see the whole of Christ's glory therein; yet they were awfully astonished (*ἐθαύμασαν*) at what he had said and done, and could not but own the finger of God in it, and give glory to him for conferring such a wonderful authority upon any man whatsoever.

N O T E.

9 After giveneth by his own authority; for it is distinguished from his healing the palsy, and is saying more than any of the apostles ever pretended to in their miraculous cures, which they never called their forgiving of sins: And had Christ only pronounced that God had forgiven this man, the scribes could have had no pretence to accuse him of blasphemy. See the note on *Luke v. 23.*

9 After

9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

10 And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous,

9 After this, Jesus went out of *Capernaum* again; and, as he was walking near the sea of *Galilee*, he saw a man whose name was *Matthew* (the writer of this gospel) sitting at his office in the custom-house to receive the toll or tribute-money; and though he was by his station a man of ill repute, Christ prevented him with his grace, saying, Follow me: And so efficacious were these words, that he immediately quitted his employment, his gains, and his prospects of further preferment, and followed him.

10 Then this convert's bowels earning toward his sinful companions, that they might be acquainted with Jesus too, he invited them, together with him and his disciples, to an entertainment at his house, (*Luke v. 29.*) And so amazing were the condescension and grace of Christ, that when he and his disciples sat down to eat, he suffered many tax-gatherers, (who were generally men of infamous character, and of all others the most odious to the *Jews*;) and many other notorious sinners, to sit down with them.

11 When the proud, self-righteous, and superstitious *Pharisees* saw this, their eye was evil because his was good: But not daring to debate the matter with Jesus, they thought themselves a match for his disciples, and so quarrelled with them, saying, How can your master, who sets up for an extraordinary prophet, vindicate his conversing so freely with tax-gatherers, and the vilest of men? or how can he do it without being defiled?

12 But Jesus over-hearing them, took up the cause, and answered for himself and his disciples, saying, They who, like you, have an high opinion of their own righteousness, as if they were in a moral sense whole and found already, will not think a spiritual physician to be of any use to them; and there is little room for hope of doing any good with them: But they who, like these publicans, have no such vain conceit of their own excellencies, are readily brought to a conviction that they are sinners, and will prize the Physician of souls, who will find work to do among them; and it is in that quality, and not as their companion, that I converse with them: Why then should ye be offended at this, especially since ye yourselves acknowledge that they need healing?

13 But before ye pretend to cavil on this head, consider and learn the meaning of what the prophet says, (*Hos. vi. 6.*) *I desire mercy, and not* (or rather than) *sacrifice*; which intimates, that acts of compassion to others, and especially to their souls in turning them from

teous, but sinners
to repentance.

from the error of their ways, and saving them from death, are more pleasing in the sight of God even than an observation of his own positive institutions, and much more than of the superstitious constructions that men have put upon them. Apply this to the present case, and it will thoroughly justify my conduct: For the design of my coming into the world could not be to reform such persons as are already righteous; nor is success to be expected among those that think themselves to be so: But I am come to bring them to true repentance who are the greatest of sinners, and who see their sin and danger and their need of righteousness and grace.

14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

14 Then came to him some disciples of *John the Baptist*, that had been used to frequent fastings under the austerities of his discipline, and laid a great stress upon it; and they, partly from the uneasiness of their own minds, and partly from the artful management of the *Pharisees*, who wanted to sow the seeds of discord between Christ and them, asked him, Why his disciples did not keep fasts, while they and the *Pharisees* set apart so many days for that purpose? (See the note on *Mark ii. 18.*)

15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

15 Jesus replied, I am the bridegroom of the church, as your master himself testified concerning me, (*John iii. 29.*); and my disciples are the children of the bride-chamber, or the guests of the marriage-feast, who are to rejoice with me: What an absurdity then would it be for these my wedding-guests to be sad in my presence, and to go into abstemious severities on festival days? It must needs be very unseemly for them to fast, so long as I the bridegroom am with them; but in a little time I shall be taken from them, and they will be exposed to many hardships and dangers; and then they will have great occasions for mourning and fasting.

16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment: for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

16, 17. But for them to fast now, would be as improper as to make use of a piece of new strong cloth † to patch up a hole in an old rotten garment, which would be very disagreeable, and when it comes to be strained would occasion a worse rent than before: Or it would be as unfit and injurious, as to put new spirituous wine into old worn and decaying leathern bot-

tles,

N O T E.

† *Παλὸν ἄνωγον*, signifies cloth that has not been dressed or fulled; and is a fit emblem of persons that are not used or called to severities. And *ἀπὸ τοῦ παλαιοῦ ἀνὴρ αὐτὸ τοῦ νῦν* may be rendered, He takes from the gar-

ment that which filled it up; and this equally agrees to the design of the similitude, as it intimates, that when he, who put the new cloth to the old garment, sees what a patch it makes, he tears it out again.

† There

17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did his disciples.

20 (And behold, a woman which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her,

ties, which is the ready way for the bottles to burst, and the wine to be lost; but prudence would direct every one to put new wine into new and strong hottles, for the safety of both. (See the note on *Mark ii. 22.*) So religious fastings are to be proportioned to the circumstances of things, on proper seasons and occasions; otherwise they lose all their beauty and advantage, and do more harm than good: And severities of this kind would be as unsuitable to the present state of my disciples, who are now called to rejoice at the voice of the bridegroom, as the holy freedom and spiritual delights of the gospel-dispensation are to the legal spirit of the *Pharisees* and of *John's* disciples.

18 Whilst our blessed Lord was speaking these things, behold an agreeable interruption by an uncommon case! A certain ruler of the synagogue † believed in him, came and worshipped him, and poured out his request to him, saying, I left my daughter at home in her last extremities, and cannot but fear that by this time she is dead; but such is my confidence in thy power, that I verily believe, if thou wilt but please to come and lay thy hand upon her, as thou hast upon other sick people, she shall certainly live, even though it should be found that she is now quite dead.

19 And Jesus, to shew his abundant willingness to answer faith's dependencies upon him, immediately got up, left his company, and went with him; his disciples and the multitude following, to see what he would do. (*Mark v. 24.*)

20, 21. And as he was going along, he met with another remarkable instance of faith; and that was of a woman, who had been much afflicted for twelve years together with a preternatural effusion of blood, for which she could get no cure, though she had impoverished herself by trying means to obtain it. Her modesty restrained her from making any public application to Christ for relief; but so strong was her faith in him, that she verily believed, if she could but touch his cloaths, she should certainly be healed: Accordingly she came privately behind him, and touched the hem of his garment; and was immediately cured.

22 But as she could not conceal herself from Christ, whose voluntary influence had healed her, he turned him-

N O T E.

† There were, at least sometimes, several rulers of one synagogue, as in this at Capernaum, *Mark v. 22.*; in that at Antioch, *Acts xiii. 15.*; and in that at Corinth, chap. *xviii. 8, 17.*: And yet there seems to have

been but one, who was, by way of eminence, the ruler, or president of the synagogue, *Luke xiii. 14.* Dr *Lightfoot* speaks of him as different from the overseer, or minister of the congregation, Vol. I. p. 612.

her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.)

himself about, and seeing her, put a public honour upon her faith, and spoke comfortably to her, saying, Daughter, thou art welcome to a cure; be not afraid, but take courage; thou hast honoured me, and I will honour thee; I approve of thy faith, and have accepted and answered it; and therefore I, in whom thou hast believed, have perfectly healed thee, and will own thee for mine: So from that time she was thoroughly restored to health.

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

23 When Jesus had wrought this cure, he proceeded to the ruler's house; and, as soon as he went in, found the family all in confusion; the musicians were playing their doleful tunes, according to the custom of those days; and the neighbours, friends, and relations, were lamenting over the young woman, and preparing for her funeral, because she was dead.

24 He said unto them, Give place; for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

24 He seeing this, and designing to raise her to life again, said to the people, What are ye all a-doing? and why do ye grieve at this rate? Make way, that I may come to her; for this is but a short sleep; she is not so dead as to need the preparations for her funeral; ye shall presently see her wake again. But being all sure that she was dead, they perfectly derided him, and scornfully laughed at him, for what he said.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

25 Then he ordered all these scorers to be put out of the room, that they might not have the honour and the pleasure of seeing his glory, in the amazing manner of his raising the dead; and when they were gone, he went into the room, with the parents of the deceased, and some of his disciples, to be witnesses, and took the young damsel by the hand, as we use to do when we would awaken and raise up one that is only asleep; and she immediately got up in perfect health:

26 And the fame thereof went abroad into all that land.

26 And this was such an exceeding great and unquestionable miracle, it having been so very evident to many before that she was really dead, that it became a common subject of admiration and discourse in all the country round about.

27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us.

27 Now as Jesus was going away from this place, two blind men followed him, crying out unitedly and with great importunity after him, saying, O thou Son of David, thou Saviour of Israel, we beseech thee have compassion upon us in our distress.

28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus

28 And as, to avoid ostentation and envy, and to stir up their faith and importunity the more, he did not take any notice of them in the public street; so they followed him with earnest supplication to the house whither he was going: And there, for the further trial, exercise,

cise,

his faith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith, be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened, and Jesus straightly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.

31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 As they went out, behold, they brought unto him a dumb man possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out the devils through the prince of the devils.

35 And Jesus went about all the cities

and discovery of their faith, he said to them, Do ye indeed believe me to be that Saviour of *Israel*, who have power to open the eyes of the blind, and in particular to restore you to your sight? They answered, Yea, Lord, we verily believe thou art, and that thou canst give us our sight if thou please.

29 Then he, whose understanding is infinite, knowing in himself that they did indeed believe in him, touched their eyes, as the signal that he would heal them; and by his divine power touched them into light, saying, It is done according to your faith.

30 Hereupon they were immediately restored to sight; and that he might not so much as seem to aim at self-applause, nor provoke the envy of the *scribes* and *Pharisees* to take him off before the time, nor give an occasion to the people to put him upon assuming temporal dominion as a king, according to their corrupt notions of the Messiah, he laid a strict charge upon these men not to divulge his having cured them.

31 But they were so affected with the miracle which he had wrought upon them, that they could not tell how to hold their peace: And in the heat of their zeal, too little regarding his solemn injunction, they, instead of complying with it, proclaimed his honour in all the country round about.

32 As soon as they were gone, another remarkable object offered to Christ's compassion: There were some that brought to him a certain man struck dumb by the power of the devil, who had taken possession of him.

33 And Jesus casting out the devil, the dumb man immediately spoke: And the people were amazed, saying, Such great and various miracles of every kind were never seen before, even in the land of *Israel*: the things themselves, and his manner of performing them by his own power, are incomparably beyond all that was ever done by *Moses* himself, or any of the ancient prophets.

34 But the *Pharisees* were highly provoked at these miracles, and at the people's being so affected with them; and, not being able to deny them, they immediately suggested that he was a magician, and not a prophet of the Lord; and that it was not by any divine power, but by the power of the chief of devils, and by a confederacy with him, that he cast out inferior devils †.

35 And as Jesus did these wonderful works in his own city *Capernaum*; so he likewise travelled through all

N O T E.

† What Christ said now to this horrid blasphemy we are not told; but at another time we shall find he clearly refuted it to their utmost confusion, chap. xii. 25, etc.

† The

cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people.

36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them; because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few:

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

all the populous towns and obscure villages of *Galilee* round about, opening the scriptures concerning himself in all their synagogues or places of public worship wherever he came; acquainting the people yet more and more with the gospel of his grace, relating to the nature and design of his kingdom; and confirming his doctrine by miraculous cures of every kind of distempers and maladies among them; none came amiss to him; he readily, and with equal ease and authority, healed them all.

36 But as he passed on from place to place, and saw the vast crowds that daily attended his ministry, his pity was moved toward them, to think how poorly they were provided with skilful and faithful teachers, that might be capable of instructing them, and of shewing a tender concern for the good of their souls; how weary they were of the poor, insipid, useless, and burdensome doctrines of the *scribes* and *Pharisees*; and how they pined for want of spiritual food, and were misled, and exposed to danger in their eternal concerns, like lost sheep wandering about without a shepherd to guide or take care of them.

37 Thereupon he said to his disciples, Here is much work to be done, many souls to be gathered in to me; and their crowding with eager desire after good preaching, is like a large field of corn ripe for the harvest: But alas! there is a want of hands to gather it in; there are very few that are fit and willing to exert themselves like painful labourers in this service.

38 Be ye therefore earnest in your prayers to the Lord, to whom this harvest belongs †, that he would furnish out many labourers, who shall be skilled in the word of righteousness; that he would spirit them for preaching the gospel; and that, notwithstanding all discouragement and opposition from within and from without, he would incline their hearts and enable them to labour with all faithfulness and diligence in his work, and would crown it with success.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a divine Saviour is ours, who knows our secret thoughts, forgives our sins, heals our souls, and speaks them into obedience to his call; who unstops the ears of the deaf, opens the eyes of the blind, looses the tongue of the dumb, heals all manner of diseases, casts out devils, and raises the dead, with all the sovereignty, wisdom and grace, the majesty and authority of a God! Nothing is too hard, nothing too great and good, for him to do; and the greatest of sinners are not out of the reach of his mercy: He is willing to come near them, that he may instruct

NOTE.

† The Lord of the harvest may be fitly understood to mean Christ himself, who, we find in the beginning of the next chapter, sent out labourers into his harvest.

instruct and save them; and high and low, rich and poor, are alike welcome to him; none that put their trust in him, ever were, or ever shall be, rejected by him. The weakest faith shall not go without a blessing; and the stronger our faith is, the more it honours Christ, and shall be honoured by him. How merciful is his kindness to the distressed! and yet, alas! how many are there that only wonder at it; and how many that are prejudiced against it, and shall never have the pleasure of beholding his glory! But his true disciples are his witnesses; they believe and experience it, they know and embrace it. And how affectionate is his love to them! He suits their duties to their circumstances; his presence with them is their joy and their glory; and he answers for them, and takes their part, when they are not able to defend themselves. And O how tender is his pity to lost and perishing sinners! His eye is upon his sheep, while they are straying about in the wilderness; he sends his word by his servants, to find them out and bring them in, and would have us help them with our prayers. Here is a great and dear Physician for souls sick of sin; and whatever are our spiritual diseases, or our spiritual thralldom, our blindness, impotence, or captivity under the power of sin and Satan, faith in him will derive a cure for all.

C H A P. X.

Christ's commission and instructions to the twelve apostles, concerning their services and sufferings, 1,—39. And the blessedness of those that receive them, 40,—42.

TEXT.

AND when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord no sooner put his disciples upon prayer, but he shewed his readiness to answer it; and having called together twelve of them, according to the number of the tribes of *Israel* and their chiefs, he sent them out to preach the gospel: And, for the confirmation of its divine original, and of their commission to publish it, he conferred upon them authority over devils, that, by faith in his name, they might overthrow the kingdom of those impure and defiling spirits, and in a miraculous manner cast them out of possessed persons, and heal all sorts of diseases, none excepted.

2 Now the names of the twelve, whom he chose to be his apostles, or special messengers for preaching the gospel, were these, who are mentioned two by two, because they were sent out by pairs, (*Mark vi. 7.*) First, there were *Simon*, whom our Lord had named *Peter*, (*John i. 42.*) and *Andrew* his brother: The next were *James* and his brother *John*, the sons *Zebedee*, whom Jesus called *Boanerges*, that is, *Sons of thunder*, (*Mark iii. 17.*)

3 The next were *Philip of Bethsaida*, and *Bartholomew*: The next, *Thomas* surnamed *Didymus*; and *Matthew* the Publican, who was also called *Levi*, (*Luke v. 27.*) The next, † *James* the son of *Alpheus*, who was called

NOTE.

† *James* the brother of *John* was he whom *Herod* killed with the sword, (*Acts xii. 1.*) *James* the less was the writer of the epistle that bears his name; and *Judas* of the epistle of *Jude*.

the son of Alphaeus; and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddæus;

4 Simon the Canaanite; and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses;

called *James the Less*, (Mark xv. 40.); and *Lebbeus*, who was surnamed *Thaddæus*, and was also called *Judas* the brother of *James*, (Luke vi. 16.)

4 And last of all were *Simon* † the *Canaanite*, who was likewise called *Simon Zelotes*, (Luke vi. 15.); and *Judas Iscariot*, who proved the traitor, (Luke vi. 16.)

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth with authority to preach the gospel; and, at this his first Mission, gave them the following charge: Do not offend the *Jews*, or take away the privilege of their birthright, by going as yet into any *Gentile* country, nor into any *Samaritan* city, to preach the gospel among either of those sorts of people.

6 But go, and make the first overtures of mercy to the wandering and perishing sheep of the house of *Israel* in the holy land, who are a people visibly in covenant with God, and some of whom I must bring back to him.

7 And, as ye go preaching to them, say, The Messiah's kingdom, a glorious dispensation of grace and salvation through him, is just now ready to be set up, and is brought nigh to you by the gospel. Let this be the grand subject of your ministrations; enlarge upon this; and apply it in all your discourses to them.

8 And to confirm this doctrine, that they may know it to be from heaven, and to be sent with a merciful design to them, make use of my name; and, by faith therein, heal the sick, cleanse lepers, raise the dead, and cast out devils, as opportunities and occasions offer: And as ye have freely received this commission, and these powers, from me, without your own cost; so ye shall not make a gain of them, but do all these things without demanding a reward, and thereby shew that my gospel and the blessings of my kingdom are all gifts of free grace.

9 And as to what may be necessary for your subsistence in your journeyings and in your work, the hearts of some of those to whom I send you shall be inclined to supply you with it; therefore, live by faith on God's providence for daily refreshment, make no provision of gold or silver, or any other money in your † purse, to procure it.

NOTES.

† Some suppose he was called the *Canaanite*, from *Cana* of *Galilee*; but as *Cana* signifies to be zealously affected, others think that this name is of the same meaning with *Zelotes*. And as to *Iscariot*, the learned are not agreed about the reason of this name's being

given to *Judas* the traitor: But that which seems as probable as any is, that it was given him after his death, it being derived from *Iscara*, which signifies *strangling*. Vid. *Lighf. Her. Hebr.*

† *Zora* properly signifies a *girdle*; but is like-

10 Nei-

10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: (for the workman is worthy of his meat.)

11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it:

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

10 Neither trouble yourselves with a bag to carry food from place to place, nor with any other cloaths, shoes, or staves, than those that ye continually wear and use: These are sufficient for the short journey on which I now send you; and whatsoever else shall prove needful while ye are employed in spiritual work and labour for the good of souls, shall be cheerfully provided for you, as it is fit they should; for the labourer has a reasonable claim to all proper supplies.

11 And when ye go first into any city, town, or village, in which ye are strangers, inquire where ye may find persons of the greatest probity and serious religion, that may be most likely to listen to my gospel, to embrace it, and encourage you in preaching it; and take up your abode at their house, accepting what entertainment they give you; and there continue, without shifting your quarters, till ye remove from that neighbourhood to another.

12 And at your first entrance into any house, address yourselves to the family in a civil, courteous, and religious manner, like persons heartily concerned for its happiness in every respect, and especially for its spiritual welfare, saying, Peace be unto all under this roof; and beg the blessing of God upon them.

13 And if it prove to be a religious family, ready to receive you (as ye will soon see by the way of their taking your first salutation,) preach, and pray over, my gospel of peace to them, with an expectation that its blessings shall come upon them, or that I will send salvation to that house: But if they behave themselves rudely, and treat you ill, do not cast your pearl before swine, by exposing my gospel to their contempt. And as to your prayer for them, of which they render themselves so unworthy, though it may be lost to them, it shall not be so to you, but shall return with a double blessing on your own heads.

14 And if ye should meet with any house in particular, or any whole city in general, that shall obstinately refuse to entertain you as my servants, or to embrace the doctrine with which I send you: When ye go out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet against them, as a token of your abhorrence of their infidelity and hardness of heart, and of your having no more to do with them; and as an intimation that God will,

N O T E S.

likewise used for a purse, because it was customary among the ancients either to fasten their purses to the girdle, or to have them in

the hollow of the girdle itself.

¶ Meat is here put for all necessities of life.

will, in his righteous judgment, shake them off from his care and favour for wilfully opposing and rejecting the endearing methods of his grace. (See the note on Luke ix. 5.)

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city.

15 I tell you assuredly, that in the great day of account, the punishment of the people of such a city shall be still more insupportably dreadful, than that of the ancient inhabitants of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, who, tho' they were exceeding wicked, and would not hearken to, but abused, the angels that were sent to them; yet never rejected the Son of God, and his immediate messengers; nor sinned against so much light and grace, and wonderful works, and such excellent engaging and well-attested means of salvation, as these will be found to have done.

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

16 † Behold what a world ye are going into with my gospel of peace! The longer ye are employed in preaching, the more ye will find of its wickedness. I send you, like sheep, meek, harmless, and unable to defend yourselves, among men that are furious and implacable in their tempers and designs, like ravenous wolves, against you. I tell you of this before-hand for your caution: Be ye therefore like serpents for wisdom and prudence; that ye may not give any causeless provocations, nor heedlessly expose yourselves to danger; and be ye inoffensive, sincere and meek, (*αἰσχροὶ*) like doves, that ye may win upon some, and turn away the wrath of others:

17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils; and they will scourge you in their synagogues.

17 But after all, expect nothing better than persecutions from the hands of wicked men; and do not trust yourselves with them: For how prudently and inoffensively soever ye may behave; yet, through their enmity to me and my cause, they will treat you as evil-doers, will bring you into their civil courts, and prosecute you as criminals there; and such will be their furious zeal against you, that in their synagogues, or places of public worship, they will strip you naked, and lay you under the lash, to torment and expose you to open shame, as profane persons and enemies to the law.

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings

18 And besides all this, ye shall be brought before heathen magistrates, before rulers and kings, to be still more

N O T E S.

† Most of the troubles mentioned in the following verses were not to befall the apostles till after they should receive their second mission, which was into all the world, to preach the gospel to every creature; but at their first setting out in the service of Christ, he gives them a faithful hint of all the trials and sufferings they were to expect for his name's

sake, and of the supports and assistances they should have under them through the whole discharge of their office. *Vid. Misel. Ser.* vol. II. p. 6, &c.

‡ The Jews held their courts of judicature, about both civil and ecclesiastical affairs, in their synagogues. See *Lightfoot*, vol. I. p. 311.

kings for my sake,
for a testimony a-
gainst them and
the Gentiles.

more capitally punished on account of your profession of my name, and preaching my gospel: In all this ye shall be my witnesses, and your sufferings for my sake shall be a public testimony to the truth of my doctrine, and to the inexcusable guilt and just confusion both of *Jews* and *Gentiles* that reject it.

19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

19 But do not be discouraged at any of their terrors: I who send you, will stand by and own you; and when ye may be apprehended, in order to be carried before councils, rulers, and kings, do not be anxiously careful, or trouble yourselves with thoughts before-hand, how ye shall manage, or what ye shall say in your own defence; for at the very time that ye shall be arraigned before your enemies under the heaviest charges, whatever is proper for you to say in vindication of my gospel and of your own characters, shall be immediately suggested to you.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

20 For ye shall not be left unto yourselves to make the apology that may be necessary on those occasions; but the spirit of your heavenly Father, who loves and takes care of you, will inspire you with such wisdom and courage, and with such propriety and readiness of thought and expression, as none of your adversaries shall be able to gainsay; so that your pleas shall be nothing less than his spirit's speaking in and by you.

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

21 And for your further trial, ye will meet with the most unnatural and cruel persecutions for my sake from your nearest kindred; so that even brethren, parents, and children, in the heat of their mad zeal, will break through all the bonds of nature and affection to distress and destroy one another, to betray their dearest relatives into the hands of the civil power, and to accuse and witness against them with inveteracy even to death.

22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, shall be saved.

22 Yea, and the generality of mankind, the whole world that lies in wickedness, whether they be strangers, or intimate friends and acquaintance, will shew a malignant, enraged, and irreconcilable spirit against you for my sake and the gospel's: But whatever hardships, defamations, imprisonments, tortures, or deaths, any of you shall suffer on religious accounts, know for your encouragement, that whosoever shall bear them with faith, and patience, and perseverance to the end of his days, shall obtain everlasting life.

23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone

23 However, when persecution is raised against you in one town or city, if ye have opportunity, make your escape to another, where ye may more safely enjoy the liberty of your consciences, and of preaching my gospel: For I solemnly assure you, that before (*TRIAVETE*) ye shall

gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

shall have finished your journey and testimony through all the towns and cities of *Israel*, the kingdom of the Messiah shall appear in great glory; first in the plentiful effusion of his Spirit for the propagation of the gospel, and afterwards in the destruction of the *Jewish* nation for their infidelity.

23 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

24 And though ye shall meet with all manner of tribulations for my name's sake, do not wonder or stumble at them; for they are no more than I myself, who am your Lord and Master, do and shall undergo before you: And surely the disciple should not expect to fare better than his master, or the servant than his lord, considering how much better and superior he is every way to them, and that all he suffers is really for their sakes.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

25 It is sufficient, and as much as with justice or modesty can be desired, that the disciple be not worse used than his master, or the servant than his lord: Since therefore mine enemies have not stuck to reproach me, the holy One of *Israel*, and the Lord over mine own house, with the odious and blasphemous title of the chief of devils; and since they treat me, as if I were the most wicked and detestable of all wretches, that ought to be persecuted even to the death; how much more is it to be expected, that they should stigmatize you with the worst reproaches they can think of, because ye belong to me; especially considering that ye are indeed but poor, little, contemptible creatures, and are incident to many imprudences and sinful infirmities that may give them an advantage against you?

26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

26 Since therefore it is so reasonable to expect that ye, as my disciples and servants, should be partakers of my sufferings; and since all will end so well, when ye shall come to be partakers of my glory, do not be terrified by your adversaries, or discouraged in your way and work: For the doctrine which ye profess and preach, and your integrity therein, shall be openly manifested, to my own and your honour, in the progress and success of my gospel here, and more especially in the great revealing day, which will set every thing in a true light, hereafter.

27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops.

27 With this expectation and hope, be faithful to your trust; and whatsoever I say unto you in private, between ourselves, in order to its being communicated to others, that do ye preach publicly, and with plainness of speech; and whatsoever ye learn from me, as from a friend who freely imparts his most important

secrets, or as from † your master whispering into the ears of his disciples what he would have them speak aloud, that do ye proclaim abroad in the most open manner.

18 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

28 And let not any thing, that the worst and most powerful of men can do against you, terrify or disturb your minds, slacken your holy resolution and zeal, or ensnare you into cowardice and sin: For the utmost that their rage and malice can reach to, is only to take away the life of the body, which would quickly die of itself; but they cannot hurt, much less destroy, the life of the soul, which is of a different nature from the body, and does not perish with it. Though they may deprive the body for a season of all vital influence from the soul, they cannot deprive the soul itself of its vital powers, or put an end to its sensation, thought, and action, which are the life that naturally belongs to it: And though they may separate the soul from the body, they cannot separate it from the enjoyment of God and blessedness, which is properly the perfection and glory of its life; nor can they hinder the body's reviving in a better state at the resurrection of the just. But it is, above all things else, your duty and interest to have an holy awe of God, and to be afraid of offending him, and provoking his wrath, who, if he should prove your enemy for your unfaithfulness, time-serving, and disobedience, is able to plunge both soul and body into everlasting destruction in hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

29 And even as to the concerns of the body and its present life, the worst of your enemies can go no further than God sees fit to suffer them; for his providence interests itself in, and over-rules, all affairs relating to this world, as well as the next: Ye know the sparrows are such little, inconsiderable birds, that two of them are valued at no more among you than the small price of ‖ a farthing; and yet not one of them falls to the ground, by a natural or violent death, without the providential permission and disposal of God your Father, whose kingdom ruleth over all.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

30 But ye may be sure, that his special Providence is still more watchful and tender over you, as his dear children, and his servants employed in the most important work; even the smallest circumstances relating to you

N O T E S.

† Two customs among the Jews seem to be alluded to in this verse. Their doctors used to whisper into the ear of a disciple what he was to pronounce aloud to others; and as their houses were low and flat-roofed, and

had battlements on the tops, they sometimes preached to the people from thence.

‖ The Jewish farthing, like ours, was a very small piece of money; but its exact value is not certainly known.

you are taken cognizance of by him; he so accurately surveys and observes them, as to take an account of every hair of your heads, none of which can fall without his missing it; and not one of them can perish, or any the least imaginable mischief come upon you, without his knowledge and will.

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

31 Be not therefore afraid of what men, who are all under the government of God, can do unto you: For ye are incomparably of greater worth, in your heavenly Father's esteem, than a multitude of sparrows; and therefore may depend upon his protection and safeguard in the way of duty, as long as he sees best for you, or as he has any work to do by you.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

32 This then is the true state of your case for time and eternity: And whosoever, in the face of all opposition and danger from men, shall publicly honour me, by professing his faith in me, and owning my gospel and my ways, him will I publicly honour, by owning him with all demonstrations of my love, in recitals of his faith and faithfulness in the presence of my heavenly Father, and of the whole world of angels and men, to his eternal joy.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever, out of fear or shame, shall disclaim, renounce, or act inconsistently with his profession of my name, in the presence of men, him will I likewise publicly disown, and abandon with abhorrence, as none of mine, in the presence of my Father and of all the world, to his everlasting confusion.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.

34 Do not imagine that the design of my coming is to spread outward prosperity and peace here below, according to the present Jewish expectations from the Messiah: No, my direct views are spiritual and heavenly: And though, as far as my gospel is embraced, it will promote the best of peace within, and will dispose my disciples to behave in a peaceable friendly manner toward one another, and toward all men; yet, through the corruption of nature among enemies to its purity and power, it will prove an occasion of severe opposition and tribulation to my disciples on the earth.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

35, 36. For the occasional event of my coming into the world will be fierce contentions about me, and my holy truths and ways, amongst the nearest earthly friends and relations: So that sons and fathers, daughters and mothers, daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law, will be at the utmost variance with each other; and even the children and servants of a man's own family, who depend upon him, and are provided for

36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

and

of his own household.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.

40 He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive

and supported by him, will turn the bitterest enemies against him.

37 This will be indeed a cutting trial: But when things come to such a crisis, that a man must either break with his nearest and dearest friends and relations after the flesh, or break with me; he that prefers the favour and friendship of his father, mother, son, or daughter, to me, and will not part with temporal endearments for his religion and conscience, cannot be accounted, nor is worthy to be owned, as one of my real disciples; nor shall he be the partaker of the spiritual and eternal blessings that belong to such.

38 And whoever he be, that cannot submit to the sufferings of persecution, even to death itself, and bear them patiently, like one that carries his own cross for my sake, when he is called to it, that he may follow my example, doctrines, and institutions; he really prefers his own ease and safety in this world, to his interest in me; and cannot be justly deemed, nor shall be owned, as a true disciple, that heartily loves me, and that shall be glorified with me.

39 The whole matter therefore is reduced to this single point. He who, through the fear of man, preserves his life at the expence of his religion, conscience, and regards to me, shall lose the true ends and the best comforts of life, shall sometimes be cut off from the land of the living, ere he is aware, by some other means here, and shall certainly fall short of eternal life hereafter: But he who stedfastly adheres to me, though it should cost him his temporal comforts, or even life itself in this world, shall certainly obtain the true ends of living, and everlasting life of all blessedness in soul and body in the world to come.

40 Go forth then in my name, and upon my errand, without fear of your enemies. And for your further comfort and honour, as well as for the encouragement of all that shall believe in me through your word, I tell you, that he who entertains and shews kindness to you, and receives the gospel ye preach, shall be esteemed as shewing kindness to me, and as receiving me; and he who thus receiveth me, shall be esteemed as receiving my Father himself, by whose commission I am come under the character of a Saviour: All shall be taken as done to him and myself; and we will regard it accordingly.

41 He who by faith receives the gospel, and entertains and shews an affectionate kindness to one of my prophets or ministers merely as such, without any world-

ceive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.

ly, personal, private, or party considerations to move him to it, shall have an abundant blessing through his ministry and prayers, and shall receive a proportionable share with him in his reward of grace: And he who loves and entertains a good and holy man, merely on account of his religious character, shall be blessed in answer to his prayers, and shall bear a part with him in his eternal reward.

42. And whoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, He shall in no wise lose his reward.

42. And whoever he be that, in like manner, from a principle of faith and love, shall give the least needful assistance or refreshment, though it be but a cup of cold water, to one of the weakest and meanest of my disciples, merely because he believes in me, and bears my image, I solemnly assure you, his work of labour and love shall by no means be lost; but in God's way and time he shall receive a rich and gracious reward.

RECollections.

How gloriously confirmed is the gospel of Christ by the various signs and wonders that were wrought by those who first preached it! This gospel is to be published to all, and it shall not be in vain; but by the blessing of Christ be savingly received by some. What an encouragement is this to those that preach, and those that hear it! And how careful should we be to give it due entertainment! If we reject it, it is to our own more terrible perdition, than the worst of heathens will suffer, that never heard it; but if we embrace it, it is to our own salvation and eternal glory. Though the ministers of this gospel are not to seek great things in this world for, or by, their ministrations; yet their great Lord and Master has made it the duty, and will incline the hearts, of his people to provide for them: And as it is their exceeding joy to be owned and honoured by him, and made his instruments of gathering in lost sheep; so the least Christian affection or kindness shewn to any of his faithful servants or disciples, because they are such, shall be graciously accepted; and he will own it, as if it were done personally to himself. Ah, what are the dearest friends and comforts of life, if put in the least competition with Christ! And why should any reproaches or troubles we may meet with for his sake, be a discouragement to us; since he has undergone them before us, will take care of us in the way, and publicly own and recommend us to his Father at the end! Needlessly to expose ourselves to sufferings, on Christ's account, is indeed unwarrantable and imprudent; but to neglect any known duty, or commit any known sin, to avoid them, is apostacy; it is fearing men, who cannot kill our immortal spirits together with our mortal bodies, nor affect our truest interests; it is fearing them more than the great God, who will dreadfully resent it, and can destroy both soul and body for ever in hell. But, whatever we are called to lose or suffer for Christ and his cause, we shall never lose by him, while with faith and patience, with meekness and holy courage, we commit ourselves to him that judgeth righteously and has all our affairs under his eye and government: For he that endures to the end, shall be saved.

C H A P. XL

Christ's discourse with John the Baptist's messengers, 1,—6. His testimony to him, 7,—15. His reproofs for rejecting both John and himself, 16,—24. His thanksgiving for the revelation of the gospel to him, and his invitation of sinners to himself, 25,—30.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and preach in their cities.

2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.

7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness,

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had finished his charge to the twelve apostles, and sent them out with his commission to preach the gospel at different places, he went into other parts, in order to his personally instructing the people, and confirming his doctrine with miracles, in several of their cities, where he met with many hearers.

2 Now when John, whom Herod had cast into prison, received an account of the many wonderful works that Jesus wrought, he ordered two of his disciples to go to him, more for their satisfaction than his own; though the long confinement that he himself was in, and the low figure Christ made in the world among men of learning and note, were great trials of his own faith about him.

3 And they came to ask him, Whether he were (*ἐρχομαι*) the promised and expected Messiah that was to come for the redemption of Israel? or whether they were to look for any other to appear in that character besides him?

4 In answer to this, Jesus, working several miracles in their presence, (*Luke vii. 21.*) ordered them to go back again, and tell John what they had heard with their own ears, and seen with their own eyes, to prove that he was indeed the Christ, according to ancient prophecies concerning the nature of the miracles he was to work, and the sort of people he was to find most success amongst. (*Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. and lxi. 1.*)

5 Tell him, says he, particularly from me, that by the effectual working of my power, the blind receive their sight, cripples walk like other men, leprous persons are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the poor of this world, and the poor in spirit, whom the scribes and Pharisees despise, (*οὐκ ἠγαποῦνται*) are evangelized; they have the glad tidings of salvation preached to them, receive the gospel, and are wrought upon thereby.

6 And he, and he alone, is truly blessed, who, on the foot of such evidence as this, is so well satisfied about my person and office, that no prejudices against me, on any account whatsoever, (*οὐκ ἐκλείπει*) shall so dishearten him, as to make him stumble and fall, or reject and disown me.

7 And when John's disciples were gone back with this answer, (see the note on *Luke vii. 24.*) Jesus took that opportunity to expostulate with the people, and to give an honourable testimony concerning him, saying, When John preached in the wilderness, and great multitudes

derneſt to ſee? A
reed ſhaken with
the wind?

titudes of you ran to his miniſtry and baptiſm, what did you go thither for? or what did ye expect to meet with there? Did ye crowd at ſuch a rate to hear a man as wavering in his doctrine as a reed that is toſſed to and fro with every wind? He was no ſuch giddy perſon; but ſteadily perſiſted in one and the ſame teſtimony concerning me. Or were ye like children, that will run abroad merely to ſee the ſhaking of a reed? Surely ye muſt have had ſome higher deſign than this.

8 But what
went ye out for to
ſee? A man clo-
thed in ſoft rai-
ment? Behold,
they that wear
ſoft clothing, are
in kings houſes.

8 But what was the deſign? or what did ye look for? Did ye expect to ſee ſome fine and gay perſon, arrayed with pompous and rich apparel, made of the moſt ſoft and delicate materials, to gratify your curioſity; or ſome flattering courtier to ſoothe you up with fair ſpeeches? There was no room for you to think of finding ſuch an one preaching in the wilderneſs; for people of thoſe appearances and characters are rather to be expected at the palaces of kings.

9 But what
went ye out for to
ſee? A prophet?
yea, I ſay unto
you, and more
than a prophet.

9 But what was it then that carried you in ſuch throngs to the deſert? Was it the hope of ſeeing a prophet ſent from God, and of hearing what he had to ſay to you? This is what ye certainly thought of: And I tell you it was indeed a prophet that ye ſaw and heard, and one greater than all the prophets that were before him; for he ſpoke of me as juſt ready to appear among you: Yea, he was more than a prophet, who only tells things to come; for he pointed me out unto you, as the Meſſiah already come; and called you to believe in me, and receive the goſpel, which I now preach to you.

10 For this is
he of whom it is
written, Behold,
I ſend my meſ-
ſenger before thy
face, which ſhall
prepare thy way
before thee.

10 For he was that very perſon of whom God ſpoke as my forerunner, in the prophet *Malachi*, (chap. iii. 1.) ſaying, *Behold I ſend my meſſenger, whoſe ſpecial office it is, like a harbinge, to go juſt before thee; and who, by his miniſtry and baptiſm, ſhall † give notice of thy coming, and call the people to believe in thee.*

11 Verily I ſay
unto you, Among
them that are born
of women, there
hath not riſen a
greater than John
the Baptiſt; not-
withſtanding, he
that is leaſt in
the kingdom of
heaven, is great-
er than he.

11 I ſolemnly aſſure you, that of all the children of men before, there never appeared any prophet ſuperior, no, nor equal to *John the Baptiſt*, with reſpect to the clear diſcoveries God made of the Meſſiah to him, and his direct preaching and pointing him out to others: And yet the meanest goſpel-miniſter in my kingdom, which, as he told you, I am come to ſet up in the world, ſhall

N O T E.

† In *Malachi*, God the Father, ſpeaking to the church concerning Chriſt's forerunner, ſays, *He ſhall prepare the way before me, or before my face*: But here it is quoted in the form of his ſpeaking to Chriſt; and ſo it is my meſſenger before thy face, who ſhall

prepare thy way before thee: Which makes the ſame way to be called Chriſt's way here, and God's way there; and ſhews that he is one God with the Father. See *Peack on Mal. iii. 1.*

shall excel *John* himself; his office is still more honourable, and he shall have still brighter discoveries of me, and shall be able to preach more of my obedience and sufferings, grace and glory, and of the spiritual nature and design of my kingdom, than *John*: Yea, the least true believer in the gospel-church shall have further light into these things, than he.

11 And from the days of *John* the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

12 *John the Baptist* alarmed the people with representations of their guilt and danger, and told them of my appearing to take away their sins, (*John* i. 29.); and from the beginning of his ministry onward to this day, there have been mighty stirrings among them: Great multitudes are crowding to hear the gospel, and many of them are seeking after salvation with as much earnestness and vehemence as if they were storming a town; yea, publicans, and the worst of sinners, whom the *scribes* and *Pharisees* look upon as intruders that have no right to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, even these are pressing with eager desire after its holy and gracious doctrines, and take its blessings, as it were by force, away from those that despise and envy them.

13 For all the prophets, and the law, prophesied until *John*.

13 For all the prophets, and the ceremonial law, represented my coming, and the blessings of my kingdom, as future and distant things, till *John* arose, who spake of them as already introduced, and as just coming on in all their glory; and so they are now regarded and treated like things present, which use to make the strongest impression.

14 And if ye will receive it, this is *Elias* which was for to come.

14 And if ye can bear to hear the truth, and find in your hearts to believe it, I tell you plainly, that this *John* is the very person prophesied of, as the Messiah's forerunner, under the character of *Elias*; in as much as he came in the spirit and power of that famous prophet, to prepare the way for my appearing immediately after him.

15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

15 Whoever is capable of hearing, and desirous of being instructed, let him seriously consider the truth and importance of what I say.

16 But wherunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned

16, 17. But as to the generality of people, and especially the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, in this perverse and cavilling age, what parable can be thought of that shall set them out as they deserve? They are so captious and untractable, as to be just like a parcel of morose and sullen children, whom their companions would get to play with them in the market or other public places; but whatever they do to please and engage them, whether it be by mimicking a wedding, or the like, with music and dancing, or a funeral with mournful songs
and

ed unto you, and ye have not lamented.

and other signs of sorrow, they are so ill-natured and obstinate as not to be prevailed upon to join with them: Even so the people of this day will not be engaged by any manner of address that is made to them; but set themselves against both my forerunner and me, as if we were to be no more regarded than children that only act a part.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking; and they say, He hath a devil.

18 For *John the Baptist* came to preach to them, and recommend his doctrine of humiliation and repentance, by a severe, solitary, and abstemious life, with fasting and self-denial; and they, instead of mourning with him for their sins, perversely said of him, He is an unsociable melancholy man, possessed of the devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

19 On the other hand, I, the Messiah, am come to preach to them glad tidings of great joy, and recommend my doctrine by a free and friendly way of conversation, using the innocent refreshments of nature, treating all sorts of persons with affability, and condescending to converse with the worst of sinners for their spiritual good; and immediately they as perversely cry out, See what a glutton and tippler this is, a boon companion for the vilest and most luxurious men! But after all that malice and envy can suggest, the wisdom of God in the doctrines we preach, together with the wisdom of both these methods of publishing and recommending it, and the wisdom of receiving it; yea, and the Messiah himself, *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*; are fully approved of, witnessed to, and vindicated in the thoughts of them who know me and the grace of God in truth, and even by the greatest of sinners, who, being brought to believe in me, are made wise to salvation, and receive power to become the sons of God. (See the note on *Luke vii. 35.*)

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.

20 On this occasion, Jesus entered upon a discourse, wherein he sharply reprovcd and threatened the people of those cities for their wilful obstinacy and perverseness, among whom he had wrought the greatest number of signal miracles to confirm his mission and doctrine, because they still persisted in their impenitence and hardness of heart.

21 Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done

21 And particularly he denounced the wrath of God against some cities by name, for their infidelity, saying, Wo to you, the inhabitants of *† Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*! for if the same miracles, and other means of conviction, which ye have enjoyed, had been bestowed even on that wicked

N O T E.

† *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida* were towns or cities in *Galilee*, not far from *Capernaum*. And what Christ says about other people repenting sooner than these, seems to be spoken by him as a man, upon the judgment of high probability, according to the appearances of things.

done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

wicked people of Tyre and Sidon, against whom dreadful destruction was denounced by the prophets, (*Isa. xxiii. and Ezek. xxvi. and xxvii. and xxviii.*) there is ground to believe that they, like the *Ninevites*, would, in much less time than has been afforded to you, have turned from their evil ways, and in token of their repentance have covered themselves with sackcloth and ashes, to prevent the ruin that came upon them.

11 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

22 But, as ye have sinned against greater light and mercies, and greater means of conviction, than they; I assure you the punishment of the profligate heathens of Tyre and Sidon shall not be so heavy and severe as yours, in the day of God's righteous judgment.

13 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

23 And as for thee, O Capernaum, who art a great and flourishing city, and hast been honoured with my chief residence, preaching, and miracles; and so hast been carried up, as it were, in outward privileges, to the very gates of heaven; Thou, for thy horrible abuse of them, shalt be stripped of all; thou shalt be brought to utter desolation, and thy people shall be thrown down to the lowest hell: For if the wonderful things that your inhabitants have been favoured with, had been done among the *Sodomites* themselves, there is the greatest moral reason to apprehend, that, vile as they were, they might have been brought to such a reformation and repentance as would have prevented their destruction by immediate vengeance from heaven, and that their city might have continued to this very day.

14 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

24 But, as the aggravations of your iniquities are so much greater than theirs, because ye have obstinately sinned against more evident, endearing, and repeated means of light and grace; I assure you the punishment, even of the people of Sodom itself, shall not be so great in the final judgment as yours.

15 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

25 As soon as Jesus had spoke these awful things against the people of those cities, he, with relation thereunto, comforted himself with the thoughts that there were nevertheless some who were acquainted with the gospel to their own salvation; and said, I thank thee, O my Father, who art the sovereign proprietor and disposer of all blessings in heaven and earth, that while thou hast not been pleased to discover the good things of the gospel, so as to render them effectual, to men of character for learning and worldly policy, it has pleased thee to make them savingly known to others of low figure for natural parts, sagacity, and human accomplishments.

16 Even so, Father;

26 Even in this manner, O Father, thou dispensest

Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight,

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

the riches of thy mercy, and I heartily approve of and acquiesce in it; for so thy wise and holy pleasure sees best to order it, that thou mayest appear like a sovereign in bestowing thy free favours, and mayest the more evidently secure to thyself the entire glory of them all.

27 According to this design of grace, our Lord further added, All persons and things, relating to salvation, are committed by my Father to me, as Mediator, that they may be under my uncontrollable management and dispose; and we thoroughly understand one another, like persons that have a mutual consciousness of each other's designs. None knows who or what the Son is, and what is the trust committed to him, but the Father; neither does any one know who or what the Father is, and what are his counsels and will relating to this trust, but the Son, and they to whom he by his word and spirit shall discover them.

28 Then turning to the people, he said, Whosoever therefore among you is weary of sin, and ready to sink under an affecting sense of its guilt and power, or is weary of the burdensome rites and ceremonies of the law, and impositions of the *scribes and Pharisees*; and whosoever of you is tired with vainly seeking after pardon and acceptance with God, and peace to your own souls, by the works of the law; † come by faith to me for all salvation, depending entirely on me for every spiritual blessing that ye need, and I will give you effectual relief.

29 Submit cheerfully to that yoke of obedience, which I, to set you an example, as well as to answer still higher ends, have taken upon myself; and yield yourselves up to me, as my disciples; to be taught and governed by me; for I am gracious, gentle, and condescending; and under my instruction and influence ye shall find refreshment and satisfaction to your souls.

30 For my service is perfect freedom, and my commands are not grievous; but all my ways are ways of pleasantness; and all my paths peace; and I will lay no more burdens upon my disciples than they shall be enabled to bear.

RECOL-

N O T E.

† This coming to Christ, must needs signify more than a bare corporal or local coming to hear him preach; for thus the persons he spoke to were already come to him, and innumerable multitudes came in that manner without any saving advantage to themselves: But our Lord speaks of such coming, as should certainly issue in a spiritual rest, which he would give, and they should find to their souls, (ver. 29.) Accordingly, to explain his

meaning in this phrase, he at other times used it as exactly of the same import with *believing in him*, promiscuously putting one for the other, again and again, *John vi. 35, 36, 37, 40, 44, 45, 47, 64, 65, and vii. 37, 38, 39.* And after he was gone to heaven, the apostles used these phrases of coming to him, and believing on him, as equivalent terms, *1 Pet. ii. 2, 4, 6, 7.*

RECOLLECTIONS.

Christ will honour them that honour him; but they that lightly esteem him shall be despised. A humble, though doubting faith, shall be satisfied; but wilful obstinacy shall be confounded. How dreadful and dangerous is it to sin against gospel-light and grace, to reject all means of conviction, to stumble at Christ, to be prejudiced against him, and to cast reproaches upon him and his servants! He will pour righteous contempt upon such sinners; he will one day call them to a strict account for all their impenitence, and abuses of the means of grace; and heavier vengeance shall fall on them, than on the most notorious sinners that never heard of the gospel. But how happy and encouraging is it, to see souls pressing in good earnest after Christ and salvation! How sovereign and distinguishing is the grace that gives such a happy turn to their minds and hearts, whilst others are left to perish in the way of their own chusing! How does our blessed Lord rejoice over them! What fullness of power has he in his hands to save them! And how kind and compassionate is he to such of them as are weary, wounded, and troubled in spirit! How tenderly does he invite them to himself! how sweetly encourage their faith in him! how fully assure them of all salvation in their coming to him! and how pleasant will he make his service, and how easy his cross, unto them, till they shall receive the crown of glory, that fades not away!

C H A P. XII.

Christ vindicates his disciples plucking and eating corn, and his own healing a withered hand, on the sabbath-day, 1,—21. His healing a possessed man that was dumb and blind, and answering the blasphemous cavils of the scribes and Pharisees against it, 22,—37. His reply to their demand of a sign from heaven, 38,—45. And his great affection to his disciples, 46,—50.

TEXT.

AT that time Jesus went on the sabbath-day, through the corn; and his disciples were an-hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath-day.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was an-hungred, and they that were with him;

PARAPHRASE.

ON a certain sabbath about this time, (Luke vi. 1. see the note there,) Jesus was passing to or from some synagogue, with his disciples, through a corn-field; and they being hungry, took the liberty which the law allowed them, (Deut. xxiii. 25.) to pluck some of the ears; and rubbing out the corn with their hands, began to eat it.

2 But as soon as the malicious cavilling Pharisees observed this, they were offended at it, not as an act of any injustice, but as a violation of the sabbath according to their traditions; and they said to Jesus, See what a sinful liberty your disciples take in breaking the sabbath, and you suffer them to do it without reproof.

3, 4. But he answered them, What room is there for objecting against this as a violation of the sabbath, since the law of nature requires that hunger be satisfied; and there are instances on record, which shew, that ritual circumstances, and much more your strained interpretations of them, are not to interfere with necessary

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shew-bread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?

works? Have ye never read the account of what *David* and his company did, when they were hungry? (1 Sam. xxi. 6.) Do not ye know that he went to the priest in the tabernacle, (see the note on *Mark* ii. 26.) and took of the consecrated shew-bread, which was most holy to *Aaron* and his sons? (Lev. xxiv. 9.) And though in ordinary cases, and without necessity, it was not lawful for any but the priests to eat of that hallowed bread; yet *David*, and they that were with him, eat of it to refresh themselves, and were not to blame; nor have ye ever condemned them for it. Why then do ye find fault with my disciples for doing so small a thing, as plucking and eating a few ears of corn, to satisfy their hunger, on the sabbath-day?

5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath-days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

5 Or have ye not read what the law of *Moses* itself enjoins, with respect to some servile works on the sabbath-days, as particularly that then the priests are very busy in killing, slaying, and doing all things requisite about the sacrifices in the temple, which, by your way of arguing, is profaning the sabbath, and in other cases would be so? and yet they were not chargeable with any fault; nor do ye pretend to blame them for it.

6 But I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the temple.

6 Now (s) if their being employed in temple-service justified those servile labours on the sabbath-days; my disciples attendance on me and my service, will much more justify them in this lesser labour, which is necessary to their support. And I tell you, that I, whose work they are hereby the more capable of performing on this sabbath, am much greater in dignity and holiness than the temple, as all the fulness of the Godhead and the sanctifying Spirit without measure dwell in me.

7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

7 But furthermore, as to the first of these instances; if the law of charity vindicated *David* and his followers, so it does my disciples: And had ye but truly understood and considered the meaning of what God says (*Hos.* vi. 6.) about his preferring acts of mercy to ceremonial observances when they interfere with one another; ye would not have been so ready to reproach and censure my disciples, as guilty of any crime by satisfying their hunger in this way, rather than strictly observing your ceremonies and rigorous traditions about the sabbath beyond what God himself has commanded.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath-day.

8 And as to the other instance of the priests servile labour; if the command of God, who has a right to order what works he pleases to be done on the sabbath, acquitted them from the charge of breaking it; so my disciples plucking and eating a little corn in my presence, and by my allowance, is a sufficient vindication

of them: For the Messiah has a divine right, as Lord of the sabbath, to order what he judges most proper to be done, in subservience to his honour, and to his disciples good, relating to the sabbath-day †.

9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue.

9 Christ having thus confuted the *Pharisees*, went his way; and on another sabbath, (*Luke vi. 6.*) he, according to his custom, repaired to one of their synagogues.

10 And behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-days? that they might accuse him.

10 And observe, a remarkable occasion offered for his further asserting, and confirming by a miracle, the doctrine he had taught in the fields concerning the sabbath. There was a man in the synagogue whose right hand was withered, shrunk, and dried up, so that it was entirely useless: And as he was a poor miserable object †, the *Pharisees* suspected that Christ would cure him; and therefore asked him, Whether he thought it lawful to heal any one on a sabbath-day? that if he should say it was, they might accuse him of breaking the sabbath, and pretend that he deserved to die for it; or if he should be silent, or should say it was not lawful, they might accuse him of inconsistency, because of what he had said in the fields.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

11 But (*st.*) Jesus, knowing their design, said unto them, Suppose any of you had but one sheep, and it should fall into a pit, or into any other danger of suffering great mischief, or of losing its life for want of help; which of you would not do what ye could to get it out, though it were on the sabbath-day?

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath-days.

12 Of how much more value then is a man, and his use of a hand that is necessary to his livelihood and comfort, than a mere animal? If therefore it is lawful to shew mercy to a sheep, it must certainly be an act of much greater charity to relieve a poor helpless man; and it cannot but be warrantable to do such an act of goodness and compassion on the sabbath-day.

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand; and he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

13 Thereupon he, with sovereign authority, commanded the man to stretch out his hand; and such healing power went forth with the word, that its strength and vigour were immediately restored, so that it was as perfectly sound and well as the other.

F 2

14 Tho

N O T E S.

† Christ is that Lord of the sabbath, who instituted it at first in the state of innocence, and renewed the institution at mount Sinai; and therefore must have an original right in himself to make what circumstantial alterations he pleases about it: And as, agreeable to the nature and design of the gospel-dispensation, he has only changed it from the seventh to the first day of the week, and has only allowed of works of necessity and mercy, and such as relate to religious services,

to be done on the sabbath-day, all other obligations of a sabbath remain in force; and if he did not design the continuance of a sabbath under the gospel-state, it can hardly be supposed that he would have taken so much care to explain and settle the law concerning it, as he does here, and in the following verses, and at other times.

‡ He probably used to get his bread by the labour of his hands. See the note on *Luke vi. 9.*

14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence; and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all.

16 And charged them that they should not make him known:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by *Isaiah* the prophet, saying,

18 Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

14 Though this was so evident and merciful a miracle, and done without any labour, by only speaking a word; yet the *Pharisees* were so enraged at Christ for it, that they consulted together how they might proceed against him to take away his life.

15 But Jesus, knowing their malicious contrivances, and that it was not yet time for him to suffer himself to fall into their hands, retired from them; and great multitudes, understanding whither he was gone, went after him, and he healed as many of them as were sick of any diseases.

16 And that he might not still further unseasonably provoke the rage and envy of the *Pharisees*, but might go on peaceably with his work, he commanded the people not to tell his enemies of these miracles, nor to acquaint them where he was.

17 And this he did, that the prophecy of *Isaiah* might be fulfilled, where God the Father says to the church, (*Isa.* xlii. 1.)

18 Observe my servant the Messiah, whom I have chosen to that office as the only fit person for it, my beloved Son, in whom, and in whose work, I am highly delighted: I will anoint him with my Spirit above measure; and he shall preach the gospel, to the reformation of the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, first in his own personal ministry, and afterwards still more abundantly in that of his apostles.

19 In his management of this work, his kingdom shall not come with observation: He shall not behave in a pompous or noisy manner, or with contention and tumult, like one that is clamorous or loves to make a bustle in the world; but with gentleness and meekness, condescension, tenderness, and compassion.

20 Such as are weak in grace, and wounded in spirit, like a bruised reed, he will not crush, but strengthen and bind up; and where there is but little light, life, and fervour, and this attended with sad remainders of offensive infirmities, and just ready to expire, like the smoking wick of a candle, he will not extinguish, but cherish and kindle it into a sacred flame, till the least beginnings of his renewing work of grace in the soul shall overcome all defects and dangers, and be perfect in glory. And the like will he do by the smallest beginnings of his work in the world, till by means of the gospel, in the hand of the Spirit, it shall prevail against all opposition:

21 And when his name comes to be made known, by the ministry of the word, among the *Gentiles*; even they

they shall be brought to believe in him, and depend upon him for salvation.

21 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and he healed him, inasmuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

22 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?

23 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

24 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to dissolution; and every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand;

25 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself: how shall then his kingdom stand!

26 And if I by Beelzebub cast out

21 After this, (he being in a house, chap. xiii. 1.) a certain person, who was under the power and possession of the devil, and thereby deprived of his sight and speech, was brought to Jesus to have compassion upon him; and he instantly delivered him from this possession and its dismal effects; so that he, who had been blind and dumb, recovered the use both of his eyes and tongue.

22 And the miraculous power, by which our blessed Lord did this, was so manifest and extraordinary, that all the people were exceedingly astonished at it, and said, Certainly this is the promised Messiah that was to descend from David. Who can think otherwise of him?

23 But when the Pharisees, his inveterate enemies, heard how the people were affected at the miracle; and how confidently they expressed their faith in him, as the Messiah, on that account; they were enraged in their own minds, and blasphemously said, Though we cannot deny but that ~~ver~~ this sorry fellow casts out devils; yet he certainly does it not by any divine power, but by a confederacy with Beelzebub their chief, who, to delude the people, concurs with him, and commands the lesser devils to retire at his word.

24 But Jesus knowing the maliciousness of their hearts in suggesting this, expostulated with them, saying, How perverse and inconsistent is your way of reasoning! Your argument destroys itself; for in all societies, whether kingdoms, cities, or families, the chiefs that set themselves against the common interest of the community, and the inferiors that act under them, directly opposite to the known strength and advantage of the whole, do in effect divide the body against itself, and must in course unavoidably bring it to utter ruin. It can never subsist long, much less gain any ground, by such destructive methods as these.

25 And if one devil casts out another, to the weakening of their common cause among men, and to the confirmation of my doctrine of holiness that lies directly opposite to all their interests and designs; what is this, but the powers of hell going into a conduct that effectually splits, instead of uniting, their strength? And in that case, how can the kingdom of darkness stand? The devil is not so weak a politician as to enter into such pernicious measures against himself.

26 Besides, if ye pretend that the exercise of my power over devils, to call them out, is in combination

devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out: therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

29 Or else, how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto

with *Beelzebub* their prince, Pray what will you say to your own approved countrymen and disciples, who have sometimes undertaken to cast them out †? Is it by the power of the devil that they do it? Ye will not say this of them, nor did ye ever presume to charge it upon them. They therefore shall be witnesses of the divine power by which I cast out devils, and shall rise up in judgment against you for the partiality and injustice of your blasphemous accusation of me.

28 And if it be apparent beyond all reasonable contradiction, that I do these things against the interest of Satan, in a divine manner by the power of God's spirit †; it is then evident that I am come, with sovereign authority, to destroy the work of the devil, and to set up a spiritual, merciful, and holy kingdom among you.

29 Otherwise, how is it possible that I should be able, at this superior and irresistible rate, to cast out Satan from his possession of mens bodies, as well as from his dominion over their souls? For how can any one make a forcible entry, and dispossess a strong man of his house and goods, unless he first masters him by a greater power? Then indeed he will take possession for himself, and turn all to his own use; but otherwise he cannot.

30 And as I so evidently act against all the might and interests of Satan, it can never be thought that he is with me, but must be against me; and whosoever he be that shall not own and side with me, in my opposition to him, and in my work of gathering sinners out of his kingdom into my own, he shall likewise be looked upon as an enemy to me, and as injurious to the interests of my kingdom.

31 Therefore, on occasion of what has now passed, I tell you, for your caution against one most horrid sin which some of you are in great danger of, that all sorts of other crimes, and even blasphemies, however heinous in their circumstances and aggravations, are pardonable,

N O T E S.

† Christ here seems to refer the *Jewish* exorcists in those days; who, as ancient writers assure us, sometimes used to cast out devils by invoking the name of the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*: Or perhaps he referred to such as cast out devils in his name, but did not publicly own or follow him; *Mark ix. 38.*

† Though Christ had all power in himself, as God, for the performance of his miracles; yet as none of the divine Persons act sepa-

rately from each other, their nature being the same; and as Christ was likewise man, and came, as the Messiah, in his Father's name; it was proper that the agency of the Holy Ghost should be sometimes taken notice of in his miraculous acts, to shew that the Father owned him in the execution of his office; as well as that at other times he should behave as acting by his own power, as he most commonly did, to shew that he had it in himself.

unto men : but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

31 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him : but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good ; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt : for the tree is known by his fruit.

34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things ? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

able, and shall be forgiven to every penitent believer : But in the approaching dispensation of the Holy Spirit, in which his miraculous operations and illuminations will appear with still more shining evidence, a malicious \S speaking against him then as if he were an evil spirit, or an ascribing his wonderful gifts and operations to the devil, is such a blasphemy as shall never admit of forgiveness ; since this will be obstinately sinning against the last and highest dispensation of grace by which it can be possible for any to be recovered or brought to faith and repentance.

32 And I tell you, that whosoever, through ignorance, and preconceived prejudices about the temporal grandeur of the Messiah, speaks blasphemously against me on account of the meanness of my appearance as the Son of man, such an one may afterwards, by the power of the Holy Ghost, be brought to conviction, faith and repentance, and so obtain forgiveness of that sin : But whosoever shall maliciously and designedly revile the Spirit of God, in his most signal and evident gifts and operations, by which he will hereafter bear witness to me, and which will be the last means of conviction and recovery, he must be inevitably shut up in impenitence and unbelief, and so shall not obtain forgiveness, either in this world, or in the day of judgment.

33 As to you, the *Pharisees*, that have spoken bitter things against me, whatever pretences ye make to sanctity, it is evident that your hearts are full of malicious wickedness : For a man's heart is to be judged of by his words and actions, as a tree is by its fruit, which is either good or bad according to the nature of the tree : Either therefore leave off your blasphemies ; or else make no further pretences to religion and holiness, that ye may be consistent with yourselves.

34 Whatever others may think of you, I know you to be the seed of the old serpent, a wicked and malignant generation of men : How can ye then, while ye continue to be sinful in your governing principles and tempers, speak any thing that is really good, or that is not one way or other bad ? For that which most fills and reigns in the heart, will naturally make its way and discover itself by the lips.

F 4

N O T E.

35 A

\S The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is spoken of *Mark* iii. 28. and *Luk.* xii. 10. in the future tense, and so related not to what was already, but should afterwards be done, consequent to the effusion of the Spirit ; and what the *Pharisees* had said about Christ's casting out devils by *Beelzebub*, was as di-

rectly blaspheming himself as the Spirit ; and yet he speaks of blasphemy against himself as a sin that should be forgiven, ver. 32. 2 and afterwards preached to, and prayed for, these blasphemers, *Luke* xiii. 34. See *H'42-ly's fourth appendix to this gospel.*

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly;

35 A truly good man, on one hand, has a rich treasure of grace and holiness in his heart, and it will vent and discover itself by his uttering things *that are good to the use of edifying*, (Eph. iv. 29.); and a wicked unregenerate man, on the other, has a source of all iniquity perpetually bubbling up in his heart, and it will break out and appear in the corrupt communication that proceeds out of his mouth.

36 And (31) how light soever ye may think of your words, as if they were of little moment in God's account; nay, though ye may be apt to say, *Our lips are our own, who is Lord over us?* (Psal. xii. 4.); I tell you, that not only mens false, blasphemous, and reviling words, but even all their vain, trifling, and unprofitable talk, shall be exactly scrutinized, and brought to a reckoning in the day of judgment.

37 For your words, as well as actions, shall be produced in evidence for or against you, to prove whether you are a saint or a sinner, a true believer or not; and according to their evidence, you shall be either publicly acquitted, or condemned, in the great day.

38 Then some of the lawyers and *Pharisees* turned upon him, and said, Master, after all that you have taught and done, we are not satisfied about your being the Christ: We therefore desire you to shew us some miraculous sign from heaven, (Luke xi. 16.) to prove that you really have a divine commission, and that God himself owns you; or else we shall not believe in you.

39 But as this was a humorous, superfluous, and unreasonable demand, he answering them said, None but a perverse and degenerate set of men, that have cast off God's covenant, and apostatized from the faith and obedience of their father *Abraham*, could have required any other sort of sign to satisfy them, than they have already seen, in the numerous, great, and merciful miracles I have wrought among them, to confirm my character and my holy doctrine: And no other sort of miraculous sign, different from those that I have already wrought, shall be given them for this purpose; except one, which was prefigured by the prophet *Jonas*, in what befel him for the conviction of the *Ninevites*, and which of itself will be such an unanswerable demonstration of my divine authority and power, as will leave every one that rejects it without excuse.

40 For as *Jonas* came alive out of the great fish's belly, when he had been buried there three days and three nights in the depth of the sea, which was a proof

ly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

of his being a prophet sent from God to the *Ninevites*: So I, the Son of man, shall rise again to life, when I shall have been put to death, and been buried † three days and three nights in the grave, to prove that I am the Messiah.

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas: and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

41 If, upon this further evidence, I shall be still rejected through unbelief, the *Ninevites*, compared with the perverse people of these days, will rise in judgment, like witnesses for God that they deserve to be condemned as incorrigible infidels: For they believed and hearkened to *Jonas*, as a prophet of the Lord; and were so affected at his preaching, that they went into a solemn humiliation and repentance, covering themselves with sackcloth and ashes. They were so convinced by his message, as to do all this, though he was but an ordinary prophet, and continued with them but a little while; and though there was no other miracle, than that which was wrought for and upon him, and not by him, and which they could only have the report of, to confirm his message to them: And observe it, One incomparably greater than *Jonah*, even the Messiah himself, who comes with evident characters of divinity, is now among you, and is often preaching with all plainness and authority, and continuing to preach to you, as many years, as *Jonas* did days to them; he likewise has confirmed his doctrine with a multitude of signal miracles before your own eyes, and at last will conclude them with his resurrection from the dead: If therefore, after all this, ye shall still continue in impenitence and unbelief, how aggravated will your guilt and punishment be in the great day!

42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

42 The queen of *Sheba* in *Arabia*, (which lay south of *Jerusalem*,) being likewise compared with the people of this obstinate age, will rise up as a witness for God, that their condemnation is just: For, upon her only hearing a report of *Solomon's* great wisdom in a very distant country, bordering on the ocean, she, though a person of great state, and of the tender sex, took a fatiguing long journey to see and hear it herself; and having been favoured with some proofs of it, she readily owned and admired it: And pray observe, One incomparably greater than *Solomon*, even the Messiah himself, who is the Wisdom of God, and teaches wisdom to salvation, is preaching daily among you in your synagogues

N O T E.

† The Jews natural day was expressed by a day and a night, and they used to reckon a part of a day for a whole day; and so Christ's lying in the sepulchre part of Friday, and of the Lord's-day, and the whole of the *Saturday*, is, according to their way of computing, called three days and three nights.

gogues and other places; and if, after all, ye despise this wisdom, and *will not come to him that ye may have life*, (John v. 40.) how great and how righteous will be your condemnation!

43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh thro' dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

43, 44, and 45. The case of this people is like that of one possessed with the devil, who delights in nothing but wickedness and mischief: When this evil spirit is cast out of a man, he, like a melancholy disappointed creature, wanders about in places where he may probably meet with least disturbance; there he seeks after another settlement, but cannot find it. Then he thinks with himself, I will go and try whether I cannot recover possession of the same man again; and upon his returning to make the experiment, he finds there is nothing to oppose him, but every thing more ready to entertain him than before. Upon this, he enters again with several other still more malignant devils than himself; and they unitedly fix their abode in this man, and so make his condition abundantly worse than it ever was before. Just so the dreadful condition of this impenitent unbelieving people shall be: I have often baffled Satan among them; the light and power of my gospel have, in various instances, been too hard for him; and there have been some convictions and stirrings in the minds of the people, that have disturbed and threatened his interest in them; and all together have made him afraid, lest, by further pursuing his vile designs against the *Jews*, he should provoke me utterly to destroy him. Hereupon, in the great vexation of his mind, he retires to the *Gentile* world, hoping to meet with a better reception there. But thither my gospel shall follow him with much greater energy and success, in turning innumerable multitudes from idols to serve the living and true God; so that he will be abundantly more harassed and defeated there, than he was among the *Jews*. Upon this, he will return, and try this people again; And finding that their convictions have not prevailed upon them to admit me into their hearts; and that, amidst all their pretences to purity and religion, they are still destitute of my grace, and are more ready to resign up to him than before; he will come with greater power and fill them with more obstinate hardness of heart than ever, till their wickedness and their ruin shall be past remedy.

46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, his

46 While he was discoursing in this manner to the people, behold, a proper opportunity offered for discovering a most affectionate love to his disciples. *Mary*
his

his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him,

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered, and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold, my mother, and my brethren:

50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister and mother.

his mother, and † some of his nearest kinsmen, came to the house where he was preaching; and, not being able to get in because of the crowd, they desired he might be told that they wanted to speak with him.

47 According to their request, one of the company immediately acquainted him that his mother, and some of his near kindred who were called his brethren, waited abroad to speak with him.

48 But he replied, saying to the person that informed him of it, What authority have any earthly relations to call me off from my Father's business? and whom do you suppose that I account to be my dearest kindred, even as my mother, and my brethren?

49 And while he spake these words, he pointing with his hand toward his disciples, said, Behold the dear objects of my affection! these are they whom I have taken into peculiar relation to myself, and whom I love with all the tenderness and fervour that are due to the nearest of kin; and no respect to relatives after the flesh can ever divert me from pursuing their salvation. (See the note on *Mark* iii. 34.)

50 For whosoever shall heartily comply with the will of my heavenly Father, in their believing obediential regards to me; these are the persons whom I prefer to all earthly relations, and whom I will own and embrace with all the kindness and love that a brother, a sister, or a mother, can expect or desire.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Behold the horrible corruption of human nature, how prone it is to be captious and cavilling at trifles; and at the same time, how full of blindness, prejudice, and malignity, against Christ and the gospel! Who could have thought that the holy One, and the Wisdom of God, who gave the clearest evidence of his excellent character, as divine, and every way greater than that of *Solomon* or any of the prophets, should ever have been traduced as a confederate with the devil; or that it should ever enter into the heart of man to blaspheme the blessed Spirit in his highest manifestations of glory, and stigmatize him as an evil spirit? If we shut our eyes and harden our hearts against the rich means of grace which Christ has given us, in vain do we call for further evidence and better means to convince us: No signs from heaven would prevail upon us; and the very heathens must reproach us, and rise up in judgment against us. O the danger and the aggravations of sinning against light and grace! The more convictions are stifled, the greater is the hardness that ensues, till at length Satan obtains a secure dominion over the sinner,

N O T E.

† It does not fully appear that *Mary* ever had any other child besides Jesus: And therefore these, who are called his brethren, may have been either the children of *Joseph* by a former wife; or else the cousin-germans of our Lord, such as the children of *Mary*, the wife of *Cleophas*, sister to the mother of Jesus; and such relations, according to the language of the *Jews*, were called brethren.

But Mr *Wheaton* has said a good deal to shew that our Lord's mother herself really had several other children after his birth: See his *essay upon the brethren and sisters of Christ*. But whoever these were, they probably designed to get Jesus away, either lest he should overspend himself, or lest he should offend the *Pharisees* and expose himself to danger.

sinner, and the work of all condemnation will pass upon him in the great day. How should the thoughts of a judgment to come make us dread every word as well as deed that would go against us then ! But the heart must be changed before the life can be holy ; and the worst of sins shall be forgiven by gospel-grace, except that against the Holy Ghost, which they are least in danger of committing who are most in fear about it. How great is the authority, as well as grace, of our Saviour ! He, as Lord of the sabbath, directs our observation of it ; and if his service and honour command our hearts and behaviour on his holy day, we shall be kept from profaning it ; and he will countenance and bless us. What he did on earth, in a way of mercy, for the bodies of many, was a lively emblem of what he lives in heaven to do, by his word and spirit, for our souls. At his powerful command, Satan is dethroned from our hearts, we are enlightened with the knowledge of salvation, hear Christ's voice and live, stretch out the hand of faith, and yield obedience to his word ; and he will deal tenderly with the weakest believers, and vindicate them from the reproaches of their enemies ; he will maintain and increase the least beginnings of his good work in their hearts, till all shall be perfected in victory and triumph ; and he will own and honour them, as his nearest kindred and dearest friends. How should Christians therefore love and honour him, and unite together, in heart, affection, and endeavour, for the support of his kingdom and interest, as Satan and his instruments unite against them for the support of theirs !

C H A P. XIII.

The parable of the sower, with its explanation ; and the reason of Christ's speaking in parables, 1,—23. The parable of the tares, of a grain of mustard-seed, and of leaven, 24,—33. The parable of the tares explained, with a further reason of Christ's using parables, 34,—43. The parable of hidden treasure, of a pearl, and of a fishing net, 44,—50. The application of all to the disciples in the parable of a good householder, 51, 52. : And the treatment Christ met with in his own country, 53,—58.

TEXT.

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat ; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many

PARAPHRASE.

ON the after-part of the day in which Jesus delivered the foregoing discourse, he, for the convenience of more room, went out of the house where he was, to the shore of the sea of Galilee ; and there, according to the custom of the Jewish teachers, sat down to preach another sermon.

2 And great crowds of people thronging about him, he went into a boat, that they might not press upon him, and that he might be the better seen and heard : Then sitting down again, he addressed himself to all the company, as they stood before him on the shore.

3 And the way he took to instruct them was by plain + similitudes, taken from the most common affairs of life,

NOTE.

+ A parable is a continued comparison of things, for the illustration of that which is designed to be represented ; and teaching by parables was an usual, pleasant, and profitable way of instruction among the eastern nations, to excite the attention and inquiries of the hearers, and in the most familiar manner to instil the sentiments of the speaker, and fix them

many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow.

life, thereby teaching us to spiritualize earthly things: He therefore began with a comparison to represent the preaching of the gospel, and the variety of its effects upon different sorts of persons, saying, Observe the following illustration. "A husbandman went into his field to sow it with corn:"—Thereby meaning that he was come, by his own ministry, and the ministry of his servants, to scatter the good seed of his word among the people.

4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up.

4 "And, as he was sowing his seed, some of the corns fell upon the common beaten path; and lying uncovered on the surface of the ground, the fowls of the air came and eat it all up:"—Thereby meaning, that when the gospel is preached, there are some trifling, careless hearers, who never seriously regard or think about it; and the devil diverts their minds with other thoughts, to make them entirely forget it,

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

5, 6. "Another part of the seed was cast upon rocky ground, where, there being but a thin coat of earth, a reflection of heat from the rock just underneath caused it to spring up very soon; but, (5.) having no depth of ground to strike root into, as soon as the sun shone hot it shrivelled and quite withered away:"—Thereby meaning, that there are others, who, when they hear the word, attend to and are pleased with it; and, under a present start of affection, have some good purposes and desires; but this being only a slight touch upon the passions, their hearts are not changed, but remain hearts of stone still; and so when a fiery trial comes upon them for the sake of Christ and the gospel, they cannot stand it, but all soon comes to nothing for want of a rooted principle within.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.

7 "And there was another part of the seed which fell on a spot of earth that was full of briers and thorns, which grew up faster than the corn, and smothered and killed it:"—Thereby meaning, that there are others who hear the word with attention, and seem to make some proficiency in their profession; but their hearts are so thick set with the cares of this world, and with their vain expectations and desires of happiness from it, that their convictions and promising appearances are stifled, before they come to an effectual saving change in their hearts and lives.

8 "But

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them in the minds of those who were desirous to learn by them. And as I thought that it might enliven the reading, to add an interpretation of the parables as we go along, even though they are afterwards explained by our Lord himself; I have sometimes, as here, drawn out the meaning of their several parts,

where we first meet with them, in such a paraphrastic form as intimates that Christ did not then explain them; and have endeavoured to vary the turn of expression, and throw further light upon them, when we come to his own account of what he intended by them.

8 But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit; some an hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold.

9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.

8 "But another part of the seed was sown in a good soil, which brought forth corn to maturity, in various degrees, from thirty to an hundred fold increase."—Thereby meaning, that there are other hearers, whose hearts are formed, by the grace of God, for a due reception and entertainment of the word; who have a spiritual understanding of its truth and excellence, and of their own concern in it; and are so deeply impressed by it, as to bring forth fruits of righteousness, more or less, and that to the latest age.

9 Whosoever is capable of hearing, and desirous of being instructed, let him seriously consider the truth and importance of what I say.

10 As our Lord had delivered this parable without an interpretation, his disciples, being surprized and troubled at it, came to him when he was alone, (*Mark iv. 10.*) and asked him why he taught the people only by similitudes, without explaining them?

11 He answering said to them, The reason of it lies in the holy, wise, and sovereign dispensation of God's free mercy, who gives or with-holds a clear and saving discovery of the great things of the gospel, relating to the kingdom of grace and glory, when and where, to what degree and in what manner, seems best in his sight: Ye are the people of his choice; he, in his good pleasure, has opened your eyes, and designs to open them yet more and more; but it has not pleased him to bestow the like savour upon the multitude, nor have they any claim to it.

12 For they who, under divine influence, have a true spiritual knowledge of the great things of my kingdom, and who, like the good-ground hearers, honestly receive the word of God, and bring forth excellent fruit, shall have still a greater abundance of means for their further improvement, that his distinguishing love may operate to their growth in light and grace, till they obtain complete salvation: But they who, like the other sorts of hearers, either will not consider, or do not care to know or to profit by the word; even the means they already enjoy shall be justly taken from them, instead of their having still better added to be lost upon them.

13 The reason therefore of my speaking to them in parables, without an explication, is, that they, by the righteous judgment of God, may be left to their own wilful obstinacy and blindness; because, seeing the most unquestionable miracles, they will not be convinced by them; and hearing the most excellent and intelligible doctrines of my kingdom, they will not regard them,

nor admit the evidence that shines in them; but obstinately shut their eyes against the clearest light of my plainer preaching to them.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of *Esaïas*, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this peoples heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed: lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

14 And so the prophecy of *Isaiah* is fulfilled again in this people, (*Isa. vi. 9, 10.*) where he speaks to the following purpose: They shall hear and see the great and glorious things of divine revelation, and shall be given up, for their wilful obstinacy, to such a judicial blindness of mind and hardness of heart, that they shall not have a true spiritual discerning of them, nor feel their effectual impression.

15 For this people being righteously left, in the awful judgment of God, to themselves, their hearts are become sensual and stupid, like *Jeshurun's*, who waxed fat, and kicked against the Lord, (*Deut. xxxii. 15.*); and their ears are resolvedly shut against the sound of the gospel, like the deaf adder, which stops her ears, and will not hearken to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely, (*Psal. lviii. 4, 5.*) They behave with such enmity and opposition, as if they were afraid, lest, one time or other, light and power should force themselves through their eyes and ears, and they should be convinced of the wickedness of their hearts and the error of their ways, and their disobedient souls should be turned to the wisdom of the just; and lest I should work a thorough change upon them: It is therefore fit that they should be let alone to perish in their chosen ignorance and insensibility.

16 But as for you, my disciples, God has kinder designs of grace toward you, and has begun to discover them already: Ye are happy, and shall be blessed indeed: God has given you the seeing eye, and the hearing ear; he has turned you from darkness unto light, and made you obedient to the voice of his word; and has inclined your hearts to desire still more and more to know and do his will.

17 And the blessedness, which ye are hereby partakers of, transcends all that ever was enjoyed by any before you. For I solemnly assure you, that the ancient patriarchs, and many of the prophets and Old-Testament saints, earnestly longed to see and hear the glorious things concerning me and my kingdom, which now are displayed before your minds, and salute your eyes and ears: But this high favour was not granted to them; they had only a glimmering dawn in types and shadows, or distant views in the promises, of the great blessedness and glory which I am now clearly revealing to you.

17 For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way-side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it:

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 Another parable put he forth unto

18 To you therefore I will fully explain the parable of the sower, which, as ye will see, represents the preachers of the gospel going forth to spread abroad its doctrines, like precious seed, with very different success upon several sorts of persons.

19 The way-side, on which the seed was cast, signifies such careless stupid hearers of the gospel as neither relish nor understand its truth, nor make any serious reflections upon it; and Satan, that wicked adversary, proves too hard for them by his temptations, which carry their minds off from the word, and leave them as unconcerned about it, and as effectually hinder their profiting by it, as if they had never heard it.

20, 21. The stony ground, on which the seed was sown, signifies such hearers as attend to the word, and have some sudden flashes of joy in their affections, and some hasty resolutions for God and religion while they are hearing it; but it not being entertained by faith and love, and settled as a governing principle in their hearts, it soon comes to nothing; and in a time of temptation and persecution for the gospel's sake, they are discouraged, and turn apostates; and thereby prove, that, notwithstanding all their fits of zeal and fervour, their hearts were never thoroughly penetrated and changed by what they heard.

22 The soil full of thorns, on which the seed fell, signifies those hearers, that so far embrace the word, as to make a promising profession of the doctrine of Christianity, and to have some good appearances of reformation by it; but through their anxious care about the things of this world, and their eager pursuit after its riches and pleasures, (*Luke viii. 14.*) their sensual hearts entangle, deceive, and overset them, and all is stilled before it ever comes to maturity.

23 And (*sc.*) the good ground, that was sown with the seed, signifies such hearers as receive the word of God into new and understanding hearts; where, under the influence of divine grace, it takes root, is cherished and improved, and produces abundant, genuine fruits of righteousness, to the praise and glory of God, though in some twice or thrice as much more as in others †, even to the greatest plenty that human nature in its present imperfect state is capable of.

24, 25. But this was not the only parable which Jesus spake to the people: He furthermore delivered another,

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† An hundred-fold seems to signify the largest increase that can be; and it is mentioned as an extraordinary instance of God's blessing *Israel*, that he *seeded*, and *received in the same year an hundred-fold*, Gen. xxi. 12.

into them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field :

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay: lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

ther, saying, "The state of the gospel-church, or of the Messiah's kingdom in this world, is like what befel an husbandman, who sowed good seed in his field; but, whilst his servant slept, an enemy came privately in the night, and sowed tares among the wheat, and then withdrew that he might not be discovered."—Our Lord thereby intimating, that he himself, first by his own ministry, and afterwards by the ministry of his servants, sent his gospel; and planted his grace in the hearts of many, to form a church for himself in the world; but whilst his servants and people were off from their watch and guard, the devil, that great enemy to him and souls, secretly raised up false teachers and hypocritical professors among them, who lay concealed for a while, insinuating themselves by specious errors, and outward appearances of piety.

26 "But as, when the good seed grew up, and bore fruit, then the tares likewise began to discover themselves."—So after some time, when, in a day of persecution and trial, sound Christians shall appear to have the grace of God in truth, by their faith and patience, their brave and open profession of his name, and their holy lives; then false pretenders will discover themselves, by a contrary temper and behaviour.

27 "The husbandman's servants, seeing the tares appear with the wheat, seemed surprised, as well as troubled at it; and asked their master, how this came to pass, since he sowed only good seed in his field?"—So Christ's faithful servants and people are grieved, and even amazed, to see that his excellent and holy gospel should be perverted and abused by any of its preachers and professors, to the introducing of dangerous errors and immoralities into the church and the world; and they are much at a loss to account for it.

28 "The master told his servants, it was an enemy that had sown tares among his wheat; upon which they asked him, whether they should go immediately and weed them out?"—So Christ knows all the mischievous devices and works of Satan and his instruments; and when his servants and disciples come to discover the false pretenders to Christianity, they want to know what to do with them; and ask counsel of him, whether they shall not immediately cast them all out of the church?

29, 30. "But the master answered them, Do nothing rashly, lest, while ye are plucking up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them: To avoid this danger, let them both stand till harvest; and then I will order the

30 Let both grow together, until the harvest: and in the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

reapers to take out the tares, and burn them all together, and to gather the wheat into the barn:—So, when there is any danger of mistaking true believers for hypocrites, or of stumbling and grieving sincere Christians by any over-rigorous discipline, Christ would have his servants and churches to be very cautious in casting out offenders, lest they should excommunicate saints instead of sinners, or give occasion to some upright souls to leave the communion of the church: And, rather than run any risks of this kind, he directs them not to proceed in a way of censure against † persons of barely suspicious characters; but to leave them to his immediate judgment at the end of the world; when he will order his angels to separate the precious from the vile, and will cast all the hypocrites and unbelievers together into the lake that burns for ever and ever, and receive all his true disciples to himself, that where he is, there they may be also.

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures

31, 32. He likewise spake another parable to the people, saying, “The gospel-kingdom in this world is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man sowed in his field, and which indeed is one of the least of seeds; but, when it grows up to maturity, is one of the biggest plants among all herbs, and becomes, as it were, a tree, large enough for the birds to lodge and build their nests in its boughs.” ‡—Our Lord thereby meant, that his gospel in the world, and his grace in the soul, at their first beginnings, make but a small and obscure appearance; they, like the dawn of the morning, are scarce discernible, and, like the day of small things, are in the account of carnal men very contemptible; but by degrees they grow and spread, till they fill the heart in which they are planted, and even fill the earth; so that *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, shall find refreshment and rest in them.

33 He also delivered another parable to the same purpose, saying, “The gospel-kingdom is like a little leaven that a woman covered up in three measures §, which

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† The reason Christ gives for letting the tares alone, intimates, that he here speaks only of professors of dubious, though of very suspicious characters, who may possibly be real Christians, notwithstanding some appearances to the contrary: For notoriously wicked persons, and scandalous apostates, may undoubtedly be cast out of the visible church, without danger of mistaking true believers for them, or of doing any injury to the true interest of Christ in the world. And though the world is said to be the field, in which the tares were sown, ver. 38; yet as

ministers and churches have nothing to do, in a way of extirpation, *with them that are within*, (1 Cor. v. 12, 13.) it seems necessary to understand it of the visible church as spread through the world, or at least as having a mixture of hypocrites with true believers while it is in the world.

‡ The mustard-tree in that country grew to a prodigious size.

§ Three measures seem to be here mentioned as the common quantity that was kneaded at once, Gen. xviii. 6.; and *Ainsworth* says they made an ephah or bushel.

fures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them :

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house : and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man ;

38 The field is the world ; the good seed are the children of the kingdom ; but the tares are the children of the wicked one :

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil ; the harvest is the end of the world ; and the

which made a great quantity of meal ; and there it lay and worked, till it diffused itself through the whole mass :”—Thereby meaning, that his gospel and his grace, which at first lie hid in the heart, and in the world, should secretly work with such divine efficacy, as to sanctify all the faculties of the soul, and all the members of the body, and spread themselves by degrees through all nations, to captivate them to the obedience of faith.

34 Our Saviour spake all these things to the people in parables, and in no other way ; giving them only the similitudes themselves, without explaining their signification.

35 And he did this, among other reasons, that what was said, with a prophetic spirit, (*Psal. lxxviii. 2.*) might be fulfilled in him, viz. *I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter dark sayings of old* ; as that may be understood with a reference to the mysteries of the gospel, which have been hid in the counsels of God from eternity, and under the obscurity of types and shadows from the beginning of the world ; and which Christ himself delivered in a mysterious manner to those that would not receive, nor even bear, plainer revelations.

36 Then Jesus dismissed the multitude and went into an house, where his disciples came to him, and desired that he would particularly explain to them the parable of the tares growing up with the wheat in the field.

37 And as he used, when he had them alone, to open his mind and heart freely to them, he told them, that by the *husbandman*, who sowed the good corn, was meant *himself*, who preached the pure gospel in his own personal ministry, and by the ministration of those whom he sent to raise up a seed to serve him :

38 That by the *field* was meant the *world* of mankind, through which he would spread his church ; that by the *good seed* was meant *true believers*, who were begotten by the gospel, and made the subjects of his kingdom of grace ; but that by the *tares*, growing up among the wheat, were meant *false teachers and hypocrites*, who, under a profession of religion, crept into the church, but really were the children and instruments of the devil, bearing his image, and doing his work.

39 He further told them, that by the *enemy*, who sowed the tares, was meant the *devil*, who doeth all the mischief he can in the church and in the world ; that by the *harvest* was meant the *day of judgment*, which

the reapers are the angels.

shall be at the end of time; that by the *reapers* were meant the holy *angels*, who excel in strength, and do his commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word, (Psal. ciii. 20.)

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

40 And that as the tares, in the parable, were in the time of harvest picked out from the wheat, and cast into the fire and burnt; so it shall be at the day of judgment, in the separation that will be made between the righteous and the wicked; when, the former being taken up to heaven, the latter shall be cast into hell, to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

41 Then, said he, the Messiah shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and send forth his angels to bring all nations before him; and they shall separate, from among the subjects of his visible church or kingdom, all the false teachers and hypocrites, unbelievers and workers of iniquity, who were an occasion of stumbling, or were some way injurious to his true members, and lay concealed, or not clearly distinguished in, and not separated from, his visible church before:

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

42 And those holy angels, as the executioners of his justice, and as ministers to do his will, shall cast them all together, like bundles of weeds fit for nothing but destruction, into the fire of hell, heated by the dreadful wrath of God; where they shall be everlastingly tormented with the utmost horror, anguish, and bitter reflections on their folly and wickedness, loss and misery:

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

43 And then the children of God, and heirs of glory, shall shine in robes of perfect righteousness; and shall break forth out of obscurity, like the sun from behind a dark cloud, into illustrious light, in all the honours and felicities of their Father's immediate presence and kingdom. Whosoever is capable of hearing, and desirous to know these important things, let him seriously consider them with a reference to his own concern in them.

44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field: the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

44 Our Lord moreover added several other parables, saying, "The gospel-kingdom, for the excellence of its blessings, is like a rich mine that lies under ground in a field; and when a man has found it, he conceals the discovery in his own mind, and, in the abundance of his joy, goes and sells all that he has to buy the field which contains this treasure."—Christ hereby intimating, that he himself is our richest treasure, as all the stores of wisdom and knowledge, and all fulness of righteousness and grace, with all the riches of salvation, are in him; and that he lies hid from the carnal unbelieving world in the gospel, which, like a field, is open

to all; but when a sinner, under the guidance of God's Spirit, has searched and found him there, he hides him in his own heart, rejoices to think what a precious treasure he has found, and is ready to part with all things in the world, that he may obtain an interest in it, and enjoy the benefit of the word.

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who when he had found one pearl of great price, went, and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto

45, 46. To the like purpose he said, "The blessings of the gospel-kingdom are like a pearl of exceeding great value, which being found by a merchant who was inquiring after rich commodities of that kind, he went and sold all that he was worth, to buy it."—So Christ, together with his blessings in the gospel, is a pearl of inestimable price, which being once discovered by one who is in earnest seeking after his truest happiness, he is willing to part with all the riches and enjoyments of this world, rather than not obtain a property in him.

47, 48, 49, 50. Once more he added, The gospel of the kingdom is like a net cast into the sea, which gathered all sorts of fish, and was filled with good and bad together: And when the fishermen drew it ashore, they sat down to separate them; and preserved the good, but threw away the bad.—So the gospel is preached promiscuously to all by the ministers of Christ, whom he has made fishers of men: They let down the evangelical net at his command, who brings many souls under it; and by means thereof a visible church is gathered, consisting of true believers and hypocrites. But at the end of the world, when the gospel-ministry shall have fully accomplished its design, the holy angels shall be sent to separate the hypocrites from the righteous: And then, as they who have the grace of God in truth shall, by the ministry of angels, be safely lodged in heaven; so nominal professors shall be cast into hell; where will be terrible agony and wo, despair and rage; and where they will have a long eternity to lament their sin and folly, in taking up with an external form of godliness, and at the same time denying the power thereof, (2 Tim. iii. 5.)

51 When Jesus had spoken all these parables, he, to try his disciples, and shew his great readiness to instruct them, asked, whether they understood the meaning of them all? And they answered, like persons sensible of their obligations to his favour, Lord, we do.

52 Then, as a practical improvement of the whole, he said in another parable to them, See therefore that ye faithfully communicate what ye know to others, as becomes gospel-ministers, who succeed the scribes in their office: For every preacher in my kingdom, who

a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

is himself well instructed in the great truths of religion, may be likened to a good house keeper, who lays up new and old stores to spend them upon the family as there may be occasion; so should he be laying up treasures of divine truth in his mind and heart, that out of the Old and New Testaments, and out of new and old instructions, observations, and experiences, he may bring forth doctrines suited to all persons and cases, as may be most seasonable and advantageous.

53 And when Jesus had gone through all these parables, he left those parts:

54 And returning to *Nazareth*, his own country, where he had been brought up, and rejected before, he preached to the people on the sabbath-day (*Mark vi. 2.*) in their synagogue, with such wisdom and authority, that they, who knew his family and education, were amazed to think that he should talk and act at such a superior rate, and said, How is it possible, that so mean and contemptible a man should be master of all this knowledge, and should be able to do such great things to confirm what he says?

55, 56. Is not *Joseph*, the poor carpenter, his Father? and is not she his mother, whom, without any manner of ceremony, we commonly call *Mary*? Are they not people of ordinary, low rank, and of no account amongst us? And as for all the rest of his nearest kindred, *James* and *Joses*, *Simon* and *Judas*, and his female relations, (see the note on chap. xii. 46.) do not we know them all? are they not a parcel of mean and ignorant creatures, of no figure or learning? How then comes this man to pretend to such high things as these?

57 And they, on these accounts, stumbled at him, contemned him in their hearts, and slighted his gospel. But Jesus despised the shame; and, gently reproving them for their unreasonable prejudices against him, said, A prophet is usually received with more honour and advantage among strangers, who justly form their judgment of him by the excellence of his doctrine and works, than among his own countrymen, acquaintance, and near kindred, who unrighteously judge of him according to his former mean appearances, and envy any new honours that are put upon him, how much soever he may be worthy of them.

58 And therefore Jesus worked but few miracles among this people, not from any defect of power in himself, but because of their provoking unbelief, whereby they obstinately rejected his doctrine, and the wonders he

53 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, inasmuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called *Mary*? and his brethren *James*, and *Joses*, and *Simon*, and *Judas*?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? whence then hath this man all these things?

57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

he had wrought, which were abundantly sufficient to confirm it.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Of how much greater value is the gospel, than all the gold of *Ophir*! It is full of the richest mines of knowledge and grace; Christ and salvation are its precious treasure; and things new and old may be drawn from thence for a supply of every want: It lies open to all, but with various success; to some it is a favour of life unto life, and to others of death unto death: It is of little importance whether it be preached in places set apart for religious worship, or in a common house or ship, or on the sea-shore; the great concern is, how it is heard and received: And, alas! how many are there who despise and reject it! how many who neither understand nor consider it! and how many who soon lose the good they seemed to have got by it! Ah hard and treacherous hearts, and wretched unbelief! and ah mischievous temptations of Satan, and of this evil world, that hide its glory from us, that prevent or stifle its good impressions upon us, that shut us out from its blessings, and that endanger our being deprived of the gospel itself, or our being sealed up under judicial hardness to everlasting destruction! But, blessed be God, there are some to whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom: The gospel shall make its way through all opposition, and heaven many souls into its own likeness; and when once the seed of grace is planted in the heart, though it be ever so small in its first beginnings, it shall maintain its ground, and flourish into perfection. While saints and sinners sit under the ministry of the word, and true believers and hypocrites mingle together in the visible church, under a profession of Christ's name, it is hard in many instances for us to distinguish them: But they are all known to God, and shall be made known in the day of judgment; then there shall be an entire separation between them: And O happy they who shall be bound up in the bundle of life! The bundles of tares shall be cast into devouring flames.

C H A P. XIV.

Herod's opinion of Christ, and an account of John the Baptist's imprisonment and death, 1,—12. Christ's feeding five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, 14,—21. His walking on the sea, 22,—33. And healing many sick, 34,—36.

TEXT.

AT that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,

PARAPHRASE.

BY this time, Christ's disciples having gone forth to preach the gospel and work miracles in his name, (Luke ix. 6, 7.) his fame was so much spread abroad, that it reached the court, and came to the ears of *Herod*, who was governor of *Galilee* †, under the Roman emperor, and was the son of *Herod the Great* that slew the infants at *Bethlehem*.

2 And said unto his servants, This

2 And when he heard of Jesus, and the divers opinions people had of him, his guilty conscience smote him for having killed *John the Baptist*. Therefore, in the terror of his mind, he said to his courtiers, I cannot help

N O T E.

† A Tetrarch, strictly speaking, was either a governor of the fourth part of a kingdom; or one that held the fourth rank of dignity in the Roman empire. See the note on Luke iii. 2.

This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath, to give her whatsoever she would ask.

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.

help thinking but that this is *John* whom I beheaded: He is surely risen from the dead, and endued with more extraordinary power than he had before; and therefore these wonderful miracles are now wrought by him to justify his character; and I wish he be not come to revenge himself on me.

3, 4. For this *Herod* had taken *John* up, and ordered him to be bound, and committed to prison, to gratify his own resentments, and to please *Herodias* his brother *Philip's* wife; because he had married her, and *John* freely told him that it was utterly unlawful so to do, her husband *Philip* himself being then alive, and having had children by her. (See *Whitby*.)

5 *Herod* was hereby so highly provoked at *John*, that he had a great mind to put him to death; but was afraid to venture upon it, partly from the checks of his own conscience, and the veneration he had for him; and partly from an apprehension that it might raise a mutiny among the people, who universally esteemed and honoured him as a holy and inspired prophet.

6 But † about an year and half after *John's* imprisonment, when *Herod* was celebrating his birth-day with feasting and jollity among his friends, there was a ball in honour of the day; and the daughter of *Herodias* danced so finely before the company, that *Herod* was vastly delighted with her:

7 Upon which he engaged himself, by a rash oath, to grant her any request she should make, though it should cost him half his kingdom, (*Mark* vi. 23.)

8 Immediately she consulted her mother, what to ask in such a favourable juncture; and her mother, having this opportunity to get rid of her fears from *John's* reproofs, and to glut her cruel revenge, ordered her to beg that the head of *John the Baptist* might be presented to her in a dish; accordingly she went back with this request.

9 And as soon as she mentioned it to the king, he was surprised and troubled at it; and yet, as if conscience were more concerned in keeping his wicked oath than in breaking it, he, even on the festival of his birth-day, ordered the monstrously shocking sacrifice to be made to his own and *Herodias's* vengeance, under pretence that he could not in honour refuse it, because he had solemnly sworn to the young damsel, in the presence

N O T E.

† It is computed, says Mr *Henry* on the place, that he lay a year and half a close prisoner, which was about as much time as he had spent in his public ministry, from his first entrance into it.

of the whole company, that he would grant whatsoever he should ask.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

10 Accordingly he sent to the prison; and, without any forms of law, tyrannically caused *John* to be privately beheaded there.

11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.

11 And the head of that holy good man, which was worth more than the heads of *Herod* and all his court, was brought in a dish, and presented to the young lady; and she carried it to her mother, that they, putting off all the tenderness of their sex, and all the honour of their exalted station, might barbarously triumph over it.

12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

12 And when *John's* disciples heard what was done, they, to testify their affection and respect, went, and taking away the body, decently buried it; and then repaired to Jesus, to give him an account of the tragical story.

13 When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place, apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

13 As soon as Jesus heard, not only how *Herod* had murdered *John*, but likewise the opinion he had of his being risen again from the dead, (ver. 2.) he, to avoid the rage and jealousy of this cruel tyrant, and to gain a little respite for himself and his disciples, went aboard a vessel; and passed privately with them over the sea of *Galilee* to the desert of *Bethsaida* †, (Luke ix. 10.) which lay in the province of *Philip*, who was a milder prince: But as he could not easily be concealed, the people, having learnt whither he was going, flocked after him with all speed from several cities a-foot, taking a compass by land; and got thither even before him. (*Mark* vi. 33.)

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

14 And Jesus, at his landing, saw a vast multitude gathered together; and finding several sick and weak persons among them whose faith brought them thither for a cure, he, in the greatness of his compassion, healed them, as well as preached to the people. (*Mark* vi. 34.)

15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

15 And toward evening, his disciples came and desired him to dismiss the company, that they might go to the nearest towns or villages they could come at, and provide necessary refreshments for themselves; because the day was far spent, and they were in a solitary part of the country, which afforded no provisions to supply their wants, and prevent their fainting, or suffering in their health, for lack of proper sustenance in due season.

16 But

N O T E.

† The desert of *Bethsaida* was in *Trachonitis*, of which *Philip* was Tetrarch, *Luke* iii. 2.

† Christ's

16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

18 He said, Bringing them hither to me.

19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained, twelve baskets full.

21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

22 And straightway Jesus constrained

16 But Jesus, resolving in himself what to do, said to them, for the trial of their faith, and making his intended miracle the more conspicuous, There is no necessity that they should either be distressed with hunger, or go to buy provisions for themselves; let them partake of your food.

17 Upon which they answered, All that we have is only five barley loaves, and two small fishes; a little ordinary fare, just enough for ourselves: What will these do toward feeding so great a company? (*John vi. 9.*)

18 But Jesus, for the further trial of their faith, and manifestation of his own power and goodness, said to them, How little soever your provisions are, bring them to me; that I may dispose of them as I see fit.

19 And then, ordering the people to sit down in several ranks upon the grass, he, in a religious manner, looked up to heaven, and craved a blessing upon the food, giving thanks † to his Father for it, and sanctifying it for present use by the word and prayer, therein setting us an example: And when he came to break the bread and the fishes, they by an act of his divine power and will increased under his hand, who gave them to his disciples, and they distributed them to the multitude.

20, 21. And so wonderful was the increase of this small quantity of provisions, that though the number that eat of it was five thousand men, besides women and children, there was enough to give them all a full meal, with a remainder of as many fragments as filled ‡ twelve baskets, one for each apostle; and so they were no losers, nor were they above eating the broken meat that was left.

22 The people were so affected with this miracle, that they immediately thought of setting up Christ for a king, (*John vi. 15.*) who could so easily subvert an army without any charge; and the disciples notions about temporal dominion, were strong enough to dispose them to join in the design: But to prevent such an attempt,

N O T E S.

† Christ's blessing the food, is called his giving thanks in a like case, (*chap. xv. 36. Mark vii. 6.*) and in this very case, (*John vi. 11.*) And this, as appears to me, related to his asking a blessing, as was usual, upon set meals, and not to his praying for a miraculous multiplication of the food: For I do not find that our Lord ever wrought his miracles by an application to his Father for assistance; but he commonly managed them in a sovereign, independent way, like the

God of nature, who had a power inherent in himself to perform them whenever he pleased: And as the widow's oil increased in the pouring it out, (*1 Kings iv. 4. &c.*) so it is probable that Christ, by his creating power, multiplied this food in breaking it. See the note on *Mark viii. 7.*

‡ Some think that each apostle carried a basket with him, as the Jews were wont to do when they travelled.

strained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

13 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

14 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary.

15 And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

16 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

17 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, *Of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.*

18 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee, on the water.

19 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the

tempt, he obliged them, against their own will, to get into a boat by themselves, and row over the sea of *Galilee* (*Mark* vi. 48.) whilst he staid behind them to dismiss the rest of the company, who would then be the more easily prevailed upon to go home.

23 And, when he had got rid of the multitude, he retired into a mountain to pray to his Father in secret; and there continued alone, pouring out his soul to him, and keeping up holy communion with him, till it was night; the second evening, which began at the sun-setting, (*Exod.* xii. 6. and *Deut.* xvi. 6.) being then come on.

24 By this time the disciples had reached to about the middle of the sea; but a terrible storm arising, and the wind being against them, their boat was tossed about by the boisterous waves, and they were in great jeopardy of their lives, and could not get forward.

25 But (1) when, after long toiling, they were in the greatest extremity and danger, Jesus, like the God whose peculiar property it is to *tread upon the waves of the sea*, (*Job* ix. 8.) went to them † toward the morning, and walked upon the tumultuous waters as if he had been on dry land.

26 When the disciples saw him walking upon the surface of the lake, and, for want of more light, could not easily distinguish him, they were in great consternation, supposing it to be an apparition of some evil spirit; and, in their fright, cried out like persons in distress and expectation of some mischief to befall them.

27 But Jesus, who came for their relief, immediately undeceived and comforted them, saying, with his usual voice, which they were well acquainted with, It is I; take courage, and do not be dismayed, either at this my appearance to you, or at the danger of the storm, from which I am come to save you.

28 Hereupon, they beginning to recover from their surprise and terror, *Peter*, who was always most forward among the disciples to shew his zeal and courage, said, Lord, if it be thou indeed, command and enable me to come to thee walking upon the water, in the same manner as thou dost.

29 And Jesus, that he might try his faith, convince him of its weakness, and at length confirm it, said to him, Come then, as you have desired: And as soon as *Peter* went down from the boat, the power of Christ so

far

N O T E.

† The Jews ordinarily divided their night only into three watches; and accounted the fourth, from about three o'clock, to belong to the morning rather than to the night. (*Mark* xiii. 35.) *Vid. Lightf. Har. Matr.*

the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship, came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Genesareth.

35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;

36 And he sought him, that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

far upheld him, that he really did walk upon the water toward his Lord.

30 But, notwithstanding this experience of extraordinary support, when he felt the force of the wind and the swellings of the sea, his unbelieving fears damp't his spirits, and made him begin to sink; upon which he cried out with great earnestness, Lord, help me, or else I must inevitably perish.

31 And Christ being as ready to assist him as he was to ask it, immediately reached out his hand, and took hold of him to encourage and secure him; but at the same time reproved him for his unbelief, saying, After you knew that it was I, and had experienced my power in carrying you so far through your danger, why, O man of weak and wavering faith, should you nevertheless doubt of my further care to preserve you amidst the most threatening circumstances that could attend you?

32 Then they went together into the boat; and, at that very instant, the stormy winds and waves were turned into a perfect calm.

33 And at this miraculous alteration in a moment, all that were in the vessel fell down at Christ's feet; and, adoring his divine power and compassion, said, Thou art indeed the Son of God, who doest what none but the sovereign Lord of the universe is able to do.

34 Now when Christ was with them, they soon reached the port they were bound for, and came towards *Capernaum*, into the country of *Genesareth*, (John vi. 17. and Mark vi. 53.) where he had been, and wrought miracles before, (chap. viii.)

35 And the people thereabouts, knowing what great things Jesus had done, and that he was returned amongst them, sent the good tidings to all the inhabitants of the towns and villages in that neighbourhood, desiring them to bring their sick to him, that he might heal them; whatsoever their distempers were.

36 And, when they came, they had such a reverence of him, such faith in him, and such a sense of their own unworthiness of his taking any particular notice of them, that they humbly and earnestly intreated they might only be allowed to touch the hem of his garment, which they believed would prove effectual to heal them; and as many as touched it with this faith, were immediately and perfectly recovered of all their diseases.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Sin is as much to be condemned and reprov'd in the greatest, as in the meanest men upon earth: But how malignant and impetuous is its rage! it is impatient of

of reproof, bursts through all bounds of humanity and honour, of justice, gratitude and goodness, of reason and conscience; it proceeds from one step to another, till it knows no restraints, but will venture upon rash and unlawful oaths, and pretend to be obliged, by such a bond of iniquity, to commit the most outrageous abominations. And, O what can tell to what lengths the sinner's lusts will carry him, in the unguarded hours of mirth and jollity! what monstrous wickedness will not man commit, if God do not withhold him! But O how stinging is the remorse, when conscience, like *Heracl's*, is awakened!—How happy is it to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, to commit ourselves by faith to his care and keeping, to wait for his salvation, and to imitate his goodness, whose power and compassions are infinite, who acts the God, feeds the hungry, heals the sick, and saves in times of the utmost extremity! He is able and ready to do all this for needy, diseased, and perishing souls, as well as bodies; and therefore is a proper object of our adoration and faith: And the more he is trusted, the better his honour and our own safety and comfort are consulted. In all our fears, troubles and dangers, let us fly to him for help: How great soever our trials may be, the least faith shall be succoured under them; and great faith shall entirely overcome them. *Lord, increase our faith.*

C H A P. XV.

Christ reproves the Pharisees for their traditions, 1,—9. States the true notion of defilement, 10,—20. Heals the woman of Canaan's daughter, 21,—28. Heals multitudes of their diseases, 29,—31. And feeds four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fishes, 32,—39.

TEXT.

THEN came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

PARAPHRASE.

SOOON after the things before-mentioned, certain Jewish doctors and Pharisees, members of the sanhedrim at Jerusalem, by whose authority matters of religion used to be determined, came from thence to Jesus; and, not being able to fix a charge of his having broke any commands of God, they would pick a quarrel with him for breaking the canons which they themselves had established, saying,

1 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

2 Why do you, who pretend to so much religion, suffer your disciples to transgress the laws and traditions of our ancestors, and of the chief governors of the church? For they have ordained, that men should always wash their hands before meat, to prevent defilement by touching their food; and yet your disciples pay no manner of regard to this injunction.

3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

3 But he answering, said to them, Let me ask you another question, which is much more difficult for you to answer; and that is, Why do ye, in your high zeal for human traditions, transgress the commands of God himself? Which is best, to have a strict regard, as my disciples have, to the divine law, and neglect your superstitious injunctions; or, like you, to be exact observers of these, and make no conscience of that, even in things of natural obligation?

4 For God commended, saying, Honour thy father and mother : and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

4 For God himself has given a moral command, (*Exod. xx. 12.*) that children should honour and obey their parents ; should shew them all testimonies of filial affection and respect ; and, in case they need it, should provide for them, in return for all their former care and cost, and for the capacities they received from them of getting and enjoying what they themselves have : And God has so solemnly guarded this law of nature and equity, as likewise to order, by a positive precept, that the disobedient son, (*ὁ κακολογῶν*) who speaks contemptuously of his father or mother, and uses them ill, shall surely be put to death, (*Exod. xxi. 17.*)

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be prohibited by me,

5, 6. But ye, by your traditions, say, That whatever may be the necessities of parents, if a man once binds himself by an oath or vow to devote to religious uses what he might have spared for the relief of his poor father or mother, he is thereby discharged from the obligation of applying it to their use, and thereby paying the honour and respect due to them ; and so, by your human traditions, ye make void the express commandment of God.

6 And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

7 O ye hypocritical pretenders to religion, and superstitious observers of invented ceremonies for external rather than for internal purity, well may the prophecy of *Isaiah* be applied to you, when God, speaking by him, says, (*Isa. xxix. 13.*)

7 Ye hypocrites, well did *Isaiah* prophesy of you, saying,

8 This people talk much of religion, and make an outward specious appearance of worshipping and honouring me, by their lip-service, and ceremonious acts of devotion ; and yet their hearts are estranged from me in their inmost temper, exercise, and designs.

8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips ; but their heart is far from me.

9 But while they withhold from me the homage of their souls, and, instead of making my prescriptions the only rule of their religion, set up human inventions and commands, some of which are directly contrary to an express law of mine, as that about honouring parents ; and others of them are additions to my law, as that about washing hands ; and every one of them are invasions of my authority, who only have power to appoint how I will be served and worshipped ; all their pretended holiness and devotion is a vain show ; it is neither truly and sincerely good in itself, nor is it acceptable to me, nor profitable to their own souls.

9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

10 And that the common people might be helped against their prejudices, and set right in so important a doctrine as this, Jesus said unto them, Observe and consider what I say, that ye may understand it, and know your own concern in it.

10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand :

11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?

13 But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone; they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

15 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth, goeth in to the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

11 What the *Pharisees* teach about persons being defiled by eating with unwashed hands, is a vain and superstitious tradition: For such hands touching the food, which a man puts into his mouth and eats, cannot defile his soul, or make him unclean in God's account; but that which really pollutes him, has its rise in the evil thoughts and inclinations of his heart, and vents itself by the sinful words of his lips.

12 Then Jesus withdrew from the people into an house, (*Mark* vii. 17.); and his disciples came to him and said, Didst thou not foresee, and hadst thou no concern about, the offence that the *Pharisees* would take at thy speaking so plainly and so publicly against the traditions which they are so fond of and lay such a mighty stress upon? And dost thou not perceive how provoked they are at it; and what prejudices it raises in their minds against thee and thy doctrine, which will expose thee more than ever to their rage and fury?

13 But Jesus answered, saying, It was necessary that I should speak as I did: For every ordinance and imposition in religion, which my heavenly Father has not instituted, shall be disowned by him, and must be rejected; it is not of God, and therefore shall not stand.

14 And as to the *Pharisees*, do not trouble yourselves, nor be concerned about their being offended or pleased; for they are self-conceited and obstinately ignorant teachers of the people, who blindly follow their dictates with an implicit faith: And what in the nature of things, and by the just judgment of God, can be their end, but that both the deceivers and the deceived, who wilfully persist in their erroneous ways, must perish together in the bottomless pit?

15 Then *Peter*, the usual spokesman of the disciples, through the forwardness of his temper, said to Jesus, Please to explain to us the meaning of this parable which thou hast delivered about the things that do or do not render a man unclean.

16 And Jesus said to them all, Are ye, who have been so much and so long with me, still so dull of understanding as not to know the meaning of so familiar and plain a parable as this? Surely better things might have been expected from you, whatever one might think of others.

17 Do ye not by this time easily apprehend, that whatsoever food a man eats, though it be ever so dirty, it goes into the stomach; and that which is unfit for nourishment passes through the body, and is discharged into the vault, without rendering the man in a moral sense

sense either better or worse.

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart, and they defile the man :

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

20 These are the things which defile a man : but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David ; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away ; for she crieth after us.

18 But the things which properly defile a man, or make him sinful, are such as proceed out of the corrupt fountain of his heart, and vent themselves through his lips and life.

19 For out of the depraved propensions of the heart proceed carnal imaginations, contrivances, and designs ; hatred, malice, and murder ; wanton desires, words, and actions ; adultery, fornication, and all uncleanness ; covetousness, injuries, cheats and thefts, lies and falsehood in witness-bearing ; and all evil-speaking or calumnies against men, and blasphemies and profaneness against God and religion.

20 These are the abominable things that make a man morally unclean and odious in the sight of God, unfit for his service, or for communion with him and an enjoyment of him : But to eat a meal, without first washing the hands, has no moral impurity in it ; it does not affect the soul, nor make any man a sinner before God.

21 When Jesus had spoken these things, he went away from those parts to the borders of the *Tyrians* and *Sidonians*.

22 And behold a surprising instance of his grace and signal earnest of mercy toward the *Gentiles* ! A certain woman of *Canaan* †, who was a *Greek*, (*Mark* vii. 26.) and so a stranger to the commonwealth of *Israel*, having heard of the many miraculous and merciful cures Christ had wrought, came from some part of that country, and earnestly cried after him, saying, O Lord, thou promised *Messiah* of *David's* race ‡, I beseech thee to have compassion upon me in healing my daughter, who is possessed, and dreadfully tormented by an evil spirit.

23 But Jesus, for the trial of her faith, seeming to take no notice of her, gave not one word of answer, good or bad ; till at length his disciples, tired with her loud and importunate cries, and moved with pity toward her, desired that he would please to grant this woman's request, or at least to send her away with some answer or other ; because it was so very affecting to hear how she followed them with her lamentable and incessant importunity.

24 But

N O T E S.

† *Canaan* was also called *Phœnicia* and *Syrophœnicia*, as lying between *Syria* properly so called, and *Phœnicia* by the sea-side. See *Whitby's* alphabetical table.

‡ It is not unlikely but that this woman,

though a *Gentile*, might be a proselyte, at least of the gate ; since she addressed our Lord as the Son of *David*, which was a known character of the *Messiah* among the Jews.

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the childrens bread, and to cast it to the dogs.

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

29 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went

24 But he answering said to them, How can ye expect that I should shew her mercy? For as I ordered you not to go in the way of the *Gentiles*, (chap. x. 5.); so the commission I received of my Father to exercise my personal ministry and perform my miracles, was not designed for the immediate benefit of the *Gentiles*, but of God's covenant-people the *Israelites*, who are gone astray, and are in perishing circumstances, like lost sheep.

25 The woman, notwithstanding this further discouragement, drew nearer to Christ; and, to express her humility and faith in him as a divine person, fell down at his feet and worshipped him, saying, with still greater earnestness, Lord, grant me the help which I want, and which thou art able to give.

26 But that he might yet further try and humble her, he seemed to refuse and reproach her, saying, My special blessings are childrens bread, which belong to God's peculiar people the *Jews*; and it is not proper to give such favours to *Gentiles*, who are without the pale of the covenant, and deserve to be treated with neglect and disdain, as men use to deal with dogs for their impurity and vileness.

27 To this she replied, Lord, I own what thou sayest is true; I am as vile and worthless as a dog, and do not deserve any mercy at thine hands; and yet wretched outcasts, as we poor *Gentiles* are, may be allowed some small pittance of favour, since even dogs are suffered to pick up the crumbs under their master's table: There is bread enough for the children, and to spare; let me therefore have the scrapes that may be given to others; and in the greatness of thy bounty, I beseech thee to spare me this one mercy, which is so necessary for me, and will be no loss or injury to the children.

28 Then Jesus, as if he were surprised and overcome by the strength and importunity of her faith, (which, by a secret power, he had all along supported and encouraged,) answered, Blessed art thou among women, who hast been thus importunate and patient, resolute and depending upon me in thy pleas for mercy, under all discouragements. This is an extraordinary and noble faith indeed: It has power with me, and has prevailed; its request is granted to the utmost of your heart's desire. And at that very instant her daughter was perfectly healed, in token of his honouring the faith which had so highly honoured him.

29 After this, Jesus went from those parts toward the sea of *Galilee*, nigh unto which he set himself down

went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:

31 Inasmuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? and they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

upon a hill, as he was wont to do when he intended to preach to the people.

30 And great multitudes, who had seen or heard of his former miracles, flocked to him, bringing along with them such as were lame, or blind, or dumb, or (*ῥακκ*) crooked; or afflicted with any other kind of disease; and they laid them down at Jesus's feet, as miserable objects of his compassion; and he mercifully and miraculously healed them all:

31 So that the people were exceedingly amazed when all on a sudden they heard the dumb speak, and saw the crooked and deformed made straight and whole, the lame walk, and the blind receive their sight, and all manner of diseases healed, at the will and word of Christ; and they, together with the persons that were cured, rejoiced, and ascribed glory to the God of *Israel*, who, according to ancient prophecy, (*Isa. xxxv. 5, 6.*) had sent the Messiah to exercise such divine power and mercy among them.

32 Then Jesus, intending still further to manifest his glory, called his disciples to him; and that he might impart his design to them, whom he condescended to treat as his friends, said, As this great company have, in their abundant zeal and affection to me, been three days together hearing my word, and seeing my works, with little food for their sustenance, and now have nothing to eat; my compassion is moved towards them, and I am determined not to send the poor creatures away fasting, lest some of them should faint with hunger before they get home.

33 His disciples, not reflecting on his late miraculous feeding five thousand, in like circumstances, (*chap. xiv. 21.*) answered, How can we provide sufficiently, in this solitary place, for the entertainment of such a multitude of people as are here?

34 But Jesus replied, for the trial of their faith, What provisions have ye got among you? And they answered, Only seven loaves of bread, and a few small fishes, to supply our own wants.

35 Here was indeed more food, and less company, than in the former instance; but it was as much above the ability of any creature to multiply this store for answering the present occasion, as it was in the other: And as Christ did not aim at ostentation, or at working miracles beyond necessity; he, designing to make use of the whole quantity of food that was at hand, ordered all the people to sit down in ranks upon the ground.

36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them; and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets full.

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.

39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

36 Then, taking the bread and fish in his hand, he gave thanks for these provisions, and asked a blessing upon them, as was usual at ordinary meals; and whilst he brake and delivered them to the disciples, his divine power gave an increase, and the disciples distributed them to the multitude. (See the note on chap. xiv. 19.)

37, 38. And so exceedingly was this small quantity of provision enlarged, that though there were four thousand men, besides women and children, who made a full meal of it, there remained afterwards as many fragments as filled seven baskets: So that for every loaf there was left a basket-full of the broken food, which was a good return to the disciples; and yet these fragments were not so many as in the other miracle of this sort, here being not so many people to leave morsels out of their several shares, after they could eat no more.

39 And when all this company were abundantly refreshed, Jesus dismissed them, that they might go to their several homes; and he himself took water with his disciples, and went in a boat to the country of Magdala, which contained *Dalmanutha*. (Mark viii. 10.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What will all pretences of piety and external purity avail us, if our hearts are full of iniquity? And what is all our religion worth, if it have not divine institution for its warrant, and the heart be not engaged in it? Human inventions and impositions, in the worship of God, are invasions of his authority; they corrupt his worship, mislead the heart, turn it aside from his ordinances, and seek their own establishment, even to the destruction of moral duties: Nonconformity to them is our duty; and they should be rooted out of the church, and of our hearts, lest we ourselves be rooted out of Christ's kingdom. But, O what a source of iniquity is the heart of man! How great and many are the defilements that it spreads through the life! How much more concerned should we be for cleansing from these, than for ceremonial purifications! And how ready is our blessed Lord to patronize his disciples in opposition to human impositions, to relieve them in all their distresses, to heal their various maladies, and supply their wants! They, who follow him in his ways, shall be taken care of by his providence: And yet how dull of understanding are his own people; and how apt to forget the wonders of his power and love! But great faith honours Christ, and he will honour it: It breaks through all discouragements, and lays hold on the least hints of mercy: And though the infinitely wise and gracious Saviour may sometimes seem to disregard and discountenance it, and may delay his answer to it; yet he secretly upholds it, and stirs up its importunity in prayer, till at length he will certainly fulfil the desire of the believing heart: And blessed be God that in this way *Gentile* sinners shall find mercy with him.

C H A P. XVI.

Christ's discourse with the Pharisees about a sign from heaven, 1,—4. With his disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees, 5,—12. About his

his own character, 13,—20. About his own sufferings, 21,—23. And about their bearing his cross, 24,—28.

TEXT.

THE Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and, tempting, desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather, for the sky is red :

3 And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day, for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky ; but can ye not discern the signs of the times ?

4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

PARAPHRASE.

THE self-righteous hypocritical Pharisees, and the free-thinking Sadducees, however opposite to one another, were alike enemies to Christ ; and therefore they agreed to apply to him, under pretence of desiring to be satisfied that he came from God, and to ask him to give them some such sign of it immediately from heaven, as was given at mount Sinai, when the law was delivered to Moses † ; thereby designing to put a difficulty upon him.

2, 3. But, as all his miracles of power and goodness had been plain and sufficient demonstrations of his divine authority, he would not gratify their unreasonable curiosity and perverse unbelief ; and, knowing the deceitful and captious design of their demand, he answered, O ye hypocrites, why do ye thus tempt me to give needless and unprofitable proofs of what is already so very evident ? Ye are sagacious enough to observe the signs and tokens of fair or foul weather, by the colour of the sky ; if the evening be red, ye conclude that the morrow will be fair ; and if the morning be red and lowring, ye conclude it will be a wet or stormy day : Probability determines your thoughts and conduct in these cases ; and yet even the highest certainty will not influence you in things of the utmost importance. What prodigious blindness and obstinacy is it that binds your discerning from the ancient prophecies which are fulfilled in me, and from my numerous miracles, that the Messiah is now come to set up his kingdom among you, and that your ruin is hastening apace for rejecting him !

4 Ye are a degenerate and wicked generation of men ; or else, after all that ye have seen and heard, ye would not continue in unbelief, and ask for further proofs : But no other sort of miracles shall be wrought for your conviction than ye have already seen ; except that of my own resurrection from the dead, after I shall have been buried three days and three nights in the earth, which was prefigured by the prophet Jonas's lying the same length of time in the great fish's belly. And, having said this, he left them as incorrigible sinners, and went away with his disciples over the sea of Galilee. (Mark viii. 13.)

NOTE.

† Or perhaps they might mean, that he should give them the sign of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, Dan. vii. 13.

5 And

5 And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees.

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread.

8 Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

10 Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

11 How is it that ye do not understand, that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees?

12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees.

13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, say-

5 And just as his disciples were got to the other side of the lake, they recollected that they had forgot to carry a sufficient quantity of bread along with them to supply their necessities.

6 Thereupon Jesus took an occasion to give them spiritual instructions, under a metaphor relating to bread, saying, "See to it, and be very careful that ye be not infected with the leaven of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*;" meaning their corrupt doctrines, which were apt to insinuate and diffuse themselves like leaven in a mass of dough.

7 Upon which the disciples, mistaking his meaning, thought within themselves, and said privately one to another, (*iv lautois*) This is designed as a reproof for our carelessness in not providing so much bread as may be necessary for us.

8 But Jesus, perceiving how grossly they mistook him, said to them, O how astonishing is it, that ye should have so little faith, as to be disturbed about your having no bread, or to think that I am concerned about your neglect in not furnishing yourselves with it!

9, 10. Do ye not yet understand my way of taking occasions from earthly things to suggest those which are spiritual, nor my power and goodness in providing necessary food in times of want? Have ye already forgot how, in the scarcity of a desert, I at one time lately fed five thousand men with five loaves, and at another four thousand with seven loaves; and how many baskets full of fragments remained, after both those great companies were satisfied? And could ye suppose that I would not take as much care of, or were not as able to supply you, if need required it?

11 How then comes it to pass, that after all this ye should be so dull of understanding, as to imagine that I concerned myself about your having no bread, when I cautioned you to take heed of the leaven of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*?

12 Then they saw their mistake: And though Christ did not hereby plainly tell them his meaning; yet, upon further reflection, they understood that his solemn caution related, not to their care about bread, but about the hypocritical and artful errors, traditions, ordinances, and perverse reasonings, of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, that they might not be infected by them.

13 When Jesus afterwards was going with his disciples, through some part of the *Upper Galilee*, into the towns of *Cesarea Philippi*, (*Mark* viii. 27.) he, for their trial and confirmation, asked them, What the people thought and said about him; or what sort of

saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this

person they took him to be, who appeared among them as a real man, and under the title of the Son of Man?

14 And they answered, There are very different opinions among them about thee: Some talk as if they thought thee to be *John the Baptist*, risen again from the dead; others take thee to be *Elias*, who they suppose is come before the Messiah to anoint him to his office; and others think that thou art *Jeremiah*, or some other of the ancient prophets, raised again to life.

15 Then he put the question close to themselves, saying, Whatsoever others think or say of me, whom do ye, my apostles, take me to be? What are your own thoughts about me?

16 And *Peter*, being a man of a prompt spirit, answered in the name of the rest, they consenting and approving, Thou art neither *John the Baptist*, nor *Elias*, nor *Jeremiah*, nor any of the ancient prophets; nor art thou merely a man, but art more than a bare prophet, and than a mere man: Thou art the true Messiah, and, by way of eminence, the proper Son of the eternal God, who is the Fountain of life.

17 Then Jesus replied to him, This is a glorious confession of faith indeed; and great is your happiness, O *Simon* son of *Jonah*, in thus believing on me: For your knowledge of this fundamental truth did not arise from any principle of nature or education, or from the wisdom and reason of man, nor was you taught it by any man; but my heavenly Father has irradiated your mind, and revealed it to you, by his Spirit, for the saving of your soul.

18 And by reason of this noble confession of me, you may well be called *Peter*, or a *rock*: And, on occasion of my mentioning this name, I tell you, that † this person

N O T E.

† It is highly probable that Christ pointed with his finger to himself, when he mentioned these words; in like manner as when he said, *Destroy this temple*, &c. meaning the temple of his body, *John* ii. 19, 21.: And as he is spoken of in scripture as the only foundation of the church, *1st*. xviii. 16. *1 Cor.* iii. 11, 12. and *1 Pet.* ii. 6, 7.: so this is that which the apostles and prophets laid in their preaching, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone*, (*Eph.* ii. 20.) But a supposition of *Peter's* person being the rock here intended, is highly derogatory from the honour of the person of Christ, and lays a very insufficient basis for a spiritual building. It likewise appears strangely uncouth to suppose, that so transient an act as his confession, or as his afterwards preaching the gos-

pel, and not the person or doctrine contained therein, should be the foundation of the church. It could at most be only *laying the foundation, like a wise master-builder, according to the grace of God given to him*, as the apostle *Paul* speaks of himself, (*1 Cor.* iii. 10.); and in this sense, the names of all the *twelve apostles* were equally inscribed on the *twelve foundations of the city of God*. *Rev.* xxi. 14. But if any thing personal and peculiar to *Peter* be intended in this and the following verse, it relates only to his being the first preacher of the faith he here confessed, to lay the foundation of the Christian church, first among the *Jews*, and afterwards among the *Gentiles*, (*Acts* ii. and x.); and so it can never sound a claim for the supremacy, or the infallibility, of the pope: For in this respect

this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

person, whom you have now confessed to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah; or, which amounts to much the same thing, this great article of your faith in him, is like an immoveable, everlasting rock, on which I will build my church, consisting of all true believers that shall agree with you herein; and I will so establish them upon this sure foundation, that neither all † the power and policy of devils and their instruments, nor death itself, shall ever so far prevail, as to destroy the souls of any that truly rest upon it for eternal life, or to root my interest out of the world.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

19 And as you, in the name of all my apostles, have made this important confession of me, I give the key of knowledge and discipline unto you as the first preacher of my gospel to *Jews and Gentiles*, and unto them and their successors as your fellow-labourers and officers in my church and kingdom: And whatsoever you or they ‡ shall do, in a doctrinal way, by preaching in my name, and declaring what practices are unlawful and what are lawful, and so binding or charging sin upon the consciences of others, and loosing or acquitting them from guilt; and whatever any of you shall do, in a judicial way, by the exercise of spiritual and holy discipline, according to my will and word, in the administration of my kingdom upon earth; all this shall be surely ratified and confirmed in heaven, and be approved of in the day of judgment.

20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

20 Then he strictly commanded the apostles not to publish, as yet, what they knew about his being the Messiah and a Person of divine original; lest the *Pharisees* should be provoked to cut him off before his time; or lest the people should tumultuously gather together, to make him a temporal king by force; or at least they,

who

N O T E S.

spect *Peter* could have no successor, much less one that resides at *Rome*; and the pope is so far from being the first preacher of the gospel; and from going in person to convert *Jews and Heathens*, that he does not use to preach at all.

† As gates and walls were the strength of cities, and as courts of judicature were held in their gates, this phrase may very well signify the power and policy of Satan and his instruments. *Vid. Gloss. Editor. Sac. cap. xli. p. 392.*

‡ As the use of keys is to open doors and shut them; so delivering the keys to a person was an emblem of the authority vested in him as a steward, or as one put in trust with the management of stores and provisions and other affairs for the honour and service

of his Lord. And as what *Christ* here says to *Peter*, he says afterwards (*chap. xviii. 17, 18.*) to the church, and (*John xx. 23.*) to all the apostles; it seems that it is to be understood with a relation to the succeeding state of the church in all ages of the world; and is to be explained by after settlements in the New Testament, with regard to the authority of ministerial declarations, and church-acts, in the name of *Christ*, as far as they are duly managed in agreement with the word of God. But I rather think, that *Mat. xviii. 17, 19.* relates only to church-authority; so what is said here, and in *John xx. 23.* relates principally, if not entirely, to that which is ministerial. See the note and paraphrase on *John xx. 23.*

who would not then believe the disciples report, should be prejudiced before hand against the testimony they were to give to him after his resurrection from the dead.

21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

21 The faith of the disciples being now raised so high concerning him, he thought it a proper season to acquaint them with the great sufferings and abasement he was to undergo, that they might not expect him to appear with temporal grandeur for their worldly advantage, nor be shocked at the sight of the humbling and terrible things which would ere long befall him: And therefore from that time forward he began, as opportunities offered, to tell them more plainly than ever before, that he must go to *Jerusalem*, and there suffer many cruelties and indignities by the malice of the *Jewish* sanhedrim, (which consisted of their rulers, chief priests, and *scribes*,) till at length they would put him to death; but, for their comfort, he added, that on the third day he should rise again to life. (See the note on chap. xii. 40.)

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

22 This was strange doctrine to them, who could not tell how to reconcile it to the faith they then had in his exalted character, and to their hopes of his reigning with power and glory as a temporal monarch among them: And therefore *Peter*, with his usual rash and forward temper, took him aside from the rest of the disciples, and so far forgot himself, and the noble confession he had lately made, as to expostulate with him, by way of passionate contradiction and displeasure, saying, We cannot bear a thought of this; it is abominable to suppose that the Son of God, and the Messiah, should suffer such reproachful and terrible things as these: Lord, have pity upon thyself, (*καὶ οὐκ οὐκ,*) and then none of them can befall thee: Nay, rather than they should, we and the people, who have thee in admiration, will fight to deliver thee out of such cruel hands.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for

23 But Christ took this very heinously; and, turning short upon *Peter*, severely reprov'd him for it, saying, In this you are an adversary † to me; notwithstanding the heat of your avowed friendship, Satan hath given it a carnal selfish turn, and you are serving his interest by attempting to prevent the great end for which I am come into the world. Be gone; say no more of this matter;

N O T E.

† As *Satan* signifies an *adversary*, possibly our Lord might only mean, that *Peter* herein acted the part of an enemy to him. But, as this motion had a real tendency to favour the devil's interest, and discourage Jesus in his work; and as it proceeded from such car-

nal principles and motives as a *Satan* excites to, it might also be spoken of as his work; though it seems that he did not design to prevent Christ's sufferings and death, since we are expressly told, that *the devil put it in the heart of Judas to betray him*. John xiii. 2.

for thou favourest
not the things that
be of God, but
those that be of
men.

matter; I am much displeased with you for throwing such an obstacle in my way. For your judgment and affections herein are not, according to my Father's will and design, relating to his glory in the redemption and salvation of lost sinners; but, according to the maxims of carnal policy, relating to the honour, ease, and riches of this world.

24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

24 Then Jesus, turning to his disciples, some of the people also being with them, (*Mark* viii. 34.) said, As I myself must be perfected by sufferings; so whoever is heartily willing and resolved to be my disciple, must deny his own fleshly wisdom and will, and secular inter-cits, and submit to the will of God without reluctance or reserve; and whatever losses or persecutions, even unto death, he may be called to endure for my sake, he must, with faith and patience, follow my example in sufferings as well as obedience. (See note on *Mark* viii. 34.)

25 For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.

25 For he that thinks to preserve himself from temporal death by sinful compliances and forsaking me, shall surely fall short of eternal life, and be plunged into endless misery: But he that suffers the loss of a temporal life on account of his faith in me and obedience to me, or because he will not make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, shall not be hurt of the second death, but obtain everlasting life, which is the life of the soul, and is best of all.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

26 For what would be the advantage of any one's possessing the present life, with all the riches, honours and pleasures that this world can afford, if at last, through his inordinate affection to them, he should lose all the welfare, peace, and happiness of his own immortal soul? Or, if once this is lost, what valuable consideration can he ever offer to God for its redemption? and what would he not give, if he had it, and it might be accepted, in exchange for this soul of his, that it might not be miserable to all eternity?

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

27 He will one day find this to be an important consideration, whatever he thinks of it now: For the Messiah, who, as the Son of man, at present appears in the fashion of a man, attended with all the mean circumstances and sinless infirmities of human nature in its humbled state, shall, in the day of judgment, appear as the Son God, in the form of God, shining in the glory of the same divine nature with his Father, and attended with a grand retinue of holy angels; (see the note on *Luke* ix. 26.) And then he, as Judge of the whole world, will pass sentence of eternal life upon the righteous

teous, and of eternal death upon the wicked, according as they shall be proved to be such by their respective works.

28 And, as an evidence and emblem of this, I assuredly tell you, There are some now present †, who shall live to see the Messiah coming to set up his mediatorial kingdom, with great power and glory, in the effusion of his Spirit, in the wonderful increase of the gospel-church, in the subversion of the *Mosaic* frame of worship, and in the destruction of the city, temple, and nation of the *Jews*, for their obstinacy and unbelief; yea, some shall soon see a glimpse and prefiguration of his future still more eminent glory, (chap. xvii. 1, 2.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How do the enemies of Christ and his church combine together against him and them, though these enemies be ever so much at variance among themselves! and how much more sagacious are they in temporal, than in spiritual concerns! But O how great is the blessedness of those that are savingly enlightened with the knowledge of Christ, and brought to believe in him! God has distinguished them by his grace; they are built on the Lord Jesus, as a sure foundation that will never fail them; and no designs formed against them shall ever prevail to their ruin. Christ, as the Son of man, has the tenderest compassion toward them; and, as the Son of God, has almighty power to save them, in defiance of all that oppose them: He has gone through the deepest humiliation and sufferings for their redemption, and now lives in his glory for their security and salvation: And whatever spiritual powers he has lodged with men, they are all for the good of his church, to be exercised by his commission, and with a reference to his final judgment; and they shall then be confirmed or reversed, according as they shall be found to agree or disagree with his word. How should believers rest and rejoice in him, own and honour him, and even triumph in the thoughts of the day; when he shall shine in all the majesty of the God, and of their Judge, who will come to save them! But, alas! how busy is Satan with us, even in the hours of our strongest faith and sweetest enjoyments! and what need have we to be upon our watch against him, and against the deceitfulness of our own hearts, lest we be puffed up with pride, grow impatient of humbling prospects, oppose the wisdom and will of Christ, and bring ourselves under his rebukes!—We must follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes, if we would follow him at last to heaven. What if we suffer tribulation and death for his sake, in the way? An immortal life of blessedness lies at the end; and whatsoever we may lose for Christ, we shall be no losers by him: His crown will make a rich and eternal amends for his cross. And O how much better is it to deny ourselves here, for an everlasting life hereafter, which can never be lost, than to deny him here, to our endless ruin, which can never be retrieved! What in all this world can once be compared with the loss, or salvation, of a man's own soul!

N O T E.

† To *taste death*, is a Hebraism for *dying*. Now all these things were seen by the apostle John, and some others, before they died; and the transfiguration, which some think is here peculiarly referred to because all the evan-

gelists make this the preface to their account of it, was seen by Peter, James, and John, about a week afterwards. Chap. xvii. 1. Mark ix. 1, 2. and Luke ix. 27, 28, 29.

C H A P. XVII.

Christ's transfiguration, 1,—13. His healing a lunatic, 14,—21. His prediction

prediction of his own death and resurrection, 22, 23. And his paying tribute, 24,—47.

TEXT.

AND after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3 And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one

PARAPHRASE.

ABOUT that day seven-night, after Christ had spoken of the glory in which some then living should see him appear, (see the note on *Luke ix. 28.*) he privately went up an high mountain †, and took with him three of his favourite disciples, *Peter, James,* and his brother *John*, to give them a glimpse of his glory; that as they were, in a little time, to be spectators of his agony in the garden, (*chap. xxvi. 37.*) they might be so likewise, before-hand, of his majesty; and that out of the mouth of two or three witnesses those important facts might be established.

2 And as he was praying, (*Luke ix. 29.*) the appearance of his body was changed ‡ in their sight, from the ordinary form of a man and likeness of a servant, into the illustrious form or appearance of God, that he might look like himself as the Lord of glory: And his indwelling deity darted out its rays through the veil of his flesh with such transcendent splendor, that his face shone with divine majesty, like the sun; and all his body was so irradiated by it, that his cloaths could not conceal its glory, but became white and glittering, as the very light, with which he covered himself as with a garment.

3 And behold a further specimen of his last glorious appearance, when he will come with ten thousand of his saints! There appeared *Moses* the giver of the law, and *Elias* the restorer of it, in glorious forms §: and they conversed with Christ about his sufferings and death at *Jerusalem*, (*Luke ix. 31.*)

4 Then the disciples hearing the conversation that passed between them, and thereby knowing that these two persons were *Moses* and *Elias*; *Peter*, with his usual forwardness, spoke to Jesus, crying out with wonder and joy, Lord, we are in a perfect ecstasy at this vision: How glorious and delightful is the sight! and how happy would it be for us to continue here all our days amidst this glory! If it please thee, we will pitch three tents, or make three booths of boughs, in this place;

one

N O T E S.

† This is commonly thought to have been, mount Tabor.

‡ Μεταμορφωθῆναι, he was metamorphosed, seems to refer to μορφή θεοῦ, the form of God, and μίσην δούλου καὶ ομοιωματι ἀνθρώπου, the form of a servant, and the likeness of men,

Phil. ii. 6, 7.: and may intimate, that the divine rays, which the indwelling God let out on this occasion, made the glorious change from one of the forms into the other.

§ Their bodies were probably preserved for this purpose.

† This

one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

4 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

5 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

6 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

7 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

8 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

9 And his disciples asked him, say-

one for thee, another for *Moses*, and a third for *Elias*, that we may all dwell together in the mount.

5 While he was speaking these words, behold an immediate testimony to Christ from God his Father! † A bright cloud of glory, as a gracious emblem of the Divine Presence, encompassed all that were there; and the disciples heard the Father's voice concerning Jesus out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whose person, office, and work, I acquiesce, and am highly delighted; and your happiness is not to be expected from extraordinary visions, but in and from him: As therefore ye have hitherto had *Moses* and the prophets, I now turn you over to my dear Son; and, in whatsoever he shall teach and command you, hearken to him.

6 And when the disciples heard with what divine majesty this voice was uttered, they, being conscious of their own sinfulness and frailty, were so exceedingly astonished and terrified, that they fell down with their faces flat to the ground.

7 But Jesus raised them up, whom an awful sense of God's immediate presence had cast down; he came in his tenderness and affection, and taking hold of them, strengthened and comforted them, and bad them rise and not be afraid of any evil whilst he was with them.

8 And when they got up and looked about them, the extraordinary vision and appearances were all over; and they saw Jesus alone in his usual form and habit, just as he was before this transformation.

9 Then they came down with him from the mount of vision; and, as they were descending, talked over the glorious appearance they had seen: And Jesus commanded them not to tell it to the rest of the disciples, lest they should be grieved and discouraged because they were not likewise admitted to the sight; nor to let any persons know it till he the Messiah should rise again from the dead, lest it should exasperate some the more against him, and lest his approaching sufferings should stumble others and make them disbelieve it: But he gave leave for their publishing it afterwards; because his resurrection, and the glory which should follow, would make it credible enough, and confirm their testimony about it.

10 They accordingly took no notice of it to any one for the present; but were puzzled, in their own thoughts,

N O T E.

† This seems to have been such a cloud of glory as directed *Israel* in the wilderness; which, as Jewish writers observe, departed at the death of *Moses*. But it now appeared again in honour of our Lord, as the great prophet of the church, who was prefigured by *Moses*.

laying, Why then say the scribes, that Elias must first come?

thoughts, about what he meant by the Messiah's rising again from the dead, (*Mark ix. 10.*) And as *Elias* staid so little a while with Christ, and even his appearing at all must be made a secret of, they asked him, Why it was so commonly said by their doctors, in expounding the law and the prophets, that *Elias* must publicly appear to usher in the Messiah?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, *Elias* truly shall first come, and restore all things.

11 Jesus replied, It is very sure that *Elias* was to be the forerunner of the Messiah, according to the prophecy concerning him, (*Mal. iv. 5, 6.*) He was to preach the doctrines of repentance and remission of sins, and to point out the Christ, and direct people to him for the reformation of all that was amiss in the church and in world.

12 But I say unto you, that *Elias* is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed: likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

12 But (says he) I tell you, that, answerable to the design of the prophecy, *Elias* (i. e. one coming in the spirit and power of *Elias*) has already appeared and done his office; and the scribes and Pharisees did not know and receive or own him under that character, but rejected his baptism, and said he had a devil, (*Luke vii. 30, 31.*); and they were pleased when he was put to death: In like manner they also reject and reproach the Messiah himself, and will procure his death.

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of *John the Baptist*.

13 Then the disciples understood him to mean, that *John the Baptist* was the *Elias* prophesied of as the forerunner of Christ.

14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying,

14 The day after this, (*Luke ix. 37.*) when Jesus, in company with *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, returned from the mountain to the multitude, who were gathered together about the rest of the disciples that were left below, (*Mark ix. 14.*) a certain man came to him, and, kneeling down before him like an humble supplicant, said,

15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

15 Lord, if thou art able, (*Mark ix. 22.*) I beseech thee to have compassion upon my son, who is my only child, and is grievously tormented by an evil spirit that has got possession of him, (*Luke ix. 38, 39.*): For at certain seasons of the moon he is distracted, and has the falling-sickness to such a degree, that many times he suddenly tumbles into the fire, and at others into the water, to the endangering of his life.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

16 And while thou wert absent, I brought him to thy disciples, in hopes that they might dispossess Satan, and heal my son; but alas! they tried, and found it such a desperate case, that they could do nothing in it.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and per-

17 Then Jesus rebuked him, and the unbelieving multitude, and especially the scribes, who seemed to insult the disciples, and reflect upon their Lord, because they

perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit, this

they had failed in their attempt to work this cure, (*Mark ix. 14.*); and he said to them †, O incredulous, degenerate, and froward race of men, how shall I continue working miracles among you, before ye will be convinced of my power and goodness? How long shall I bear with your obstinate infidelity? Bring the child to me, that I may shew mine arm is not shortened that it cannot save.

18 They accordingly brought him to Jesus, and he immediately, with divine majesty and authority, reprimanded the devil, and forced him, by a bare word of command, to come out of the lad, who was perfectly healed that very instant.

19 As soon as Jesus had withdrawn from the people, his disciples being concerned at the defeat they had met with in attempting this cure, and not knowing the reason of it, came and asked him, Whence it was that they could not cast out the devil and heal this child?

20 And Jesus answered them, It was for want of a proper and present exercise of faith in you, as well as in the parent of the child: For I assuredly tell you, that if at any time ye truly depend upon me, and the promises of my presence with you, though it be only with the least degree of sincere faith, such as, comparatively speaking, is but like a grain of mustard-seed; ye shall do things that are seemingly as impossible, as, by a word's speaking, to remove that mountain, which ye see, to another place; and nothing shall be too hard for you to do, for the glory of God, in the discharge of your duty and office, by my power accompanying you.

21 However, be it known unto you, that ‡ this kind of

N O T E S.

† Most expositors suppose this rebuke was given to the disciples; but the appellation that our Lord here uses, is more like those which he was wont to give to the scribes than to his disciples: And if he now called them a faithless and perverse generation, they would have had no occasion afterwards to ask him the reason, as they did, (*ver. 19.*) why they could not cast out this devil. Besides, the answer was directed to the father of the child, as one of this perverse generation, *Mark ix. 19.* see the note there.

‡ Interpreters generally think that our Lord meant this kind of *miracles*, viz. casting out of devils. But as, on one hand, the antecedent, according to this supposition, lies remote, and is rather collected from, than expressed in, the foregoing context; and it is difficult to make good sense of the phrase, *this kind of miracles goes not out*: And

as, on the other hand, *faith* is the next antecedent, and is expressly mentioned in the preceding verse; and the style, *this kind of faith goes not out*, lies easy and natural; I rather chuse the sense given in the paraphrase.—What our Lord here mentions about prayer and fasting, is no way inconsistent with what he had said against his disciples fasting whilst he should continue with them, (*Matt. ix. 14, &c.*) For that related only to the frequent and stated fasts of the Pharisees, and of *John the Baptist's* disciples; but was no prohibition of his own disciples fasting, during his continuance on earth, upon extraordinary occasions, like this: Besides, at the time here referred to, Christ was absent from these disciples, and they did not know whether they should ever see him again; and then fasting was as proper for them, as in any other state of things.

‡ Διςπαρε.

this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting.

22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men;

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again: and they were exceeding sorry.

24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute-money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon: of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

of faith, which I am speaking of, does not go forth, to the working of this sort of miracles, without earnest prayer and humiliation, with fasting, to obtain it.

22 After this, (*ἀναστρέφοντες*) as they were passing through some part of *Galilee* in their return to *Capernaum*, (*Mark ix. 30.*) Jesus again put his disciples in mind of his sufferings and death, saying, The Messiah will be delivered up (*παράδοδος*) by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and by the perfidious management of others, into the hands of cruel men:

23 And they will put him to death, and on the third day he shall rise again. But the disciples being so strangely stupid as not to know what he meant by rising again on the third day, (*Mark ix. 32.*) were exceedingly troubled to hear of the barbarous usage, the calamities and death, that were to befall him.

24 And when they were come to *Capernaum*, where both Jesus and *Peter* usually dwelt, (*chap. iv. 13. and viii. 14.*) some officers of the temple, who collected the offerings for its service, came to *Peter*, and asked him, Whether his master would not pay the half-shekel †, which used to be given annually by the *Jews* of twenty years old and upwards, toward the expence of the daily sacrifice, and other necessaries for the worship of God? (*Exod. xxx. 13, 14, 15.*)

25 *Peter* answered, Yes, I make no doubt but he will: And going into the house to speak to him about it, Jesus, who by his divine omniscience knew what had passed, and with what design *Peter* came, prevented him with this question, saying, *Simon*, what do you think about persons rendering custom or tribute to earthly princes? Do they use to demand such payments of their children and heirs, whose interests are one and the same with their own? Or do they only require them of other people, who, being not of their family, are either subjects, or foreigners that trade with them?

26 *Peter* readily answered, They demand them only of subjects and foreigners: Upon which Jesus replied, You see then, that the children themselves are exempted from all such taxes; and for that reason, I, who am the Son of God, and Heir of all, am not obliged to pay tribute for the service of my Father's house, which is my temple as well as his, (*Mal. iii. 1.*)

27 How-

N O T E.

† Δράχμα. The *drachma*, or tribute-money here mentioned, usually signifies the money that was yearly paid into the treasury of the temple. Two of these made a half-shekel, in value about fifteen pence; and four made the stater (*σταρὰ*) or shekel,

the piece of money mentioned ver. 27. And I think the way of Christ's arguing on this occasion cannot easily be understood, without supposing that the tribute here spoken of was demanded by the temple-officers for its service. *Vid. Lightf. Hor. Heb. in Loc.*

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

27 However, as I am made under the law, and am come to fulfil all righteousness, so I wave my original right: And that we may not give any occasion of offence to the men that demand this sort of tribute, or to any of the people, and may not needlessly prejudice them against me and my doctrine as if I had no regard to the temple; go away to the lake of *Gennesaret*, and, letting down your hook, take up the first fish that shall be caught; then, opening his mouth, you will find a *stater*, or piece of money of the value of a shekel, which is just enough to satisfy for me and you; and therewith pay the temple-officers for us both; though, by that instance of my dominion over all, you may see that they have no right to require it of me.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What an affecting mixture of glory and abasement was there in Christ's appearance upon earth! He shone in the majesty of God, was attended with glorified saints, was avouched and owned by his Father's immediate voice; and the disciples saw his glory, as the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth: And yet, for our sakes, he became so poor, as not to have a shekel to spare, without a miracle to provide it. Devils and distempers flew before him; and yet a perverse and faithless generation despised him. At length he was betrayed and crucified; but, after that, his resurrection from the dead put a lustre upon his sufferings, and wiped off all their reproach. O glorious and condescending Saviour! He that could command a fish to come to *Peter's* hook, with a piece of money, which either by his omniscience he knew was in its mouth, or by his omnipotence he put it into it, could easily have supplied himself with all the stores and riches of nature; and he that raised himself from the dead, could easily have prevented his sufferings and death, if he had not chosen to submit to them: But as his Father had in eternal counsels determined them, he freely consented to them, that he might glorify him on earth, and bring redemption to his people. O how should the thoughts of Christ's majesty recommend him to our faith, and make us rejoice and triumph in his cross! and had we more faith in these things, with what delight and ease should we perform the most difficult duties he calls us to! Were it not for want of this, who knows what wonders his power would work for us? But unbelief dishonours him, and mars all.—A glimpse of his glory in an ordinance will make us say, Lord, it is good for us to be here; how much more shall we find it good to be with him in heaven, where the saints will be all glorified together, will know one another, and converse with him in all his glory! Was the Divine Majesty now to shine in its own immediate light upon us, how soon would it overset us! But blessed be God, its present displays are tempered, and suited to our frail and sinful circumstances; and when any of its terrors dismay and cast us down, under a sense of our own nothingness, guilt, and vileness, the grace and tenderness of a dear Saviour comforts and raises us up: And as God is well-pleased in his Son, and turns us over to him, we should hearken to his good and comfortable words; and believe his promises, as well as obey his commands: But, alas! when we have been with Jesus in the mount, we soon come into the valley again; but when once we set our feet on the everlasting hills, the vision will never fail, nor darkness return any more. Every thing is beautiful in its season: Some discoveries of Christ are reserved for times when we may most need them, and they will come with the richest advantage; and the greatest of all shall be, when we get to *Moses* and *Elias*, at the resurrection of the just. In the mean time, how prudent and cautious should we be to avoid needless offences, that we may not prejudice others against Christ, his doctrines and ways; but may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation! Phil. ii. 15.

C H A P. XVIII.

Christ's discourse of humility, 1,—5. Of offences, and the way of dealing with offenders, 6,—20. And of forgiving personal injuries, 21,—35.

TEXT.

AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

PARAPHRASE.

THE disciples, still retaining notions of the external grandeur of Christ's kingdom, disputed among themselves, in the way to *Capernaum*, about which of them might expect to have the chief post of dignity and authority in his dominions: And when they came into the house, Jesus, knowing what had passed, and that the same thoughts still worked in their minds, asked them, What they had been disputing about by the way? that he might bring the matter to light. At first they were silent, being ashamed to own it, (see *Mark* ix. 33, 34.): But at length, finding themselves discovered, they made no more a secret of it; but asked him, Which of them should be preferred to be highest place of honour and trust in his kingdom?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in

2, 3. To answer this question, by a proper emblem, as well as words, Jesus ordered a little child to be brought to him; and, setting him before them, said, The nature of my kingdom is such, that I assuredly tell you †, Unless ye be turned from this mistaken conceit and carnal affection of secular authority and glory, and become, in the temper of your minds, like little children, who have no ambitious desires, views, or contentions, about honour, wealth or power, ye shall not partake of the blessings of the gospel-kingdom which I am come to erect in this world, nor of the glorious kingdom to which I will bring my disciples in the next.

4 Whosoever therefore shall not reach after magisterial dominion and worldly honour †, but shall be of a humble spirit, in resemblance of this little child, he shall be esteemed by my Father and me, and by his fellow-Christians, as the most excellent and honourable member of my church on earth, and shall be advanced to the highest degrees of glory in heaven.

5 And whosoever shall, without temporal views, affectionately entertain or shew friendship to such a humble disciple of mine, merely because he belongs to me,

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† After the first grand conversion, from a state of nature to a state of grace, there are many conversions from particular errors and sins, or turnings to God through Christ, by faith and repentance, which are necessary to salvation.

† If Christ had designed a supremacy and

temporal dominion for *Peter*, or popes, who pretend to be his successors, or a superiority of order and authority in one minister over another, it might have been expected, that, on this occasion, he would have given some hints of it: But he is so far from doing this, that he condemns every thing that looks like it.

in my name, receive me.

5 But whose shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 Wo unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off; and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels

bears my image, and has learnt of me who am meek and lowly in heart, he shall be accounted of as if he had paid the same kind regards to myself in person.

6 But, on the other hand, whosoever shall seduce, dishearten, and lay stumbling-blocks before any of these lowly-minded disciples, who by faith embrace me, and are related to me, it would have been better for him to have come to an untimely death by the hand of public justice, like a person thrown with a great stone about his neck into the sea, than to have been guilty of such mischief to them, which will bring a much sorer punishment on himself than any temporal death can be.

7 Dreadful are the judgments of God that shall come upon the world for such corrupt opinions and malpractices as are discouraging, injurious, and ensnaring to the least of my disciples; for, considering how depraved mankind are, and how busy Satan is, it is morally impossible but that, under divine permission, such things will fall out in the world: But the greatest of all woes belongs to, and shall be inflicted on, the man, whoever he be, whose sinful and mischievous behaviour is the occasion of others being perverted, or grieved, or drawn into evil.

8, 9 If therefore any thing that would be an occasion of sin to you, and have a pernicious influence on the least of my true disciples, be as dear, and, in your carnal sense of things, as important to you, as a hand, a foot, or an eye, it must be parted with and abandoned; the body of sin must be crucified; and all its gratifications must be cut off, how much soever it may be against the grain of flesh and blood to submit to this severity, rather than the cause of truth and peace and holiness be injured, to the stumbling or seducing of any that belong to me: For it is much better to undergo the most painful self-denying mortifications in this world, and to be admitted to eternal life in the next, than to hold that fast, whatever it be, which would cherish sinful and injurious inclinations, and minister occasions of gratifying and indulging them here, and to be everlastingly tormented for it in hell hereafter.

10 See to it, therefore, that ye do not think meanly of, or carry it with contempt and scorn; or in an insinuating, offensive or discouraging manner, towards any, even of the weakest true believers, that resemble this child: For I tell you, they are highly honoured in heaven, where they have a host of guardian-angels, who on all occasions invisibly watch over them, and in a kind and beneficial manner minister to them; who are like-

gels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

10 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so he that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

15 Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him

likewise always attending my Father, as his retinue and his servants, to observe his orders, and do his pleasure, concerning them; and who do not lose the beatific vision while they are ministering to these heirs of salvation, but carry their heaven with them, and are constantly in his special presence, like his favourites and courtiers, beholding his glory.

11 And there is a higher reason still why ye should not despise even such as may be thought the most contemptible of them that believe in me, which is also the reason why the glorious angels themselves have such a charge of them: For I the Messiah am come into this world on purpose to redeem and save them who were in a lost and perishing condition; to recover them from the ruins of the common apostasy; and to prevent their stumbling and falling again into perdition, after I have brought them into the way of salvation, that none may pluck them out of my own and my Father's hands.

12 What think ye of the love and care of my Father, from whom I am come to save them? It may be illustrated by this parable: If a man has an hundred sheep, and one of them strays into distant, bye, and dangerous places, does he not shew a more than ordinary concern for it, lest it be utterly lost? and, leaving the other ninety-nine in his fold, does not he immediately go and search through the mountains, and all the country round about, for this sheep, that it may not perish?

13 And when he finds it, I tell you assuredly, he will be more sensibly affected, and express greater joy, at the recovery of this one, which was so much exposed to danger, than at the safety of all the rest of his flock, which never strayed from his fold.

14 Just so, speaking after the manner of men, your heavenly Father is concerned for his sheep, that are led astray by dangerous discouragements, temptations, and snares; and rejoices over them, when he has recovered them, more than in the preservation of those that never were seduced since he brought them into his fold: For it is his design, and his pleasure, that none of the meanest of these should perish, but that every one of them should be effectually saved; and it is his commanding will, that ye do nothing to pervert, discourage, or hinder them in their way to heaven, but do all that in you lies to subserve and promote their salvation.

15 Suppose therefore one of you should receive some notorious injury or affront from any of your Christian brethren; do not think that you may justly despise him,

him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

and return the like upon him; or that you are not obliged to concern yourself about preventing the danger he thereby exposes himself to: But, in such a case, go to him, and in a private friendly manner endeavour to make him sensible of the offence he has been guilty of; and if he takes this well, and is brought to repentance by it, your end is answered; friendship is renewed; and your brother is recovered from his sin, and from the danger he was running into; and no more is to be said about the matter.

16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

16 But if he be obstinate and angry, or will not fall under his fault; then take with you one or two other disinterested prudent Christian brethren of the church to which both of you may belong, still further to hear and judge of the case between him and you, and to join in an admonition as occasion requires, that it may have the greater weight with him to convince and make him ashamed, as coming from the mouth of two or three witnesses, of the nature of his crime, and of his behaviour under it.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

17 And if this method fail, so that he be no more wrought upon by their united attempt than when you went to him singly and alone; then bring it before the church, or that particular religious society of which ye both are supposed to be members, that he may be rebuked before all, (1 Tim. v. 20.) and that the joint endeavours of the whole body may be used to reclaim him: And if he still continues obstinate under the public admonition of the church, nothing remains further to be done, but for them to proceed to a solemn censure of him as incorrigible, that you and all the other members may withdraw your religious communion and unnecessary conversation from him; so as to have no more to do with him, than if he were an heathen, or one of the most abandoned of men, until he is brought to repentance, and appears fit to be restored.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

18 I assuredly tell you, That whatsoever ye, in this way of proceeding according to my will, shall bind upon the offender on earth, by a due censure for his obstinacy and sin, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever, in this way, ye shall unbind or loose, upon his repentance, by taking off the censure and restoring him, shall be loosed in heaven; all that ye do in a right manner, according to the rule of my word, shall be ratified above, and God will set his seal to it in the day of judgment.

19 Again I say unto you, That if

19 And for your further encouragement in this and every other proceeding of a like nature, and indeed in all

if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven :

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him

all your religious concerns, I assure you, that if but two of you on earth shall agree together to join in your prayers, according to the will of God, for any direction, help or blessing, that ye stand in need of, my Father will hear in heaven his dwelling-place, and will certainly grant your petition, as far as it may be for his glory and your good.

20 For wherever so small an assembly as but two or three of my disciples, are gathered together for any act of religious worship, according to my appointment, by my authority, to the honour of my name, and with a fiducial dependance upon me, as the only Mediator, for assistance and acceptance, and for obtaining mercy on my account; there I am always present in a peculiar manner, by my Spirit and grace, to observe, guide, assist, encourage, quicken, approve, and succeed them; there is my resting-place, and there I am, like one come thither before-hand to bid them welcome.

21 Then *Peter*, having heard Christ's discourse about offences, came and put a question to him, saying, Lord, if, in private personal cases, any of my brethren commit offences against me, I know I ought to forgive them; but how often am I obliged to do it? Must it be over and over again, till it amounts to seven times, as some may suppose, because it is said, *A just man falls seven times, and rises up again?* (Prov. xxiv. 16.) or are our *Rabbies* in the right, who think otherwise, because God speaks of *three transgressions, and four, for which he would punish?* (Amos i. 3.)

22 Jesus answered, Whatever others may think or say, I tell you, That your forgivenesses should be, like those of God himself, without limitation: But were I to mention a number, instead of saying seven times I would say seventy times seven, to intimate that this noble Christian-grace ought to be repeatedly exercised, as occasions offer, without end.

23 Therefore to illustrate this matter by a plain similitude, "The state of the gospel-kingdom, with respect to God's dealing with its visible subjects, is like the proceeding of a certain king, who called his servants to a reckoning, that he might see how much they were severally indebted to him:"—Thus God demands an account of all the thoughts, words, and actions, of professors of religion, as well as others; and observes in how many things they have misused his favours, and offended him.

24 "And when the king began to state and examine the accounts, he found one of his servants owed

ten thousand talents.

him ten thousand talents †:—So God, in the survey he takes of his professing peoples behaviour, observes that some have run up an exceeding great score, having miserably abused all the advantages he had intrusted them with; and that every one is highly indebted to him by reason of sin.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

25 “But in as much as this great debtor had wasted all, and had nothing left whereby he could satisfy his injured lord, he, according to the custom of eastern nations in prosecuting offenders, (*Neb. v. 5, 8.*) commanded him, his wife and children, and all that he had, to be sold, as a punishment for his unfaithfulness and abuse of trust, since he could make no other satisfaction:—So God threatens in his word, to inflict the severest endless punishments upon the abusers of his mercy and transgressors of his law †.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

26 “When the servant heard this, he in a fright fell down upon his knees before the king, and begged his patience, promising that in time he would pay him all his demands:—So, many sinners, under the terror of God’s threatenings, seem to be very sorry and penitent for their sins, promise to reform their lives, and are apt vainly to imagine, that something they can do will make God amend.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

27 “Upon this, the lord of that servant, in the greatness of his compassion, suspended the execution of his threatening, set his servant at liberty, and intimated that he would forgive his debt:—So God bears long with hypocrites in his providence, and gives them time and space for repentance, declares himself in the gospel to be ready to forgive humble and returning sinners; and some, that have had convictions, and thereupon made a profession of religion, presume he has forgiven them.

N O T E S.

† A talent was the greatest weight among the Jews; and that of silver, as many learned men compute, consisted of 3000 shekels. But the Hebrew and Greek talents were different; and authors are so much divided about their value, that it is hardly possible to settle it with certainty and exactness. However, this is of little moment; but ten thousand talents are here put for an exceeding great sum.

† We are not to expect more in a parable than it is designed to represent; nor is it to be strained to an interpretation exactly suited to every circumstance: Its principal scope is to be attended to; and sentiments are to be accommodated to its other parts, only so far as the nature of things allows. It therefore is not to be thought strange, that in this parable no notice is taken of the satisfaction of

Christ; for the sinner here represented is supposed to have excluded himself from the benefit of the gospel-expedient for mercy, and to be dealt with according to his iniquities: And the king’s forgiving his servant, and afterwards casting him into prison, cannot, in application of the parable, be understood of God’s having actually remitted any man’s sins, and then reverting the pardon; for this is directly contrary to the nature of his forgiveness, in which he *blits out our transgressions*, (*Isa. xlii. 15.*) and is *merciful to our unrighteousnesses*, and *remembers our sins and iniquities no more*, (*Mich. vii. 12.*): But the governing design of the parable is only to shew, that we cannot expect forgiveness from God, unless we are disposed to forgive others.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

28 "But this very man afterwards met with one of his fellow-servants, who only owed him so small a sum as an hundred pence †; and, notwithstanding the great mercy his lord had expressed about forgiving him his ten thousand talents, he seized his debtor, and, (*κατασχόμενος*) catching hold of his throat in a violent manner, as if he would choke him, severely demanded an immediate payment of his debt:"—So hypocritical penitents, and mere professors of religion, notwithstanding their pretences and hopes of having found forgiveness with God for their most heinous offences, are rigorous and unyielding in their resentments against such as have committed any trifling fault against themselves, and will abate them nothing, but have their full revenge upon them.

29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

29, 30 "And though his poor fellow-servant fell down upon his knees before him, and begged patience, promising in time to give him full satisfaction, just as this creditor himself had done to his lord who shewed compassion to him; yet he had no tenderness toward his debtor, but stopped his ears against his earnest intreaties, and threw him into jail, resolving to keep him there till he should receive full satisfaction for his debt:"—So these pretenders to religion, and to hopes of having obtained forgiveness of their sins against the great God, will not be prevailed upon, by any intreaties or professions of repentance, to pass by the offences which others have given them; but, unmindful of their own obligations, obstinately persist in revengeful designs against them.

30 And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

31 "When some others of the fellow-servants saw this, they were much troubled to think of the cruelty of one to whom their lord had shewed so much lenity, and, in the greatness of their concern, went and acquainted him with it:"—So fellow-Christians are heartily grieved at the unforgiving, unmerciful, and revengeful spirit, which discovers itself in some professors of religion, who they hope have obtained mercy of the Lord; and they bewail it before God, begging, if it were his will, that they might be brought to behave more suitable to their profession and obligations.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant,

32, 33 "When the king knew how unworthily this wretch had acted toward the man that owed a small matter to him, he called him again before him, and said, O thou ungrateful, cruel and wicked creature! how

N O T E.

† A Roman penny was the eighth part of an ounce of silver, and in value about seven-pence-half-penny; and so an hundred pence was but three pounds two shillings and six pence; a very inconsiderable sum, compared with the forementioned ten thousand talents.

vant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me :

33 Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee ?

how much greater mercy did I give you room to expect, and did you profess and hope to obtain from me, than this poor debtor, who is only your fellow-servant, asked of you ? How could you be so severe upon him, who intreated your forgiveness ? Should you not have been moved with compassion towards him, by my readiness to quit your immense debt, and by the forbearance you found in me :”—So God will call those false professors to a strict account, who, after all his patience towards them, and declarations of willingness to forgive, and after all their pretences and hopes of having received the remission of their innumerable and aggravated sins, will have no compassion on their professing fellow-Christians and fellow-creatures that have offended them.

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

34 “ And his lord was so angry and provoked at this unmerciful, revengeful servant, that he ordered him to be thrown into prison, and there to suffer the most rigorous punishment, that justice could demand, for the debt he had contracted, till full satisfaction should be made for it.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

35 “ In like manner my heavenly Father, says Christ, will shew his terrible indignation, and take righteous vengeance, in the everlasting destruction of all pretenders to religion, who abuse his patience and his proclamations of pardoning grace ; and who act so contrary to their professions and hopes of interest in his mercy, as to shew an implacable spirit, and not heartily forgive their brethren that have offended them.”

RECOLLECTIONS.

To be ambitious of the honours of this world, is unbecoming the disciples of Christ, and unsuitable to the spiritual and holy nature of his kingdom : But the honours he puts upon humble souls, are incomparably better than all that pride proposes to itself ; and the lower we are abased in our own eyes, the higher he will exalt us : The meanest in his family are precious in his sight ; angels minister to them ; Christ himself died to redeem them ; his Father is their Father, and loves them ; and when they are in the greatest danger, like wandering sheep, he searches them out, and takes care to reduce and secure them. His ear is open to their cries ; and whenever they assemble together in the name of Christ, he honours them with his special presence. But O ! what will become of false pretenders to religion, who despise and trouble any, though the weakest, true believers in him, and go about to ensnare and ruin them ? They must be cast out of the church on earth, and the sentence against them will be ratified in heaven ; and unless they are brought to repentance here, God will take righteous vengeance upon them for ever. How awful are church-censures upon transgressors, when managed according to the will of Christ ! They are solemn judicial acts, passed in his name, and with a reference to the future judgment ; and therefore should neither be rashly passed, nor heedlessly or wilfully incurred, nor lightly thought of or profanely despised. Offences against God are of a most heinous nature ; and it is better to suffer the greatest self denials, than to sin against him ; for the debt contracted by every sin is no less than a talent. And what an immense sum is it that we owe to him, and hope to obtain the free remission of
from

from him! But personal affronts and injuries from our fellow-creatures against ourselves are inconsiderable trifles, compared with ours against the great God: If therefore we pretend to expect his forgiving of us, how should this move us to forgive others that offend us, left our own hopes of pardoning mercy from him should be disappointed at last?

C H A P. XIX.

Christ heals the sick, 1, 2. His doctrine about divorce and marriage, 3,—12. His blessing young children, 13,—15. His discourse with a rich man about the way to eternal life, 16,—22.; and with the disciples on that occasion, 23,—30.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan:

2 And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there:

3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female?

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had finished the foregoing instructions, he took his leave of Galilee, where his ministry had been chiefly exercised hitherto, and went into the borders of Judea, which lay beyond Jordan, that he might go on with his work there, where John had been preparing his way by preaching and baptizing, (*John x. 40.*)

2 And when he came thither, great multitudes flocked after him, as they had used to do in Galilee; and, according to his gracious and unwearied custom, he preached the gospel to them, (*Mark x. 1.*) and healed their sick, to shew his compassion, and confirm his doctrine.

3 The Pharisees, his restless and watchful enemies, followed him hither also, that they might prejudice the people against him; and, endeavouring to draw him into a determination about divorces, either against the doctrine he had taught, (*chap. v. 32.*) or against the law of Moses, and their own traditions, they asked him, Whether he thought it lawful for a man to put away his wife at his own pleasure, on every occasion, as he should think proper?

4, 5 Jesus, knowing their captious design, prudently, and yet effectually, answered the question, by referring them to some passages of scripture, saying, Have ye never read (*Gen. i. 27.*) that in the creation of Adam and Eve, the first parents of mankind, God made them male and female, one male for one female; and said, (*Gen. ii. 24.*) Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, the relation between a man and his wife being nearer than that between parents and children, and shall adhere to his wife; and they two shall be accounted of as if they were but one body, as the first pair really were before the woman was created out of the man, one part of whom is not to be separated from the other?

6 Since

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorce, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and who so marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.

10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.

11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save

6 Since therefore God, answerable to the first formation of the two sexes, has, by the primitive institution of marriage, so closely united them together, as that they should be accounted no more two, but as it were one body; let no ordinance of man separate them from each other, whom God has joined by such a strict bond.

7 The Pharisees answered, If this be so, why did Moses in the law order, that a man should give his wife a bill of divorce, and dismiss her?

8 Jesus replied, Moses did not command, he only, by a judicial or political law for reasons of state, permitted you of the *Israelitish* nation, on some accounts, to put away your wives, exempting you from civil punishment in case ye did so; and there was a sort of necessity for this, to prevent greater mischief, because of your hardness of heart against the wives, whom your fierce, malicious, and stubborn tempers, when once prejudiced against them, would have prompted you to abuse, and even murder in your wrath; if Moses, in compassion to them, and for preventing your sin, had not thus suffered you to divorce them: But there was no such allowance from the beginning, in the original constitution of the law of marriage.

9 And as I am come to take away hardness of heart, and to give an heart of flesh; to rectify mens manners, and restore things to their primitive institution: I say unto you, Such divorces, on trivial occasions, shall be permitted no longer; but, from this time forward, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be on account of her having played the harlot, in direct contradiction to matrimonial rights, (see the note on *Mat. v. 32.*) and shall marry another woman, will in reality commit adultery by that new contract; and he that marries such a divorced woman, shall be deemed guilty of adultery with her likewise.

10 This, being heard by Christ's disciples, seemed an hard saying to them, who had been always taught another sort of doctrine by the *scribes*; and therefore they afterwards said to him, when he was with them alone in an house, (*Mark x. 10.*) If a man may not put away his wife for any other cause than her having violated her chastity, the unhappiness of a marriage-state must be so great, that we think it is best for one to live single all his days.

11 But he answered, However true that may be in some circumstances of things; yet every man cannot live unmarried with satisfaction to himself, and without sin; and none can do it, except such as have received the

save *they* to whom it is given.

the gift of chastity from God, of which number there are but few.

11 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.

12 For some have the gift of continence by means of the natural temper and constitution with which God has formed them from the birth, whilst others are wickedly maimed by the unnatural violence of cruel men; and others, through divine grace, subdue their inclinations to marriage by a voluntary and religious determination of their own minds, that they may have less incumbrances in life, and fewer distractions and hindrances in the service of God; and so may the better attend to the things of the Lord, as Christians, or as ministers in his kingdom: And though all are not enabled to come up to this, and none are to be forced to it; yet if any one has received this gift from God, let him improve it as a blessing, when, all things considered, it may be best for him to live single.

13 Then were there brought unto him little children; that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

13 After this, (*ταπειν*, *Luke* xviii. 15.) some infants of the believing *Jews* were brought to him, not to be cured of any distemper, but that he might lay his hands upon them, and pray over them, in order to his imparting some spiritual blessing to them; (see the note on *Mark* x. 13.) But (21) the disciples thinking, that, if such a practice were encouraged, it would be too troublesome to their Lord, since for the same reason abundance of children might be perpetually crowded in upon him wherever he went, they began to reprimand those that brought them.

14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

14 But Jesus observing it, was much displeased with his disciples for attempting to keep them out of the way of his blessing, (*Mark* x. 14.) and said, Let young children be brought to me, and do not go about to hinder them; for these, as well as grown persons, are subjects of the gospel-kingdom which I am come to set up in the world †, and have an interest in its privileges and blessings.

15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

15 And then, to shew his love and tenderness, and to confirm their privileges, he, according to an ancient rite of the *Jewish* church in benedictions, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them, (*Mark* x. 16.); and having done this, he went away from that place.

16 And

N O T E.

† It seems evident, that Christ's principal meaning here, was not that the subjects of the gospel-kingdom are like little children for their temper and qualities, though he took occasion from hence to add an instruction of this nature about it, *Luke* xviii. 17.; for this could be no more a reason why their children, rather than lambs or doves, should be

brought to him to be blessed: But he plainly intimates, that their covenant-interest, and visible church-membership, should be continued under the Gospel-state; and that therefore they ought to be recommended and devoted to him; which makes his reasoning on this head clear and just.

16 And behold, one came and said unto him, Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and

16 And as he was passing along, (*Mark* x. 17.) behold a hopeful young man of figure and estate, who was a ruler! (*Luke* xviii. 18.) He, having conceived a favourable opinion of Christ, came to him, and addressed him in such respectful language as the *Rabbies* of that age were fond of, saying, Good master, whom I esteem as a teacher sent from God, I beg you would please to tell me what works of righteousness I must do to obtain everlasting life.

17 Jesus answering said to him, Why do you, who think me to be no more than a mere man, call me, in this emphatical manner, good; since there is none to whom this title, in an absolute sense, belongs, but God, and all goodness comes from him? However, as to your question about doing some works of righteousness to give you a right to eternal life †, if you would obtain it by your own doings, you must perfectly keep the commandments of God.

18, 19 The young man replied, What are the commandments that you mean? Jesus, to convince him of his defect, even in the duties of the second table, instanced only in them, saying, You, having been brought up in the *Jewish* religion, know the commandments of the moral law, (*Mark* x. 19.) which are such as these: Thou shalt not do any murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal, cheat, or defraud any man, (*Mark* x. 19.); Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour; Thou shalt honour thy father and mother; and, to sum up all in a few words, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man, judging of these precepts according to the loose interpretations of the *Jewish* doctors, and supposing he should obtain Christ's approbation, said; These are very easy duties, and I have observed every one of them from my childhood up, as long as I can remember; I am therefore safe enough for eternal life: What can there be wanting in me, after all this, to hinder my obtaining it? Is there any thing more that you would enjoin upon me? If so, I am ready to do it.

21 Jesus, to convince him of his great mistake as to what he had done, and of his insufficiency as to what he could further do, put him upon giving a proof of his

N O T E.

† I take the design of the young man's questions, and Christ's answers, all along in this discourse, to proceed upon what may be expected, according to the terms of the covenant of works, to give a title to eternal life;

otherwise Christ's answer seems hardly reconcileable to his doctrine of the necessity of faith in himself for that purpose; and therefore I have chosen this, rather than the more usual way of interpreting it.

and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

his compliance with the great command of *loving his neighbour as himself*, saying, If you would be indeed as perfect as you vainly conceit yourself to be, and as the law of God requires, in some peculiar circumstances, relating to your neighbour's good, go now and sell your citate, and give it all away to the poor in these days of pressing necessity: And if only by this single instance you prove the sincerity of your love to fellow-creatures as to yourself, I assure you of a treasure in heaven; then come again and follow me, as my disciple and my servant, and I will further instruct you into the way to eternal life, and conduct you safely to it.

21 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

22 But when the young man heard this, he thought it a hard saying, and went away from the only Saviour, with a heavy heart, and with great vexation of mind to think that this must be a parting point between heaven and him: For he was very rich, and could by no means bear the thoughts of giving up all he had for Christ and future happiness, but really preferred the riches of this world to all the blessings of the other.

23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

23 Then Jesus took this occasion to say to his disciples, How strong are the temptations of earthly riches! I assuredly tell you, that it is a very difficult thing for a man, who abounds in wealth, and whose heart is taken up with it, to be a true subject of the kingdom of grace here, and to arrive at the kingdom of glory hereafter.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

24 And, that ye may take the more notice of it, I say unto you again, The love of this world's treasures, to the placing of one's happiness in them, (*Mark x. 24.*) is so exceedingly ensnaring, that it makes the difficulty of such a rich man's being a true disciple to me, and of his getting safe to heaven, greater than can be imagined; yea, than a camel's going through the eye of a needle, or than a needle's being threaded with a thick cable-ropes †.

25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

25 The disciples, upon hearing this, seemed to be extremely surprised, and cried out, Who then among mankind can be saved, since many of them are rich, and most of them desire riches, and all will find something or other in this world to engage their hearts, and hinder them in their way to heaven?

26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With

26 But Jesus, looking with earnestness and compassion upon them under their consternation and fear, said,

N O T E.

† Καμαθ. The word here used is observed by some to signify a *cable*, as well as a *camel*, which seems to make the metaphor more natural: But others tell us, that a ca-

mel's or an elephant's passing through the eye of a needle, was a proverbial expression of something extremely difficult, if not impossible, in the ordinary course of things.

With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

said, Such indeed is the corruption of mankind, and their addictedness to this world, that going on therein is inconsistent with salvation; and it is altogether impossible for any man, by the power of nature, to make an effectual change upon himself, or for one of them to make it upon another; but it is not impossible to the almighty grace of God to turn even the most rich and worldly-minded sinner to himself, and carry him thro' all temptations to eternal life.

27 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

27 Then Peter answering said to him, Behold what an effect this grace has had upon us! Though we were not rich in this world; yet have we forsaken all that we had, which was as much to us as riches are to others; we have cheerfully left our livelihood, and dearest relations and enjoyments, to follow thee through all difficulties, wants, and dangers; and all our expectations are from thee: What then wilt thou please to bestow upon us? We trust thou wilt make it worth our while; but how?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

28 Jesus said unto them, I assuredly tell you, That as ye, my apostles, have gone through the work of regeneration & yourselves, and have attended me to subserve the design of my kingdom which I am setting up for the reformation and recovery of others; so ye shall bear a part in the honour and blessedness hereafter to be revealed: When I, the Messiah, shall be enthroned in glory at the Father's right hand, ye immediately thereupon shall be endued with power from on high, and shall preach my gospel with authority, and with mighty signs and wonders to confirm it: When I shall appear in my glory for the destruction of Jerusalem, your predictions about it shall be accomplished, and your characters and commissions shall be vindicated: When the Jews shall be called again in the last days, your doctrine shall be the means of their conversion, which will be as life from the dead: And when I shall come to judge the world, ye shall have the honour of sitting upon twelve seats next my throne; and however the twelve tribes may treat you now, they shall all be brought before you, then assessors with me in judgment, to see and approve the sentence which I shall pass upon them according to my gospel dispensed by you; and as ye suffer with me in this world, ye shall be glorified together with me in the next.

29 And

N O T E.

† As *παρηγορία*, the regeneration, may relate either to the renewing work of grace, or the glorious restitution of all things, and may be referred either to the former or the latter part of the sentence, I have taken both

into the paraphrase, and given it as as wide a scope as I apprehend the nature of things will bear; and the reader may observe, that I generally chuse the like method in other places.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life.

30 But many that are first, shall be last; and the last shall be first.

29 And as to all the rest of my true disciples as well as you, whoever they be, that, for my sake and the gospel's, shall suffer any losses in their temporal interests and enjoyments; whether they be deprived of their worldly substance and estates, in houses or lands; or of their dearest relations, such as brethren, sisters, fathers, mothers, wives, or children; because they chuse rather to part with them, than with me: All these shall have, in this present life, what is an hundred times better for them, in inward contentment and divine consolations and hopes, and many times in outward friends and supplies too which God will in his providence raise up to them; and what crowns all is, that they shall at length inherit everlasting life.

30 But that all this may be looked upon as a reward, not of merit, but of grace; many of the *Jews*, who have the first gospel-calls, and stand fairest in outward appearance and visible privileges, shall be rejected for their unbelief; and many of the *Gentiles*, who are now strangers to the covenant of promise, and will be called last, shall be admitted, through faith, to all the blessings of the kingdom of grace and of glory: And † even many of those *Jews*, who shall be first effectually called in order of time, shall be, in point of honour, as those who shall be called last; and many of the *Gentiles*, who shall be brought to believe in me, in order of time, after them, shall be advanced to honours as high, or higher than theirs.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How indefatigable was our blessed Lord in doing good wherever he came! how prudent in his conduct to avoid snares and dangers! and how careful to maintain and perpetuate every divine institution; and particularly in what relates to the chastity of the marriage-relation, and to the spiritual rights and privileges of the children of the covenant! These ought to be presented to him, that he may own and bless them: And how displeasing is it to Christ, for any of his disciples to go about to exclude them from their place in his kingdom, or to hinder their being brought to him in the gospel-state, that they may receive the tokens of his favour to them! Marriage is an ordinance of God, free to all, as prudence and inclination may direct; and however some may abstain from it with safety and advantage, yet this is not a gift given to all, and none are to be forced into vows against it; and when once it is contracted, nothing but adultery or death can lawfully break the matrimonial bond; nor will the civil magistrate's divorce, for other reasons, acquit the conscience from sin against God. How unable are we to keep any of God's commands, as we ought, without defect! And if we must have a perfect righteousness to entitle us to life, where shall we find it but in Christ? But, alas! many that compliment him, have very low thoughts of him, who is good, and doeth good, and who only can bring us into the way to eternal hap-

N O T E.

† I think both these interpretations may be taken in, to comport with the discourse of the following chapter, which is an enlargement upon this verse, and sets out God's so-

vereign and yet righteous rejection of some, and equal vouchsafements of his blessings to others, among whom we might have thought he would have made a difference.

happineſs; and they who do not ſee his excellence, and their own need of him, are naturally prone to imagine that they can obtain ſalvation by their own doings: But if any think themſelves capable of this, they might ſoon be convinced of their dangerous miſtake, were they put to the trial of their obedience in inſtances that lie moſt oppoſite to their natural inclinations and ſecular intereſts. Alas, what ſnares and temptations are the riches and love of this world, to hinder us in our duty and in our way to heaven! Nothing but almighty grace can give an effectual turn to the heart, and overcome the difficulty: And whoever is hereby brought to deny himſelf, and ſuffer temporal loſſes for Chriſt, ſhall find a rich reward in his bleſſing here, and eternal life with the higheſt honours in his preſence for ever. But whether we be firſt or laſt in partaking of goſpel-benefits, it is according to the riches of God's grace.

C H A P. XX.

The parable of the labourers in the vineyard, 1,—16. Chriſt's prediction of his own death and reſurrection, 17,—19. The petition of the mother of two diſciples, and Chriſt's answer and diſcourſe upon it, 20,—28. And his curing two blind men, 29,—34.

TEXT.

FOr the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an houſholder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a-day, he ſent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and ſaw others ſtanding

PARAPHRASE.

NOW, that what hath been ſaid, about the firſt being laſt, and the laſt firſt, is no way inconſiſtent with rules of righteouſneſs, may be learnt by a plain ſimilitude. “For the diſpenſation of grace, in the goſpel-kingdom, is like the management of a certain maſter of a family, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard; and, agreeing with them for a penny a-day, he ſet them about his buſineſs there:”—So † God called the *Jews* to faith and repentance, in the beginning of the goſpel-diſpenſation, by the miniſtry of *John the Baptiſt*, of Chriſt himſelf, and of his apoſtles in their firſt miſſion to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*: And ſome of them were called in the youngeſt part of life, with propoſals of ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings for their encouragement; and they thereupon profeſſed to come into the church, and give themſelves up to the Lord.

3, 4, & 5. “The maſter afterwards went out about the third hour, and then about the ſixth and ninth hours; and finding others, who ſtood idle in the market, like perſons that waited there for employment, he bid

N O T E.

† Some ſuppoſe, that *early in the morning*, and the *third*, the *ſixth*, the *ninth*, and the *eleventh hours*, which ſignify nine o'clock in the morning, noon, three, and five o'clock in the afternoon, relate to the times of the firſt promiſe, and afterwards of *Abraham* and *Moſes*, and then of the prophets, and laſt of all of Chriſt and his apoſtles: But as the kingdom of heaven, repreſented in this parable, ſignifies the goſpel-ſtare, I rather take them all to relate to the ſeveral periods of its

diſpenſation, and the various commiſſions for preaching it, firſt to the *Jews*, and afterwards to the *Gentiles*: And though this parable ſeems to relate primarily to the different ſeaſons of God's calling the *Jews* and *Gentiles* by the goſpels, and to the ſovereign diſtributions of his grace to one and the other of them; yet it is moſtly applicable to all perſons, wherever the goſpel comes, in every age, and to every period of a man's life.

ing idle in the market-place,

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and said unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard said unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more;

hid them go into his vineyard, promising that they should have sufficient recompence; and they accordingly went:—So the *Jews* continuing to neglect Christ and the gospel, though they were full of expectation that the Messiah would appear about that time to set up his kingdom, God again called them, by Christ's sending out the seventy disciples, as well as the apostles, during the time of his abode upon earth; and after his resurrection, his messengers were sent out again with a further commission to preach the gospel, first in *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, and then to the *Jews* of the dispersion, before they went to the *Gentiles*; and, at these several seasons, many came in, and made a profession of Christ's name, some of which were called in their youthful days, others in their middle age, and others in the decline of life.

6, 7. "Last of all, about the eleventh hour, the master found others standing idle, and expostulated with them for squandering away all their time; and when they said they had nothing to do, he hid them go into the vineyard, promising them a proper reward:—So at last God sent the gospel, by the ministry of the apostles, and others of his servants in that and after-ages, to the idolatrous *Gentiles*, who had for many generations gone on in ignorance, walking in their own ways; and they were turned from idols to serve the living and true God, upon the encouragements therein set before them; and some were called in old age, after they had wasted the greatest part of their lives in stupidity and in sin.

8. "Now when the day was finished, the master ordered all the labourers to be called, that they might receive their reward, beginning with them who came in last, and so on to the first:—So at God's completing the settlement of the kingdom of grace, he will shew the riches of his mercy to the *Gentiles*; and to them who were called last; and in the evening of life, or at death, and in the evening of the world, or at judgment, they shall receive the blessing of eternal life, as well as the *Jews* and such as were called first.

9, 10. "And when they, who came last into the master's service, received a penny, they, who were ordered to go first into the vineyard, expected to receive more, but were disappointed:—So when the *Gentiles*, and they who were called last, were admitted to all the privileges of the covenant here, and entitled to the gracious reward of eternal life which they shall receive hereafter; the *Jews*, and they who were called first, knowing this, imagined that their privileges and their glory should

more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the good-man of the house,

12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? is thine eye evil, because I am good?

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many

should be still greater; but found themselves mistaken, they being to receive no more than the others.

11, 12. "And when they, that first entered upon their master's work, found they were to have no more, they murmured against him, because they who came in last, and laboured but one hour, received as much as themselves, who had borne the heat and toil of all the day:"—So the *Jews*, who had been the ancient people of God, and were first called, and valued themselves upon their external privileges and performances, murmured at the *Gentiles* being made fellow-heirs with them of all the privileges of the gospel, and of all the blessings of salvation; because they thought the advantages and glories of the Messiah's kingdom ought to have been confined to themselves, or at least bestowed in a more ample manner upon them than upon the *Gentiles*.

13, 14, & 15. "But the master answered one of these murmurers, saying, Friend, why is this complaint? I have done you no wrong: Have I not performed my agreement with you? Take therefore what belongs to you, without grudging at the favour I show to others; for I will give as much to the last as to the first; and have I not a right to dispose of mine own property as I please? Why then should you be envious because I am bountiful?"—So God reproves the complainers against his dispensations of mercy, and vindicates his own right in freely disposing of gospel-blessings according to his sovereign-will, saying, How good and kind soever I am to others, I do no injury to you; ye cannot claim more than I have given you; and ye ought not to envy others. My favour is free, my gifts are entirely at my own dispose, I am debtor to none, and will leave no room for any to complain; but will have mercy on whom I will have mercy: And as I delight to glorify the exceeding riches of my grace, I will do it to such persons, and in such ways and degrees, as seem good in my sight. What! shall I not do as I please with mine own? How unbecoming is it, that ye should be offended, because I am so exceedingly gracious, even beyond all appearance of desert.

16 Thus, as was said, (chap. xix. 30.) many of those, who, like the *Gentiles*, are called last, and have the least pretence to be regarded, shall be admitted to all the privileges and blessings of the kingdom of grace and glory, as well as those, who, like the *Jews*, were called first, and bid fairest for pre-eminence: And they who, from a high conceit of their own merit, murmur against, and cannot be reconciled to those sovereign dispensa-

many be called,
but few chosen.

tions of forfeited goodness, exclude themselves from its saving benefits; while others, who appear to be still more unworthy, shall be partakers of them †: For many are externally called by the ministry of the word, and made members of the visible church; but there are, comparatively, few that are chosen of God to eternal life, and effectually called according to his purpose.

17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them;

17 After these things, Jesus, knowing that the time of his sufferings drew nigh, set out for *Jerusalem*, with the twelve apostles, to celebrate his last passover there; and, as they were in the way, he privately reminded them of what he had told them, once and again before, would befall him; and added some further particulars about it, saying,

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

18 We are now going up to *Jerusalem*, and I would have you observe, that this will be my last journey thither; for the time draws nigh, in which I, the Messiah, shall be treacherously betrayed into the hands of the chief priests and *scribes*, who will take this opportunity of apprehending and prosecuting me with malice and fury, till they procure an unrighteous sentence for condemning me to death.

19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

19 And they will deliver me into the hands of the *Roman* governor and his soldiers, to be derided, crucified, and insulted, abused, and beaten with rods, (see the note on chap. xxvii. 26.); and at last, to be put to the painful and ignominious death of the cross, as if I were the meanest of slaves, and the vilest of malefactors; and for your comfort I add, that, on the third day, I shall rise again from the dead.

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

20 Then † *Salome*, the wife of *Zebedee*, came to him with her two sons *James* and *John*, (chap. x. 2.) and imagining, that, after the rising again which he spake of, he would set up a temporal kingdom with great majesty and glory on the earth, she fell down before him, and worshipped him, earnestly begging that he would grant her a certain request, on the behalf of those her two sons, they also joining in the petition with her, (*Mark* x. 35.)

21 And he said unto her, What wilt

21 He knowing their ambitious design, said to her, What

N O T E S.

† This latter part of the verse being brought in as a reason of what was said in the former, seems naturally to intimate, that, by the *last* being *first*, and the *first* *last*, our Lord meant not only, that the *Gentiles* should be made equal, in gospel-privileges and blessings, to the *Jews*; but that many, who were most likely, in human view, to be made partakers of them, should fall short, through self-conceit and unbelief; while others, who

were much more unlikely, should obtain them through faith, according to the sovereign disposals of God's grace.

† That this was *Salome*, appears by comparing *Mat.* xxvii. 56. with *Mark* xv. 40.; and she may be spoken of as the mother of *Zebedee's* children, either because he was dead, or was not a constant follower of Christ as she and her sons were.

will thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left in thy kingdom.

21 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

22 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup; and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

23 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

24 But Jesus called

What is the petition that you would offer? She told him it was, that, since he had spoken of the twelve apostles sitting on twelve thrones, (chap. xix. 28.) those two sons of her's, who were his constant and favourite disciples, might, at the opening of his kingdom, be admitted to the highest places of honour, and be next in authority to himself, like persons sitting one at his right hand, and the other at his left.

22 But Jesus, turning to her two sons, replied, Ye are much mistaken about the nature of my kingdom, which is not of this world; nor will it gratify your carnal ambition, according to your vain expectations; sufferings here being the way to its dignities and honours hereafter: If therefore ye would be partakers of its glory, think seriously with yourselves, whether ye are able to drink of the cup of trembling which I must drink of, and to be baptized with the sorrowful baptism which I must be baptized with by my sufferings? They readily answered, with little thought, but with a great deal of vanity and self-confidence, We are ready to suffer every thing that can befall us, for obtaining the honours of thy kingdom.

23 Jesus replied, Ye shall indeed be called to suffer terrible persecutions, reproaches, and distresses, after my example, and for my sake, in your way to my kingdom of glory, (see the note on Mark i. 39.): But as to the chief honours there, such as sitting next to me at my right hand and my left, these are already disposed of in God's eternal counsels, and are put into my hands to confer them, not according to any private will of my own, but according to his purpose, who *hath given me power over all flesh, that I should give eternal life to as many as he has given me*, (John xvii. 2.); so that these honours are not mine to give, († αὐτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξουσία) save only to them for whom they have been prepared by my Father in his appointments before the foundation of the world.

24 Now when the other ten apostles heard the ambitious request of these two brethren, and Christ's reply to it, they were filled with envy and resentment against them, for endeavouring to get a pre-eminence in the Messiah's kingdom, which they thought they had as good a claim to as either of them.

25 But Jesus, seeing that the same carnal ambitious

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N O T E.

† The particle (αὐτῷ) is sometimes used exceptively, as in Mark ix. 8. compared with Matt. xvii. 9. and the *Swiark* version very justly renders these words, without the supplement in our translation, *Unless to those for whom it was prepared*, &c. See *Blackwell's Sacred Classics*, vol. i. p. 24.

called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the *Gentiles* exercise dominion over them; and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

29 And as they departed from *Jericho*, a great multitude followed him.

30 And behold, two blind men sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they

temper worked in them all, called them together, and with great meekness and gentleness reproved them, saying, All this is quite wrong: Ye know indeed that the princes of this world, the kings and emperors among the *Gentiles*, have a mighty thirst after dominion and power over their subjects, and over one another; and they among them who have the strongest arm, exercise authority over the rest.

26, 27. But it must not be thus among you in my spiritual kingdom, the nature and design of which are contrary to those of the kingdoms of this world: If any therefore would be truly great and honorable under me, let him humble and deny himself, and labour to promote the spiritual interests of others; and if any among you desire to have pre-eminence above the rest, let it not be by lording it over God's heritage, but by condescending to the meanest services for their souls benefit, and by serving one another in love.

28 Herein take me, the Messiah, for your pattern, who came into this world, not to take upon me temporal state and dominion, or to be served with pomp and grandeur; but to submit to the most self-abasing offices, in doing good to the souls and bodies of men, and to lay down my own life at last (*αὐτοῦ ἀντὶ πολλῶν*) as a price of redemption for as many of them as the Father has given me, by dying in their room and stead, that they may be delivered from sin and slavery, from the curse of the law and the wrath of God.

29 Upon this, Jesus and his disciples went forward to *Jerusalem*; and, passing through *Jericho* in their way thither, (see the note on *Luke* xviii. 35.) a great multitude of people followed him, as they used to do wherever he went.

30 And behold a wonderful instance of his power and compassion! There were two blind men, sitting on the side of a public road to ask relief; one of whom was a noted beggar, whose name was *Bartimeus*, (*Mark* x. 46.); and when they heard from some of the company, that Jesus, who had wrought so many miracles, was then going by, they joined in their request for a cure, crying out with great earnestness, and faith in his power and goodness, O Lord, thou Son of *David*, whom we believe to be the true Messiah, and both able and ready to help and save the miserable, we beseech thee extend thy mercy to us.

31 But (2c) the multitude chid them for making such a noise, and bad them hold their peace and not disturb him, who seemed to take no notice of them: However,

they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David.

31 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What wilt thou that I shall do unto you?

32 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

33 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

instead of being silent, they cried out with still more vehemence and fervour, O Lord, thou expected Messiah, we greatly need the mercy which thou art come to bestow, and earnestly beg that thou wouldst please to have compassion upon us.

32 Then Jesus stopped; and, for the encouragement of their faith, ordered them to be brought to him: And when they came near, he asked them, What mercy it it was that they desired he should shew them, whether they wanted an alms, or a cure from him, or what else? thereby giving them an opportunity to make known their particular request, and an intimation of his readiness to answer it.

33 They immediately replied, Lord, the mercy we want, and humbly beg of thee to grant, is, that, according to thy greatness and goodness, and according to our distressing necessity, thou wouldst restore sight to us who are blind.

34 And they no sooner asked but received: Jesus extended his mercy toward them, according to their faith; and, upon his touching their blind eyes, they, by a mere act of his sovereign power and will, recovered their sight in an instant, and went along with the company after him, to testify their gratitude, love, and praise, and to receive still further blessings from him.

RECollections.

How free and sovereign is the grace of God! The most unlikely are effectually called; and that sooner or later, according to his good pleasure: And the latest convert shall have all the privileges of the gospel-state, and the reward of eternal life, as well as the earliest; whilst others, who seemed to stand fairer for it, drop short of it. It is indeed a reward, because it is given, according to the promise, after our work is done upon earth, and because it is a rich amends for all our labour and sufferings for Christ; but it is a reward of grace, which God bestows, as he pleases, upon his chosen, for whom it is prepared in his eternal decrees. He herein leaves no room for others to complain, since he does them no wrong; but every mouth of proud boasters, and captious murmurers, shall be stopped. And, blessed be God, while there is life, there is hope for every sinner, especially for those that have not all their days before neglected the means of grace: But there is no encouragement for such as sit under the gospel, to defer their repentance, in hopes of being called at the eleventh hour; and as soon as the twelfth hour comes, or the day of life is ended, there remains no more hope for ever. How earnestly should we beg, that Christ would open the eyes of our minds, before it be too late; that he would shew us the worth, and our need, of spiritual blessings, and the way of obtaining them through faith in him, who freely gave his life a ransom for many! And if for *many*, why not for *me*? It surely is for me, if I am brought to receive the Lord Jesus as the only sacrifice for my sins, to depend on him as able and ready to save me, and to make him my example; if I prefer spiritual to temporal blessings, and seek to excel in humility and usefulness, in every great and good work, instead of thirsting after power and fame; and if, having sat down and counted the cost, I reckon upon the cross as well as the crown, and am made willing to follow Christ through sufferings to glory.

C H A P. XXI.

Christ's public entry into Jerusalem, 1,—11. His driving the traders out of the temple, 12,—16. His cursing the barren fig-tree, 17,—22. His silencing the Jews, by an appeal to John's baptism, 23,—27. His reproof to them, by the parable of two sons, 28,—32. and by the parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen, 33,—46.

TEXT.

ANID when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.

3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and colt the foal of an ass.

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on

PARAPHRASE.

NOW when our Lord and his disciples drew near to Jerusalem, and were come over-against Bethphage, which lay between that city and the mount of Olives, Jesus knowing that, at the approaching passover, he, as the true paschal Lamb typified by that ordinance, must be sacrificed for us, (1 Cor. v. 7.) determined to make a public entry into Jerusalem, as an emblem of the higher honours of the kingdom that he should rise to from the dead: And, in order thereunto, he sent two of his disciples into the adjacent village, saying, At your arrival thither, ye will find an ass tied with her foal, which has never been hacked, (Mark xi. 2.); untie, and bring them to me, that I may make such use of them as seems good in my sight.

3 And if any one should find fault with you for attempting to loose and lead them away, Tell him that your Lord and Master wants them, for a special purpose, at this time: And as soon as he hears this, his heart shall be inclined to let you bring them along with you.

4, 5. Jesus purposely did all this with a view to some ancient prophecies of the Messiah, that they might be punctually fulfilled in him; as particularly those in Isa. liii. 11. Say ye to the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; and Zech. ix. 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation: lowly, and riding upon an ass †, and (or even) upon a colt the foal of an ass.

6 The two disciples accordingly went into the village, and, managing just as Jesus had commanded, found every thing fell out exactly as he had foretold it would.

7 And they brought the ass with the colt, and putting their garments upon one of them ‡, viz. the colt,

(Mark

N O T E S.

† Christ rode on an ass, as the judges and kings of Israel did till Solomon's time: And, suitable to his character, he herein appeared, not in the pomp and pride of chariots and horses, which God had forbid to the kings

of Israel: but rode on the foal of an ass, like David, the greatest of all his ancestors. See Dr Skerbeck on Prophecy, dissert. iv. p. 328.

‡ As all the other evangelists mention only Christ's riding upon the colt, we may

on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way.

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

(Mark xi. 7.) they afterwards set Jesus on the cloaths, which they had spread upon it, that he might ride, with humble triumph, to Jerusalem.

8 And as he rode along, an exceeding great multitude attended him, many of which spread their cloaths, like carpets, in the way, for him to ride upon; others cut off boughs of trees, and strewed them on the sides of the road, as the people used to do when kings and emperors made their triumphal entrance into a city; and great numbers met him from Jerusalem, carrying palms in their hands, (John xii. 13.) as they were wont at the feast of tabernacles.

9 And † the great crowds, that went before and behind, shouted with loud acclamations of joy, and saluted him, saying, as at their feast of tabernacles, *Hosanna to the Messiah, of David's race: save now, we beseech thee, O Lord,* (Psal. cxviii. 25, 26.): We sing these honours to our Saviour and our King, the Sent of God, who comes in the name of the Lord to bless us: May all prosperity attend him and his kingdom in the highest degree; may his throne be exalted above every other throne; may he be extolled in our highest praises; may the holy angels join their songs with ours; and may all possible blessings and glory descend upon him, and upon us through him; may he bless us from on high †!

10 And when he came into Jerusalem, amidst these throngs and loud acclamations, and other demonstrations of joy, the whole city was strangely affected, some with wonder, others with envy, others with contempt, and others with ecstasy; and the common inquiry among them was, Who is this, that is thus cried

on,

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suppose that the particle (*ἐν*) ver. 8. signifies, as it often does, *even*, or, *to wit*, with respect to the colt or foal of an ass, and that Matthew here put the plural for the singular, by a figure called *enallage of number*, as it is used in Gen. viii. 4. and xix. 29.: and compare Job xix. 29. with Matt. xxv. 48: Or else we may suppose the people spread their cloaths, both on the ass, and her colt, for Jesus to take his choice; and then set him upon them, meaning the cloaths, which they had spread upon the colt; or that they first set him on the ass, and immediately afterwards on her foal, Jesus chusing to ride upon the foal. *Vid. Lamp. in John xii. 14.*

§ Perhaps they hung them likewise on the hedges and houses, to adorn the passage, and express their joy.

† Our Lord restrained all public tokens of honour from the people till now, that he might not stir up the envy of his enemies,

nor interrupt the course of his preaching, before his time; but these reasons now ceasing, he suffered these loud acclamations of the multitude, that they might be a strong and public testimony against their wickedness, who, in four or five days afterwards, would cry out, *Crucify him, crucify him.*

‡ Though the expressions recorded here, and in Mark xi. 9, 10. Luke xix. 37, 38, and John xii. 13. are somewhat different; yet they are all of a sort; and it is easy to apprehend, that in so great a multitude all these forms of congratulation were used by some or others of them. *Hosanna* is compounded of the Hebrew verb *הושיע*, which signifies *save*, and of the particle *הנה*, which is a note of intreaty; and the peoples using it may intimate their praying for salvation to themselves by the Messiah, as well as for prosperity to him.

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves,

up, and makes such a solemn appearance amongst us?

11 And the multitudes that attended him told them, This is that great prophet, who is commonly known by the name of Jesus of *Nazareth*, of *Galilee*; and whose doctrine, and wonderful works to confirm it, have been so famous in *Israel*.

12 Then Jesus went, not like a temporal prince to the palace, but like the Lord of the temple to his own house, to exercise his authority there; (see the note on *Mark xi. 15.*): And when he came to the outward court, the court of the *Gentiles*, he found a great number of traders; some paying off bills of return from distant countries for money to buy sacrifices, and changing foreign money into half-shekels, which every one of twenty years old and upwards was to give as an offering to the Lord, (*Exod. xxx. 13, 14.*); and he found others buying and selling doves and cattle for sacrifices, under a pretence of its subservience to sanctuary-work, and of convenience to those that came from far, and could not easily bring such things along with them: But when he saw that this traffic, which ought, and formerly used, to be carried on in the markets of *Jerusalem*, was introduced, by the avarice of the priests, into the place which was consecrated to the immediate service of God, and that it was managed with extortion, he threw down the stalls of the money-changers, and of the sellers of doves, and the like, and turned them all out, saying,

13 This place was designed, not for a market, but for the religious use of *Gentile*-profelytes, (who might not be admitted into the inner court of the temple to worship and offer up their prayers to the God of *Israel*), according as it is written, (*Isa. lvi. 7.*) *My house shall be called a house of prayer to all people*, or nations: But ye have horribly perverted its use, and profaned it, by your covetous merchandice; ye have thereby robbed God of his honour, and made an unlawful gain of the people, which is no better than theft; and so, according to an ancient complaint of the prophet, (*Jer. vii. 11.*) ye have turned it into a den or receptacle of thieves. And such was the divine majesty and authority of his behaviour on this occasion, that, notwithstanding all the interest of the priests among the people, and all the gain which many had by this merchandice, their spirits were so over-awed that none dared to oppose him.

14 When the market-people were gone out, Jesus staying behind in the court of the temple, such as were blind and lame came to him thither; and he honoured

13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he

he healed them.

the holy place, and supported his own character, by exerting the same authority to heal them, by which he had purged his house, and banished the buyers and sellers out of it.

13 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,

15 At this time there were children in the temple †; and even these, seeing with what majesty Christ had over-awed the traders, and cured the lame and blind, joined their joyful acclamations with the multitude, crying, All hail! Hosanna to the Messiah of the house of David: But when the chief priests and doctors of the law saw the glorious wonders he performed, and heard the very children admiring and applauding him, they were filled with indignation and envy, instead of taking conviction by it and bearing a part in their song.

16 And said unto him, Heardest thou what these say? And Jesus said unto them, Yea: have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

16 And they said to him, Do you hear what these silly children say? Surely you will not suffer such foolish creatures as these, who understand nothing, to make such a noise in crying you up. Jesus answered, Yes, I hear them; and they ought not to be rebuked for proclaiming mine and my Father's praises, which, thro' envy, ye deny us: And ye yourselves might easily perceive, that God has stirred up these weak instruments to own me as the Messiah, were ye but to read, and duly consider, that the scripture says, (*Psal. viii. 2.*) *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength:* He hereby makes his strength perfect in their weakness, and advances his own praise to the confusion of those that envy and reject me.

17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

17 Then leaving them to reflect upon all that had passed, he withdrew from their rage and fury on one hand, and from the acclamations of the people on the other; and went out of the city in the evening, with his twelve disciples, (*Mark xi. 11.*) as far as Bethany, which was near two miles from Jerusalem, (*John xi. 18.*) and there he lodged that night.

18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

18 But the next morning he returned to Jerusalem on his Father's business, though he knew the rage and malice of his enemies there against him; and, as he was going in the way, he being truly a man, and having had but little refreshment at his lodging, was hungry.

19 And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever.

19 And observing a fig-tree at a distance, (*Mark xi. 13.*) as he passed along, he went up to it; and finding that it had nothing but leaves, pronounced a curse upon it, in the hearing of his disciples, saying, As thou art barren now, so thou never shalt bear fruit again; thereby intimating to the disciples, in an emblematical man-

And

N O T E.

† We may suppose they were playing there while the priests made a market-place of it; or rather were brought by their parents to worship there.

ner,

And presently the fig-tree withered away.

ner, that the *Jewish* nation, and hypocritical formal professors, who bring forth no fruits of righteousness, which, by their profession, pretences and advantages, might be expected from them, should certainly and suddenly be destroyed. Accordingly the fig-tree immediately withered away, though the disciples did not just then take notice of it.

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!

20 But the next morning, as they were passing that way, they saw, and observed with wonder, that this fig-tree was withered and dried up from the roots: (*Mark xi. 20.*) And they said, How amazing is it that this tree is so soon quite dead!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree; but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

21 To this Jesus answering said, As wonderful and extraordinary as this may seem to you, I assuredly tell you, that if ye have but a stedfast unwavering faith and dependence upon me and upon the promises of God, ye shall be enabled to do, not only things as great and surprising as this which I have done to the fig-tree, but to perform what is as much greater a wonder, as it would be for you to command this mount of *Olives*, or any other mountain, to be plucked up by the roots, and thrown into the sea; even things as great as this shall be done according to your word.

22 And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

22 Yea, whatsoever ye shall ask with importunity in prayer, and with an unshaken faith in my name, according to the will of God, for his glory, and the confirmation of my gospel; however difficult and unlikely it may appear, your petition shall be granted.

23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him; as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

23 Jesus then went to the temple, and as he was preaching there, the chief priests and elders of the people, who were members of the great sanhedrim, or highest court of judicature among the *Jews*, came to him, and insolently demanded of him, saying, By what authority have you taken upon yourself to enter into *Jerusalem* in a public triumphant manner; to spirit up the huzza's of the multitude; to turn the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and overthrow their seats, and preach there day after day to the people, as if you were some great person? Pray who gave you a commission to do all these things? Have you this authority from God, or man?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you

24 Jesus knowing their obstinacy, and their malicious ensnaring design in this demand; instead of returning a direct answer, wisely replied by putting another question to them, which he knew would confound them, and silence their cavils against him, saying, I also will ask you a question, which if you will be so good as to resolve, I will tell you, even from your own words,

you by what authority I do these things.

15 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

16 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

17 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

18 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

19 He answered and said, I will not: but afterwards he repented, and went.

20 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir, and went not.

21 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto

words, by whose commission I do these things. What I would ask you is this:

25, 26. When *John the Baptist* preached and baptized, from whence had he his warrant? Was he sent of God; or did he come of his own head, or by the authority of any man? The chief priests and elders, considering with themselves, that if they should say, He acted therein by a commission from God, Jesus would immediately reply, Why then did ye not believe the testimony he gave concerning me as the Messiah? and so they should be confounded: And, on the other hand, considering that if they should say, *John* came of his own head, or had his commission from man, they should provoke all the people to rise up in a rage against them, and even to stone them, (*Luke xx. 6.*); for they were universally persuaded, that *John* was a prophet sent from God: These men therefore, reflecting in this manner, were afraid to return a direct answer one way or other.

27 And so they chose, for once, to pretend ignorance; and replied, even contrary to the convictions of their own consciences, We do not know from whence he received his commission. Thereupon Jesus said to them, Since ye decline answering so fair and easy a question as this, ye cannot reasonably expect that I should tell you from whence I have my authority. And to what purpose should I declare it to you? For if ye are so perverse, as either not to believe, or not to own, that *John* was sent from God; ye would rather be provoked, than convinced, by the plainest assertions I could lay down of my own divine authority.

28, 29, & 30. Christ having thus thoroughly silenced the chief priests and elders, without giving them any advantage against himself, proceeded to represent, by two parables, how God would reject them and the *Jewish* nation for their impenitence and unbelief, notwithstanding all their pretences to religion, and would receive the believing penitent *Gentiles* in their stead, saying, What think ye of this parable? A certain man had two sons, and he commanded them both to go and work a day in his vineyard: The first peremptorily refused, saying, I will not go and work; but afterwards he repented, and went: And the other seemed very forward, by making fair promises of ready obedience; but did not perform them.

31 Now, though both of these were to blame; yet which of the two do ye think most acceptable to his Father? They answered, as common sense would dictate, He

unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

He that said he would not go, but afterwards repented and went. Jesus replied, This is the very case between you, who make high pretences to obedience, and the very worst of sinners, who professedly declare against it: Both they and you have one common Father, even the Creator of all, who has a right to every one's obedience; and they are like the first son, while ye are like the second: For I assuredly tell you, that publicans and harlots, and sinners of the *Gentiles*, who did not pretend to any religion, are sooner brought to a conviction of their sin and danger, and to faith in me, and shall sooner find acceptance with God according to the grace of the gospel, than you, who make fair professions of duty, and yet continue in impenitence and unbelief.

31 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him. And ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards, that ye might believe him.

32 For *John the Baptist*, by his life and doctrine, proved himself to be a prophet sent from God: He came to you, like one of that character, leading a holy, serious and unblameable life, and calling you to repentance and faith in me, as the Messiah, for the remission of your sins; and yet ye, who pretend to abundance of regard to God, and to whom *John* was properly sent, did not believe what he said concerning me: But the publicans and harlots, the worst of sinners, whom ye rank with the heathen; yea, *Gentiles* themselves, such as the *Roman* soldiers; confessed their sins, and believed what he preached concerning me: And even when ye saw how his ministry wrought upon them, their example had no good effect upon you; but still ye persisted in rejecting me.

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

33 Let me give you another parable of the same import. "A certain master of a family planted a vineyard, hedged it in, and dug a trench for a wine-press; he likewise built a tower for the vine-dressers to dwell in, and to watch the vineyard; and, letting it out to husbandmen, travelled into a far country:"—So God formerly planted his church among the *Jews*, furnishing it with every thing necessary for its fruitfulness, ornament, and defence: He encompassed it about with his special care and protection; honoured it with his presence and promises, and with the covenant of circumcision; and there he set up the altar of burnt-offerings, to which all the sacrifices were to be brought; and instituted ordinances, in which the overseers of the church were to be conversant and watch over it; and then, committing the management of it to the chief priests, elders, and rulers, he withdrew his extraordinary visible appearances from them, leaving them promises of returning, after a while, to bestow better blessings

sings upon them.

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other servants, more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir: come let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the

34 "And when the season for the vine-harvest was come, the owner of the vineyard sent his servants to the husbandmen, to receive its fruits, and to help to gather them in:"—So when in reason it might be expected that God's people the *Jews* should bring forth fruits of righteousness, according to the advantageous means they enjoyed, he sent his prophets of the Old Testament to remind them of their duty, to direct them in it, and encourage them to it.

35 "But, instead of the husbandmen attending to their duty, they abused the servants their master had sent to them, beating some, and killing others:"—So the rulers of *Israel* persecuted the messengers which God sent to them: They beat *Jeremiah*, (*Jer. xx. 2.*); killed many of the other prophets, (*Neh. ix. 26.*); and stoned *Zechariah*, the son of *Jehoiada*, (*2 Chr. xxiv. 21.*)

36 "Again, the master sent still more servants; and the husbandmen dealt as injuriously with them as with the former:"—So God continued to send his prophets, time after time, to the *Jews*, with further additions of light and admonitions, to recover and reform them; and they reviled, abused, and slew them also.

37 "At last, he sent his own son, reasonably supposing that they must needs pay a high regard to him:"—So God, after the *Jews* and their rulers had from age to age slighted, oppressed, and killed his prophets down to *John the Baptist*, sent his only begotten Son to them, as the last expedient for reclaiming and recovering them, that they might bring forth fruit to him; and it was reasonably to be expected, that, however they had dealt with his servants, they should pay the highest honour and obedience to his own Son, who came with greater authority and right in himself, and with the clearest attestations of it by the miracles he wrought, to demand their subjection to him.

38, 39. "But when the husbandmen saw their master's son and heir, they thought, that, if they should but kill him, the inheritance would be their own, without any more disturbance, for ever; and therefore, consulting together, they seized and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him:"—So when the Son of God appeared among the chief priests and rulers, and they saw with what authority he spake and acted, what miracles he wrought, and how the people cried him up; they, instead of receiving him, and encouraging others to believe in him, were filled with envy against him; and thinking, that, if they could but get rid of him, their

the vineyard, and
slew him.

their own authority would be established without controul, they combine together, and rise up against him, to cast him out of the church, who is its Foundation, and the Author of all its blessings; and to procure his crucifixion without the gates of *Jerusalem*, and so fill up the measure of their iniquity.

40 When the
Lord therefore of
the vineyard com-
meth, what will
he do unto those
husbandmen?

40 "When therefore the lord of the vineyard returns, what do ye think he will do to those wicked husbandmen?"—In like manner, when the time shall come for God to execute judgment, What is reasonably to be expected that he will do to such persecutors and murderers of his prophets, and at last of his own Son?

41 They say
unto him, He will
miserably destroy
those wicked men,
and will let out
his vineyard unto
other husband-
men, which shall
render him the
fruits in their sea-
sons.

41 The chief priests and elders, not understanding Christ's meaning, he not having explained it to them, readily answered, "The master, no doubt, will utterly destroy those wicked husbandmen without mercy, and commit the care of his vineyard to others that will be more faithful to their trust?" And so they unawares passed judgment against themselves, that it would be a righteous thing with God utterly to destroy them, and all the rejecters of the Messiah among them; and to call the *Gentiles* into his church, who should believe in him, and bring forth fruit unto God. But though they thus gave sentence in general against these husbandmen; yet as soon as they found the parable was spoken against themselves, they said; Far be it from us that we should be guilty of so horrible a crime, as that of putting the real Messiah to death, which deserves so severe a punishment, (*Luke xx. 16, 19.*)

42 Jesus saith
unto them, Did ye
never read in the
scriptures, The
stone which the
builders rejected,
the same is be-
come the head of
the corner: this
is the Lord's do-
ing, and it is
marvellous in our
eyes?

42 Then Jesus said to them, Nay, thus it certainly will be; for have you never observed that the scripture says, *The Stone which the builders refused, is become the head-stone of the corner?* (*Psal. cxviii. 22.*) i. e. The Messiah, who was rejected by the *Jews*, and particularly by their chief priests and rulers, that had the care and government of the church in their hands, is become its foundation, and its principal corner-stone for uniting the *Gentiles* to it, in like manner as the chief corner-stone of an house supports and links together its two sides: And all this is appointed, over-ruled, and ordered of God, for the vindication of his own honour, the confusion of his enemies, and the salvation of his people, in such a manner as is wonderfully glorious in itself and in the account of all those that believe.

43 Therefore
say I unto you,
The

43 Therefore I assure you, that for your obstinacy and unbelief, the gospel and all its blessings shall be taken away from you, so that ye shall be no longer the peculiar people of God; and he will send it to the *Gentiles*,

The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

tiles, and take them into his covenant, who shall give it better entertainment, and bring forth fruits of righteousness to his praise and glory.

44 And whosoever shall, through ignorance and prejudice, be offended at the Messiah, on account of his state of humiliation, so as not to believe in him, is like a man who stumbles and falls, or is thrown down upon a great stone, to the endangering of his life: But whosoever shall finally reject him, and obstinately set himself against him, in his state of exaltation, is like a man who pulls a heavy stone upon his own head, or † on whom it is cast, which will crush him to pieces, and miserably destroy him without remedy.

45 Now when the chief priests and *Pharisees* had heard both these parables, with their application; they plainly saw, that they were the persons against whom our Lord, in a special manner, had directed them; and that he had brought them unawares to give judgment against themselves, relating to their guilt, and the vengeance they deserved.

46 But, instead of falling under a humble sense of it, they were so much the more enraged against him; and would have been glad, at that very instant, to have laid violent hands upon him; only they were restrained by fears, that the people would take his part and avenge his quarrel; for he, especially at this time, stood high in the esteem of the multitude, who at least believed him to be a prophet sent from God: And therefore the chief priests and *Pharisees* waved executing their malicious design for the present, till they might meet with a safer opportunity for it.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a wonderful conjunction of divine, human, and office characters, do we meet with in Christ! Behold the *God*, in his perfect knowledge before-hand of every minute circumstance of things, and of the freest actions of men; in his command over their minds, and acting like the Lord of his temple, to reform abuses there, and that without resistance from those whose authority, inclinations, and interests lay strongly against it; and in his healing diseases, and drying up the barren fig-tree at his pleasure! Behold the *Man*, in his being hungry! And behold the *Messiah*, in his riding on the ass's colt, amidst the loud hosannas of the people; in his opening the eyes of the blind; in making the lame to walk; and in his being refused by the *Jewish* builders, according to ancient prophecies! But oh what sort of Messiah was this: how kind and good, how meek and lowly in heart! With what humble state did he appear, like one whose kingdom was not of this world, and whose present humiliation was to issue in a glorious exaltation! and yet how different were peoples thoughts about him! Some readily owned him for the saviour of *Israel*; whilst others did not know what to make of him, and others rejected him. And how different was the treatment he met with!

Some

N O T E.

† Here seems to be an allusion to the manner of the *Jews* stoning to death, in which the person was first cast down upon a great stone; and if that did not dispatch him, a very heavy one was thrown upon his breast.

some admiring and applauding him; whilst others were filled with envy at him, and that under pretence of high regards to God. But alas! what are all pretences to religion, if the life contradict them? And how many flat denials do some give Christ, who are afterwards effectually wrought upon by his grace to yield themselves up to him! He will have an interest in the world, how unworthily soever some may treat him: And fruit shall be brought forth to God, though his gospel and his grace be removed from one people to another to produce it. O how afraid should we be of a barren profession, or of stumbling at Christ, and rejecting him, thro' unbelief, lest we be rejected by him; to the loss of the means of grace, and to our own dreadful perdition! and how desirous should we be to say and do, to profess, believe, and obey his call in the gospel!

C H A P. XXII.

The parable of the marriage of the king's son, 1,—14. Christ's debates with his enemies about paying tribute to Cæsar, 15,—22. About the resurrection, 23,—33. About the greatest commandment of the law, 34,—40. And about the Messiah's being the Son of David, 41,—46.

TEXT.

AND Jesus answered, and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

PARAPHRASE.

WHILE the Pharisees were seeking an opportunity to lay hands upon Christ, (chap. xxi. 46.) he, as answering to their secret designs, proceeded to represent the state of the gospel-kingdom by way of similitude, saying,

1 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king which made a marriage for his son;

2 "The dispensation of God, in the gospel-state, is like the management of a certain king, who made a great marriage-feast for his son."—So God, having sent his own Son into the world, to be the bridegroom of the church, has made rich provisions, and gracious invitations in the gospel, to encourage sinners to accept of him †, and yield themselves up by faith to him, that they may partake of all the blessings of salvation.

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

3 "And when the feast was ready, the king sent his servants to call them without delay who before had been invited; but they refused to come."—So God, by his Son, sent the apostles and the seventy to preach the gospel, with proposals of salvation to his peculiar people the Jews, who had before been invited to embrace the Messiah, by the ancient prophecies of him, by the ministry of John the Baptist, and of Christ himself; but the greatest part of them would not come to him that they might have life: And thus it is with the greatest number of those to whom the gospel is preached.

4 Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner:

4 "After this, he nevertheless sent out other servants to the same people, saying, Tell the invited guests; that my provisions are fully prepared, and every thing is ready for a kind reception; and insist upon their coming

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now

NOTE.

† Though this parable primarily respects the Jews and Gentiles; yet it is applicable to others in all ages.

my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

now, before it be too late."—In like manner, God so ordered it, that Christ, after his death, resurrection, and ascension to glory, should renew his commission to the apostles and other disciples, and send them forth, with great measures of his spirit, to the *Jews* again, to assure them, that the work of redemption is fully accomplished, that a dispensation of grace is set up in all its fulness and glory, and that he is ready to receive every one who comes to God by him; and, with these encouragements, to repeat their free and solemn invitations to those refusers now, at last, to accept of him with all his benefits, and give themselves up in a marriage-covenant to him: And thus God graciously condescends to renew the ministerial offers of mercy again and again, by many of his servants, to them that sit under the gospel.

5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and intreated them spitefully, and slew them:

7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed these murderers, and burnt up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

5, 6. "But they still slighted the kind invitations, and went about other business; some to manage their farms, and others their trades; and some of them were so very ungrateful and wicked, that they reviled and abused, and even killed, the servants who came to invite them."—So the *Jews* continued to despise the gracious errand on which the apostles and other ministers were sent, and preferred their worldly interests to Christ and the salvation of their souls; and many of them were so horribly vile, that they reproached and persecuted his servants, and put them to death:—And thus it is still with many to whom the gospel is sent.

7 "But upon the king's hearing this, he was exceedingly enraged, and ordered his army to go and put these ungrateful murderers of his messengers to the sword, and to burn their city down to the ground."—So, God being highly provoked at the obstinate infidelity and cruel outrages of the *Jews* in opposing his servants who came to bring the last dispensation of his mercy to them, stirred up the *Romans* against them; and, in the righteousness of his providence, sent their army to destroy that nation, and burn up *Jerusalem*: And he will not always bear with other refusers of Christ, and implacable enemies of his servants; but will one day execute the most dreadful vengeance upon them, and consume them with unquenchable fire.

8 "Then the king said to his servants, My feast is ready; but the guests that were invited have shewn such contempt as renders them utterly unworthy to be admitted to it; therefore they shall be sent to no more."—So the *Jews*, by putting away Christ and the gospel, judged themselves, and God judged them unworthy of eternal

eternal life; and therefore cut them off from his covenant, and made no further tenders of his grace to them: And, in like manner, he will deal by such persons and nations as continue to pour contempt upon the means of grace which he sends among them.

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

9 "But that his provisions might not be lost, he ordered his servants to go into the common roads, and invite all they should meet with in their way, to the wedding-feast."—So, when God rejected the *Jews* for their obstinate and continued infidelity, he ordered the apostles to turn to the *Gentiles*: In like manner, he will have an interest in the world, how many soever they be that despise and reject the gospel; and he externally calls all that hear it, to the obedience of faith.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

10 "The servants, according to this command, went into the public ways, and promiscuously invited every one they met with; and by this means a great number of guests came to the wedding-feast."—So the apostles, according to their enlarged commission, went and preached the gospel, without distinction, to the *Gentiles*, calling rich and poor, greater and lesser sinners, to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and turn from idols to serve the living and true God; and multitudes among them renounced their former idolatry, and were received into the Christian-church; some of them being true converts, and others but temporary believers and hypocrites. In like manner, gospel-ministers publish its good tidings to all sorts of sinners; and by this means many are brought to give up their names to Christ, and his church; some of which have the grace of God in truth, and others only a profession of it.

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

11 "And upon the king's coming amongst his guests, he observed one of them that appeared there without † a dress suitable to the nuptial solemnity."—So God takes an exact notice of all that make a profession of Christ's name, and are members of the visible church; no hypocrites can conceal themselves from him; but, however they may pass for saints among men, he sees that they have not put on Christ by faith, and are neither adorned with his righteousness nor his image, and so have no right to partake of the blessings of his kingdom.

12 And he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in

12 "Hereupon the king expostulated with the man, saying, Friend, how durst you come so unsuitably
clo-

N O T E.

† The wedding-garment was a better sort of dress than was ordinarily worn; and such a garment, it seems, was so necessary, that even they who came upon an invitation were not suffered to taste of the feast, or continue with the guests, without it. See *Illustration* on the place.

in hither, not having a wedding-garment ! And he was speechless.

clothed, to appear as a guest at this marriage-feast ? And he was confounded, having nothing to reply."--- So God, in the great day, will call those sinners in *Sion* to a strict account, that were by profession and obligation Christ's friends ; and will demand of them, How they could venture to creep into churches, and expect to be made partakers of eternal life, they being destitute of true faith in Christ for righteousness, and of a work of heart-changing grace ? And their mouths will be stopped ; they will be self-condemned, and have nothing to plead in their own excuse.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness : there shall he weeping and gnashing of teeth.

13 " Then the king ordered his servants to bind this man like a criminal, and turn him out of the room, which was illuminated for the entertainment and pleasure of the guests, and to put him into a dark and doleful place without, there to bewail his presumption, loss, and misery."--- So God, by an irreversible sentence on hypocrites, will command his holy angels to thrust them out from the kingdom of glory, into a state of the thickest darkness, misery, and despair, where they shall lament their just punishment, with the utmost rage and horror, for ever. (See the note on *Mat.* viii. 12.)

14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

14 " For it will evidently appear in the final judgment, that, as I lately said on a like occasion, (*chap.* xx. 16.) many are externally called by the ministry of the gospel, and make a profession of religion ; but few, comparatively speaking, are really chosen to salvation, thro' sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth."

15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

15 The *Pharisees*, perceiving that Jesus levelled this and the foregoing parables against them, though they did not thoroughly understand his meaning, resolved to try all the methods they could think of to take away his life ; and as they durst not attempt it by force for fear of the people, (*chap.* xxi. 46.) they betook themselves to stratagem, consulting how they might draw him into some obnoxious expression (*ὁ λόγος*) in a captious dispute with him.

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and

16 And for this purpose they sent some of their own disciples, who were great sticklers for the liberty of the *Jews*, and some of *Herod's* † party, who were zealous for the authority of the *Romans* over them ; and ordered these to apply, in a respectful manner, to Christ, as if they were desirous to refer the decision of their controversy to him, saying, Master, we are satisfied that you are a man of great integrity and understanding, that you faith-

N O T E.

† The *Herodians* were the followers of *Herod the great*, who was for subjecting himself and his people to the dominion of the *Romans*, and for complying with them in many of their heathen usages. *Prim. Council.* vol. ii. p. 367.

and teachest the way of God in truth, neither canst thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto *Cesar*, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites!

19 Shew me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny.

20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

21 They say unto him, *Cesar's*. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto *Cesar* the things which are *Cesar's*, and unto God the things that are God's.

22 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

faithfully teach the right way of pleasing God, and that your impartiality and courage are proof against being biassed by the frowns or favours of any man living; for, be he ever so great, you will freely speak your mind, whether he like it or not.

17 We therefore intreat that you would please to satisfy us in a point much disputed between us; and that is, Whether it be lawful for us, who are the peculiar people of God, and *Abraham's* seed, to submit to *Cesar's* government, who is a foreigner, and of a different religion from ours; and to own that submission, by paying tribute to him? What is your judgment, or what do you say is the mind of God, in this case? Thus they thought to ensnare him, whichever way he should answer: For if it should be in the negative, *Herod's* party would accuse him to the *Roman* emperor, as an enemy to his government; and if it should be in the affirmative, the *Pharisees* would accuse him to the people, as an enemy to their rights and liberties.

18 But Jesus, seeing thro' all their subtle and malicious designs, said to them, Ye deceitful flatterers, why, under a pretence of honouring me, do ye go about in this wicked manner to entangle me in my talk, that ye may find occasions against me?

19 Then asking for a piece of money, such as used to be demanded for tribute, they shewed him a *Roman* penny which was of that sort.

20 And since the coining of money, and thereby ascertaining its value and making it current, was always looked upon as the legal prerogative of the higher powers, he desired them to tell him whose image and inscription that piece bore.

21 They readily answered, It was the *Roman* emperor's, who was usually styled *Cesar*. Whereupon Jesus replied, Your receiving this as your current coin, is an acknowledgement of *Cesar's* dominion over you; and therefore ye ought, in civil concerns, to return the tribute of that to him, which, by the authority and protection of his government, ye receive from him; as well as, in religious concerns, to return the homage and acknowledgments to God, that are his due as Lord of all: Take heed, that neither of these duties interfere with the other.

22 In this manner he avoided the snare they had laid for him: And when they found, by his unexceptionable answer, that no advantage could be obtained against him, they admired his wisdom and caution, and went away disappointed in their design of accusing him either

23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased; and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother.

26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven.

to *Casar* or to the people.

23 Soon after this, on that very day, some of the sect of the *Sadducees*, who denied a future state, or any existence of angels or separate spirits, and the resurrection of the body from the dead, (*Acts* xxiii. 8.) came to try whether they could not grieve and confound our Lord by a question which they should put to him about an important point of revealed religion, saying,

24 Master, *Moses* ordered in the law, (*Deut.* xxv. 5.) that if a married man should die childless, a surviving brother should take his widow to wife, in order to the raising up of an heir for his inheritance and keeping his name alive in *Israel*.

25 Now an extraordinary case has fallen out amongst us, in a family where there were seven brethren: The first of them, having had a wife, died without any child, and left his widow to be married to his next brother;

26, 27. And the second having married her, died without any offspring likewise; the same was the case of the third; and, in short, every one of them took her in their order, after the death of the rest, and none of them had any issue by her; and at last, the woman herself died childless.

28 If therefore, according to some peoples notion, there be a future state, and a resurrection of the body, the question is, Which of these seven shall have her for his wife in the other world, since they were all married to her in this, and none of them had any son or daughter by her to determine or appropriate the relation?

29 Jesus replied, Ye are guilty of a very great mistake, and talk much beside the point, through your ignorance of the scripture-doctrine about a future state, and of the true sense of the passage referred to, which relates only to the peculiar circumstances of the children of *Israel* in this world; as also through your ignorance of the exceeding greatness of God's power, with whom it is no impossible thing to raise the dead, and give them a different sort of life in the world to come.

30 For in the happy state to which the dead shall be raised, there will be no need of marriage for the comfort of life, nor any room for leaving widows to others to marry them for perpetuating names and inheritances, and keeping up a succession of generations, as there is in this miserable and dying world; but every one there will be incorruptible, immortal, and happy, even as the holy angels themselves are in heaven, who never die, or know what troubles mean.

31 But touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,
32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33 And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.

34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, which is the great com-

31, 32. But that there will be a resurrection of the dead to a glorious immortality, may be gathered, by just consequences, from what God himself said to *Moses* †, whose books ye yourselves professedly own to be of divine authority. Have ye never read and observed in them, what instructions God has given to you of this age, (for whose learning, as well as for the use of former times, they were written,) when, appearing to *Moses* in the bush, (*Exod.* iii. 6.) he styled himself the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, many years after they were dead, saying, not I was, but I am their God. This abiding relation to them imports, that they are still the sons of God, *waiting for the adoption*, viz. *the redemption of the body*, (*Rom.* viii. 23.): For it is unworthy of God, to suppose that after death he should continue to be a God in covenant-relation to them; and yet that their bodies, which are essential parts of their persons, should always abide in a state of death, never to revive in another world ‡.

33 And as this silenced the *Sadducees*, so the common people, upon hearing his answer to their objection, could not but admire the aptness, evidence, and excellence, of what he taught relating to this important article of faith.

34 But when the *Pharisees* heard how he had confuted the *Sadducees*, they were so far from being pleased at it, though he had therein established the doctrine which they themselves held about the resurrection, that they invidiously gathered together to see whether they could not blast his reputation among the people by puzzling him with some other question.

35 To this purpose one of them, who was by office an interpreter of the law, having a mind to try his skill, put a question to him which was much disputed among the critics of those days, saying,

36 Master, as there are different opinions about the law, some concluding that the ceremonial, and others that

N O T E S.

† The *Sadducees* admitted only the five books of *Moses*, rejecting all the other parts of holy scripture, (*Prid. Connell.* vol. ii. p. 336.); and therefore Christ argued with them from a passage taken out of those writings, and not from other still clearer proofs in the Old Testament.

‡ Though their souls lived in a separate state, God would nevertheless be the God of the dead; for they could be said to live only in part, unless their dead bodies were to rise again: However, as the chief prejudice of

the *Sadducees* against the resurrection lay in their disbelief of the immortality of the soul, or of any future state whatsoever, the argument taken from God's being the God of the living only, was a clear and effectual confutation of their error. Nay, if he is not the God of *Abraham*, &c. in another world, he never was their God, according to the full meaning of that character, at all; for the best of their circumstances, in this life, were too defective and afflicted, to come up to the complete happiness and dignity included in that high and glorious relation.

commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On these two commandments, hang all the law and the prophets.

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David.

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord,

that the moral is most important; and some contending for the law of circumcision, others for that of the Sabbath, and others for that of sacrifices, as the chief; which do you say is the principal commandment contained in the writings of *Moses*?

37 Jesus answered him, That which is most comprehensive and important, is this, 'Thou shalt love the Lord supremely, as *Jehovah* and thy God, to the exclusion of all others; and thou shalt love him entirely, unfeignedly, and at all times, with the united powers of thy understanding, will, and affections.

38 This is the grand fundamental precept of the whole law, without a regard to which no other of its injunctions can be duly observed; and this is the summary of all the duties of the first table.

39 And the next important commandment, the nearest a-kin to this, as comprehensive of all the duties of the second table, is, 'Thou shalt love thy fellow-creatures as truly and sincerely as thyself, bearing all goodwill to them, and doing good, as you have opportunity, to all men, and especially to the household of faith, even as you would in like circumstances do, or desire others to do unto yourself.

40 These two commandments make up the sum and substance of the moral law, which is fundamental to all true religion; these are the natural law that was originally written in the heart of man, the obligations to which can never be dissolved; and all the revelations that God has made, in the written law and the prophets, stand upon the foundation of, and are designed to enforce them.

41 Jesus having thus answered the *scribe's* question, and stopped his mouth so that he could make no reply; and the *Pharisees* still continuing together, in order to their making further attempts to embarrass him; he took that opportunity, in his turn, to propose a question, which would give him a fair advantage of putting them to a nonplus, saying,

42 What are your thoughts about the *Messiah*, who was promised to the fathers, and whom ye are now expecting to appear in the world? Whose son, or of what family, do ye say he must be? They readily answered, He is to be of the family of *David*, as was universally believed from the plain prophecies of the Old Testament about him. (See the note on *Luke* xx. 14.)

43 Jesus replied, How is it then to be understood, that *David*, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, called the *Messiah* his Lord, and thereby owned and honoured

Lord, saying,

honoured him as his superior and a divine person, saying of him, (*Pfal. cx. 1.*)

44 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy foot-stool?

44 God the Father said unto my Lord, Sit thou exalted in all dignity, glory and power, on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; and continue reigning in the administration of thy kingdom, as the Christ, till all thine enemies be effectually and entirely subjected to thee, according to mine appointment?

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

45 If then *David*, in a *Psal*m which ye yourselves own to be prophetic of the Messiah, styles him *Lord*, by way of superiority to himself; how do ye understand this, in consistency with his being his son or a descendant from him?

46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man (from that day forth) ask him any more questions.

46 The scribes and Pharisees, either being ignorant, or not willing to acknowledge, that he, who was of the seed of *David* according to the flesh, was, in his divine nature, over all God blessed for ever, and so was the root as well as the offspring of *David*, were at a loss what reply to make; and finding that they were no match for one of his superior wisdom, they from that time forward were afraid of entering into further disputes with him, or of attempting to ensnare him by any other questions.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How much more eager are many to dispute against the most important points of the law and gospel, to their own confusion, than to come like humble inquirers to Christ, to learn of, and believe in him, to their own salvation. But, after all that wit or malice can suggest to the contrary, he will confute it, and put his enemies to shame.—His grace is bountiful and free, and is proposed in the gospel to the acceptance of all that hear it. Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and appear with the wedding-garment as accepted guests there: But miserable is their case that reject Christ, or take up with a bare profession of his name; and many are externally called, but few are chosen of God to eternal life.—True religion is as necessary for the happiness of another world, as civil government is for the peace and order of this: They do not interfere with one another; but should be kept in proper bounds, and attended to with due regards: And as love to God is essential to the first, so the love of our neighbour is to the last; there are laws of perpetual obligation, according to the various relations in which we stand.—When believers have done with this world and all its present concerns, God will be their God for ever in another; and a resurrection to eternal life will enter their whole persons, body as well as soul, into a complete state of immortal blessedness, when all Christ's enemies shall be entirely subdued, and all the saints shall triumph in his presence: And then they shall know who and what he is, in his divine, human, and office characters and glory, as God-man mediator; shall be able to reconcile all seeming contradictions about him; and shall get through all the clouds and difficulties that here surround them, and that puzzle and confound such as set themselves against him.

C H A P. XXIII.

Christ cautions against the pride and hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees, 1,—12. Denounces several woes against them, 13,—33. And scetels the destruction of Jerusalem, 34,—39.

TEXT.

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

2 Saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do: but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not.

4 For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on mens shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

5 But all their works they do, for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER Jesus had put all his adversaries to silence, he, continuing in the temple, (chap. xxiii. 1.) spake to the great company of people that were about him, and to his own disciples, what might be proper to guard against an high opinion of the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, and against being misled by them, saying,

2 The *scribes* and *Pharisees* are, by their office, the successors of *Moses*, as interpreters of God's law; and their business is to expound and enforce it privately to their disciples, and publicly to the people in your synagogues every sabbath-day; which office is in itself good and useful, how much soever they have abused it, and behave unsuitable to it.

3 Whatsoever therefore they teach and enforce upon you, agreeable to the true intent of the law of God, that ye should look upon yourselves bound to regard and practise: But take heed of treading in their steps, or of imitating them in their lives; for while they preach and profess one thing, they do another.

4 For they are exceeding strict and rigid in their constructions of such divine precepts as best serve their turn, and in imposing them with additions of their own inventing, and so lay intolerable burdens upon the consciences of others: But they themselves will not be at the trouble of observing them, nor give the least dispensation to the people to neglect any of them; much less will they practise those moral duties that are of the greatest consequence, and of perpetual obligation.

5 And (2) whatsoever they do that carries a face of religion, it is only in public, and in the sight of men, that they may observe and applaud them. As for instance, God commanded the *Jews* (Deut. vi. 8.) *to bind the law for a sign upon their hands, and as frontlets between their eyes*: to signify that they should daily meditate upon it, and put it in practice: But these hypocritical men think they sufficiently fulfil this command, by only writing some sentences of the law upon slips of parchment of more than ordinary breadth, and putting them upon their arms and foreheads. And as, to distinguish the *Israelites* from other nations, God ordered them to *wear fringes in the borders of their garments*, (Numb. xv. 38,---40.) these men put on such as are wider than common, that they may be particularly taken notice of as more eminently religious than others.

6 And, with the same ambitious view, when they are invited to a feast, they are very fond of getting the upper hand; and whenever they are in places of religious

chief seats in the synagogues,

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

11 But he that is greatest among you

gious worship, they take care to set themselves in the highest seats there, that they may be thought more worthy than the rest of the company.

7 Yea, even in the open streets, and places of the most public resort, they love to be homaged, and treated with all visible marks of the highest respect, in the sight of multitudes; and are extremely delighted when any compliment them under the titles of *father* and *master* †; and so applaud them as great men that are the heads of sects and parties, and the authors of the doctrines they preach.

8 But, said Christ to his disciples, let none of you aim at vain-glorious titles ‡ of honour and precedence above others, much less at such titles as import dominion over their faith and consciences: For ye have but one Lord and King, which is the Messiah; and all of you should treat one another with mutual respect and love, looking upon yourselves as brethren that have no superiority of power one over another, but are equally subject in all matters of faith and obedience to your great and common Lord.

9 And let no man living upon earth be called your father, in such a sense as denotes the head of a sect, or the founder of religion, or one who is to be absolutely obeyed in matters of conscience: For, in opposition to all men, ye have but one such Father; and that is God, who is the Father of lights, and whose throne is established in the heavens.

10 Neither let any among you vainly assume to himself, or admit of, the title of *master* or *leader*, as signifying one who, of his own ability and authority, teaches and enjoins any doctrine or duty of religion: For, in opposition to human instructors, ye have but one such Master, which is Christ, the great Prophet of the church, whom, and whom only, ye ought to hear in all things, as your infallible Guide and absolute Lord.

11 But whosoever he be among you that most excels his brethren in gifts and graces, or in honour and esteem in the church, let him not take occasion from
thence

N O T E S.

† The Rabbies were the great fathers of tradition, and masters in *Israel*, who laid as much stress, or more, upon their own inventions, which in time became the traditions of the elders, than upon the words of scripture themselves; and therefore, when all the Jewish traditions came afterwards to be collected in the book called their *Talmud*, the contenders for their authority were called *Rabbinists*. See *Frid. Connell*. vol. ii. p. 336.

‡ Our Lord does not condemn civil re-

spect, under the titles of *father*, *master*, and the like; for these result from known relations in life; and the apostle styled himself a *father*, on religious accounts, to them whom he had been instrumental in converting to the faith of Christ: But all titles are to be condemned, as far as any are ambitious of them, and as far as they entrench upon God's authority, and are used to countenance a dominion over the faith of others.

you, shall be your servant.

12 And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold

thence to grow haughty and assuming; but let him rather be so much the more condescending and laborious, in improving his superior talents and advantages for the good of others.

12 For whosoever, under the dominion of a proud spirit, shall behave imperiously, and seek to set himself above others, shall be brought down and exposed to shame here and hereafter: But whoever shall have mean thoughts of himself, and behave with condescension and humility, shall be highly honoured in the sight of God and man.

13 Then our Lord turning his discourse to the *scribes and Pharisees*, said, Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! Your case is dreadfully guilty and miserable: For ye, who profess to have the key of knowledge, and ought to explain the ancient types and prophecies of the Messiah in their reference to me and my spiritual kingdom, do all you can to oppose my gracious designs, and to prejudice the people against them; for ye neither embrace my gospel yourselves, nor let others alone that are inclined to it; but ye bear them down by your authority, threaten to cast them out of your synagogues, and vilify my person, doctrine, and miracles, to prevent their believing to the salvation of their souls.

14 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! For, in direct violation of the law of right and justice, ye, by specious insinuations and rigorous exactions, make a prey of weak widows and their families, from whom any thing is to be gotten; and to cover your cruel covetousness and extortion, and bring them the more readily into your base designs, ye put on a cloak of great devotion, by lengthening out your prayers: Therefore your sin is highly aggravated; and ye shall suffer the heaviest vengeance from the hand of God, who is a *father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows*. (Psal. lxxviii. 5.)

15 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! For ye contrive and labour, run every where, and try all imaginable ways and means, to gain over a *Gentile* to your religion, and especially to your own sect; not with any design for the glory of God and the good of his soul; but that ye may have the reputation of converting him, and may strengthen your own party: And when once he is proselyted, so absolute is your ascendancy over his conscience, that ye fill his head with trifling and immoral notions, and his heart with the worst of prejudices; and so make him doubly more stupid and vile,

fold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 Wo unto you, blind guides! which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor.

17 Ye fools, and blind: for whether is greater? the gold, or temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19 Ye fools, and blind! for whether is greater? the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall

vile, more outrageously bigotted against me and my gospel †, more furiously mad, in acting under the devil's influence to serve his interests, and in posting blindly on to eternal destruction, than even some of yourselves.

16 Wo unto you, ye ignorant, erroneous, and superstitious teachers, who pretend to be guides to the blind, but are yourselves wilfully blind! Ye mislead the people into the most dangerous errors about the obligation of oaths, telling them, that whoever swears only by the temple, his oath does not bind him, and need not be regarded; but whoever swears by the gold, or the treasure, which is consecrated to the service of God in the temple, and by which ye yourselves expect to be gainers, he is bound by his oath, and must perform it.

17 Ye foolish and ridiculous teachers, (see the note on chap. v. 22.) what a weak and senseless distinction is this! For let me ask you, Which is most sacred, most related to God, and most to be regarded? the gold that is sanctified by the temple, or the temple that sanctifies the gold? Is not that which sanctifies, greater than that which is sanctified?

18 And ye furthermore tell the people, that whoever swears only by the altar, his oath is not binding; but whoever swears by any gift, or sacrifice, that is offered upon the altar, he is a debtor, (*οφειλται*), and is guilty of the greatest crime if he does not perform his oath.

19 Ye foolish and ridiculous teachers, how silly and absurd a distinction is this! For which must common sense tell one is most nearly related to God, and most strictly to be regarded with a conscience toward him? the offering which is sanctified by the altar, or the altar which sanctifies that? (*Exod. xxix. 37.*) These things carry their own evidence to any one whose interests do not lie the other way.

20 It is therefore certain, that whosoever swears by God's altar †, does in effect swear by all the oblations that are brought to it, and by the God whose altar it is, and to whom the offerings upon it are made.

21 And whosoever swears by the temple, takes that oath

N O T E S.

† The Hellenist Jews, who were mostly proselytes, shewed the bitterest rancour of all others against Christianity, (*Acts xiii. 45. and xiv. 2, 19. and xvii. 5, 6, 13.*): And *Justin Martyr* complained, that the Jewish proselytes were doubly more blasphemous against the name of Christ, and desirous to kill and torment believers in him, than the Jews were themselves; *Dialog. cum Triph.* p. 350.

† Christ disallows of these forms of swearing, (*chap. v. 34. &c.*): But he here intimates, that such oaths must in all reason be supposed to have a reference to God, who only can be a witness of the truth, and an avenger of the falsehood, of what they swear by the creatures that are related to him; and that therefore, if any were so foolish as to take such oaths, they were bound to perform the one as well as the other.

shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are

oath by the sacred house which was built at the command of God, consecrated by his presence, and dedicated to him; and so in effect swears by the God whose temple it is, and who in a special manner resides there.

22 And, to mention another instance in use among you, whoever he be that swears by heaven, which is the seat of God's most glorious majesty and dominion, swears in effect by him who dwells and rules there. So that whatever creatures ye swear by, since they have a relation to God, it is implicitly taking an oath by God himself; and if any thing could be supposed to abate the obligation arising from thence in one of these cases more than in another, it would be when ye swear by a creature of the more distant, and not by one of the nearer relation to him.

23 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and self-conceited boasters! For ye are wonderfully exact and scrupulous in trifling niceties which cost you little, that ye may raise your reputation with the people, and engage the priests in your interest: Ye therefore make a great stir about paying tithes, even of such small herbs as mint, anise, and cummin; but utterly neglect the most important duties of the law, such as justice and mercy toward man, and faith toward God in all the revelations of his will under the present dispensation of grace; together with all faithfulness toward God and man: These are the momentous vital things of religion that ye ought to have made your first and principal care, and those other trivial things should have had only a subordinate place in your regards.

24 Ye are certainly very ignorant and superstitious directors of the other peoples judgment and behaviour, while ye pretend to be so very conscientious about the smallest punctilios, as if ye were afraid of the least sin; and yet make no scruple of the worst neglects, or of committing the most notorious wickednesses, which in comparison are as much greater than those that ye seem so careful to avoid, as a camel is than a gnat †.

25 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! For ye are exceeding diligent in making an outward shew of religion, in nice observances of external washings, rites, and ceremonies, like persons that are very curious in scouring the outsides of their cups and dishes, and making them bright; but, in your hearts and secret behaviour, ye indulge all manner of abominable

N O T E.

† Here seems to be an allusion to a Jewish custom of straining their liquors before they drank, lest they should swallow so small an insect as a gnat.

are full of exor-
tion and excess.

16 *Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the out-side of them may be clean also.*

17 *Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful out-ward, but are within full of dead mens bones, and of all uncleanness.*

18 *Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men; but within, ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.*

19 *Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,*

20 *And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.*

21 *Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.*

22 *Fill ye up then*

nable wickedness, to get riches by rapine and cruelty, and use them with luxury and intemperance, (*απαρσις*) like persons that do not care what dirt and filth there is in the inside of their dishes and cups.

26 *O stupid Pharisee, who knowest not the plague of thine own heart, see that your inmost thoughts and secret practices be first cleansed from corrupt principles, inclinations and designs, and from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, as ever you would be truly holy in your life: Begin within, and all will soon appear honourable without; and a scrupulous exactness in the external forms and rites commanded in the law, will then better become you.*

27 *Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and pharisaical boasters! For ye may justly be compared to the sepulchres of persons of note, which are whitened and garnished, and so make a very beautiful outside appearance; but within are full of dead mens bones, and of nauseous putrefaction.*

28 *In like manner, ye make a fair external shew of religion, and appear with a reputation for great devotion and holiness among men; but, in your hearts and secret behaviour, are full of all odious hypocrisy and indulged vices.*

29 *Wo unto you, ye hypocritical teachers and vain boasters! For ye yourselves pretend to have a high veneration for the ancient prophets and holy men of God; and, in token of your honouring their memory, build and beautify monuments over their graves, and repair and adorn their tombs or sepulchres, which, by means of your care, remain to this very day.*

30 *And, under pretence of extraordinary respect to their characters, ye further say, If our lot had been to live in the several ages of our predecessors, we, their descendants, would not have joined with them, in their cruel persecutions of the Lord's prophets, and in putting them to death for righteousness' sake.*

31 *Therefore, by your own confession, ye are the children of those very persons who wickedly murdered the holy prophets; and your practices prove that ye really are so in your spirits and temper: Ye are the true offspring of their own likeness, and tread exactly in their persecuting steps, being a seed of evil-doers, (Isa. i. 4.) and as your fathers did, so do ye, (Acts vii. 51.)*

32 *I know that ye are now wickedly contriving, and in a very few days will accomplish, my death; and, after that, will follow my apostles and disciples with the like barbarous rage: Go on then in your own way; ye will*

then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise-men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city;

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

will thereby complete the remainder of your fathers iniquity, till the measure of this nation's guilt will be filled up, and will ripen it for utter destruction.

33 O ye crafty, malignant, and hypocritical generation of men, who, for subtilty, venom, and specious appearances, are like serpents and vipers! though ye may impose upon men, how can ye answer for all your wickedness at God's bar, or escape his righteous and eternal vengeance?

34 Therefore, to leave you inexcusable, and justify God's righteous proceedings against you, in case ye still persist in obstinate infidelity and impenitence, observe the following declaration: I, by virtue of my divine office and authority, will send, to you of this nation, ministers of the New Testament, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, who shall be noway inferior to the ancient prophets, wise-men, and scribes; and, instead of your receiving them and their message, some of them ye will put to death by various means; others ye will crucify; others ye will lash with thongs and rods in your places of public worship, where your ecclesiastical courts are kept; and others ye will harass about, and pursue with violence, from one city to another †, for my name's sake.

35 All this will ye be suffered to do, that, as ye will involve yourselves in the guilt of your forefathers sins, by approving of them, persisting in them, and adding to them, with the highest aggravations of still more flagrant guilt; so the utmost vengeance may be executed upon you for all the innocent and holy blood that has been shed for righteousness' sake, even from the days of Abel the first martyr, whom Cain slew because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous, (1 John iii. 12.) down to the days of Zacharias, the son of Barachias or Jehoiada †, whom ye of this nation slew in the court of the Lord's house, between the temple and the altar of burnt-offering, because he, under an assaunt of of the Spirit, reproved the people for their idolatry, and with his last breath said, *The Lord look upon it, and require*

N O T E S.

† All this was exactly fulfilled: They stoned Stephen to death, *Acts* vii. 59.; killed James with the sword, *Acts* xii. 2.; beheaded Paul, and crucified Peter, *Ensch.* lib. ii. cap. 25.; scourged the apostles, *Acts* v. 20.; punished the disciples in every synagogue, and persecuted them even to strange cities, *Acts* xxvi. 11.

‡ Barachias and Jehoiada are names of like signification; and Christ seems to refer to

this instance, rather than any other, because this is the last on record of the prophets that were slain by the Jews for reproving their iniquities: and because God's requiring this blood is particularly taken notice of in scripture, as well as that of Abel: And some suppose, that Christ herein had likewise a prophetic reference to the death of another Zacharias, the son of Baruch, who Josephus says was killed in the temple a little before the destruction of Jerusalem.

quire it; thereby intimating, by the spirit of prophecy, that God would require his blood at their hands, (2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, 22.)

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

36 I assuredly tell you, that God will reckon with you of the present age, for all this righteous blood, the guilt of which your still greater wickedness of the same kind hath entailed upon yourselves; and the most dreadful wrath shall fall upon you, as if ye had been the murderers of all these holy men and servants of the Lord.

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how deplorable is thy case, who wert once the holy and beloved city of God, and the joy of the whole earth! Thou art now become so infamous for shedding blood, that a prophet cannot perish but in thee, (Luke xiii. 33.); and so furious is thy rage, that thou art set upon stoning them for impostors, whom God, in the greatness of his mercy, and with visible tokens of his favour and authority, hath sent to thee. How often have I laboured by my doctrine and miracles, solemn warnings, kind invitations; and tenders of mercy, to call thy inhabitants, even thy wicked and rebellious children, to repentance, and to bring them in to myself! And what gracious overtures have I made to protect, cherish, comfort and save them, with a care and tenderness like that of a hen to gather her chickens under her wings when she apprehends them to be in danger! But, alas! ye refused my counsel, and would have none of my reproof; ye obstinately persisted in your infidelity and in your sins, and would not submit to my grace and government for your own salvation.

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

38 Behold therefore, now the glory is departed; your time of mercy is over; ye are given up, by the righteous judgment of God, as an incorrigible people; and your city, temple, and nation, are abandoned to utter ruin and desolation. (See the note on Luke xix. 43, 44.)

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say,

39 For I assure you, that I will now take my † last farewell of you, will come into your temple no more, will soon leave this world and go to the Father; after which ye shall not see me again, till the time of my second appearing in the clouds of heaven, when every eye shall see me, and ye shall be forced to own that I

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N O T E.

† This was the last solemn warning that Christ gave to Jerusalem, after two others that are recorded; one in Luke xiii. 34, 35, which was occasioned by the Pharisees suggesting that Herod designed to kill him; and the other in Luke xix. 41, &c. which was

when he wept over the city, as he was riding in triumph to it, on the first day of the week, called in our almanacks Palm-Sunday; where, as this was afterwards in the temple, just before his last departure from it, *scap.* xxi. 23. and xxiv. 1.

say, Blessed is he
that cometh in the
name of the Lord.

am the true Messiah, and would be glad to join in the acclamations ye lately heard, and were enraged at, while the children and people sang their hosanna's, saying, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, (chap. xxi. 9, 15.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what humility, integrity, and contempt of this world, should the ministers of Christ behave! and how should they live the doctrines they preach, and not lord it over their hearers! But if any of his servants act unsuitably to character, their doctrine is nevertheless to be regarded as far as it agrees with the word of God, though their disorderly lives are not to be imitated. And wo unto them who either pervert the sacred oracles, or, under a pretence of piety, are guilty of the vilest abominations; who aim at dominion over mens faith and consciences, and neither embrace the gospel themselves, nor cease from hindering others that seem to be well affected towards it; who are fond of specious appearances of external sanctity, but whose hearts are full of all impurity; who are superstitiously scrupulous about trifles, and neglect the most important things of Christianity; and who make light of oaths, and manage all their religion with secular views! How can such as these escape the damnation of hell? Christ will find out every hypocrite, and take vengeance upon them another day. In the mean while, with what faithfulness and compassion, condescension and grace, does he deal with all sorts of sinners in the gospel! But what a deplorable condition are they in, who nevertheless go on in their trespasses, and reject him by unbelief; and especially who indulge a persecuting spirit, which will one time or other bring down the heaviest vengeance upon their own heads! Let them that condemn this or any iniquity in others, take heed of practically approving it by doing the same themselves: For a time is coming, when the iniquity of impenitent sinners will be full, and God will heap the measures of wrath which they have been treasuring up to themselves against the day of wrath and revelation of his righteous judgment. Oh that we might all know the things that belong to our peace, before they be hid from our eyes! and that when Christ appears again, we may be glad with exceeding joy!

C H A P. XXIV.

Christ predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, 1,---35. And the unexpected suddenness of his coming to judgment, 36,---41. And gives warning to us to watch, 42,---51.

TEXT.

AND Jesus went out, and departed from the temple; and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things?

PARAPHRASE.

SOON after the foregoing discourse, Jesus departed from the temple; and, as he was going out, his disciples, who heard the wo he had just before denounced against *Jerusalem* and the holy place, came up to him, and desired him to take a view of the magnificent beautiful structure and ornaments of the various parts of the temple; as if they thought that he, as well as they, would admire this stately pile of building, and, upon observing it, might reverse his dreadful sentence against it.

2 But (he) Jesus answered, Are not ye too much taken with the external pomp and glory of all these things? and do ye not look upon them with too much

things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these

concern at the thought of their being laid waste? Firm and stately as ye now behold this edifice to be, I solemnly assure you it shall be so entirely demolished, that not so much as one stone of it shall be left upon another †.

3 And being now come to the mount of *Olives*, where he seated himself over against the temple, and might have a full prospect of it; some of his disciples, no longer disputing the truth or fitness of what he had said, came in private manner, and begged of him to give them his answer to the following questions, viz. When shall these dreadful things, which thou hast told us about the city and temple, come to pass? and by what discernible signs or tokens shall we know the time of thy coming to set up thy kingdom in all its glory, and to fulfil these threatenings; and the time of the consummation of all things at the end of the world ‡?

4 Then, to check their curiosity, and lead them to what was most important to themselves, Jesus, in his reply, said, Beware that no man seduce or impose upon you by false and specious pretences relating to the Messiah and his kingdom.

5 For, before the things I speak of shall be accomplished, several impostors will set up for the Christ, each of them personating me, and professing himself to be the Messiah whom God has sent to be the Redeemer of *Israel*; and by their pretended miracles, tricks of art, and fair promises of delivering their followers, they will draw many after them.

6 Ye shall likewise hear of great broils and insurrections, battles and tumults, and of peoples being terrified with alarms of war; but do not be discouraged and distressed in your minds at these things, so as to with-

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N O T E S.

† The Jewish writers themselves tell us, that this was most punctually fulfilled at the siege of *Jerusalem*, under *Titus* the Roman commander; who, though he would fain have preserved the temple, could not prevent the soldiers burning and destroying it: Thereupon he ordered them to dig up its foundations; and *Titus Rufus* ploughed up the ground on which it had stood. The same might be observed of all the following parts of these predictions, relating to the destruction of the city and temple, as an unanswerable proof of the truth of the Christian religion.

‡ It seems probable, that the disciples thought the destruction of their temple, city, and nation, would be the end of this world itself: But, be that as it will, our Lord, in his answer, took no notice of it; but marked out the signs of his coming to destroy *Jeru-*

salem, and establish his kingdom on earth, in such a manner as at the same time looked forward, and might, in most circumstances be applied, to his coming to judgment at the last day, of which the destruction of *Jerusalem* was a lively type or emblem. And in that view I have considered them in the paraphrase, according to an usual way of interpreting prophecies; for many prophecies of the Old Testament, which had an immediate relation to the affairs of the Jews, are interpreted by Christ himself, and his apostles, as having had a still further reference to the gospel-state: But it seems to me, that as some of the Lord's expressions, in this discourse, may be applied in common, both to the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the end of the world; so there are others which more directly relate to the first, and others to the last of these great events.

these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

draw your faith in me, or neglect your profession and preaching of my gospel: For, I tell you beforehand, all these commotions must precede the utter destruction of *Jerusalem*; but these are not the last calamities that the *Jews* shall endure: Tribulations of the like sort shall follow them after this, and be acted over again before the end of the world.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.

7 For, in this and the following ages, one set of people shall take up arms against another, *Jews* against *Gentiles*, and *Gentiles* against *Jews*, and one state against another: Discords and tumults, civil and foreign wars, will rage in *Palestine*, and other places bordering upon it; and, besides these terrors, there shall be grievous famines, plagues, and earthquakes, in several countries.

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

8 All these are indeed dreadful judgments; and yet they are but the beginnings of those miseries that will complete the destruction of the *Jewish* nation, and that will come upon all the wicked and ungodly in the final judgment at the last day.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

9 Moreover, as to what especially relates to you, my servants and disciples; ye shall suffer a great sight of afflictions; your enemies shall reproach and persecute you, and deliver you up to courts of judicature, to prisons and deaths; and all sorts of men, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, high and low, and people of all nations wherever ye may be scattered, shall be filled with prejudices, and vent their spite and malice against you, because ye preach and profess my name.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

10 And many, who call themselves Christians, will be so shocked at these tribulations, as to fall off from their profession, and turn apostates; and then, as they were but wolves in sheep's cloathing before, they will discover a most malignant temper, and treacherously turn informers against their brethren, to whom they pretend the greatest friendship, and will do them all the mischief they can.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

11 Many false teachers also shall appear, either among the *Jews*, or among pretenders to Christianity, who shall amuse the people with feigned prophecies of good days, and preach horrid errors, thereby perverting many from the truth to their own pernicious schemes and doctrines.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

12 And because a malignant, treacherous, and persecuting spirit in some, and errors and apostasies in others, will fill these days with abounding wickedness; therefore many, though not all, who still retain their profession of my gospel, will be apt to grow indifferent in

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place; (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judea, flee into the mountains.

in religion, cool and shy toward one another, and lose their former zeal for my glory, truths and ways.

13 But, as there ever will be a remnant according to the election of grace, who shall not draw back to perdition; so, for your encouragement, I tell you, that whoever shall patiently bear these fiery trials, and shall nevertheless persevere in the faith and holiness of the gospel to the end of that portion of troubles that may befall him, and to the end of his days †, he shall stand fair for a preservation, by special providence, from the extreme distresses that will be the total ruin of others, and shall certainly, by special grace, receive the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul.

14 And while these troubles and persecutions are spreading abroad, and scattering my disciples far and wide, the gospel, which is the great charter of my kingdom of grace and glory, shall be published through all the *Roman* empire, among the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, that it may be a testimony to my authority, for the salvation of them that believe, and for the righteous confusion of them that reject it, in all the nations round about you: And as soon as this is done, the *Jewish* nation, together with their city and temple, shall be utterly destroyed. And, after this gospel shall have had an universal spread through all the habitable parts of the earth, the whole design of God by it shall be finished; all his elect shall be brought into the kingdom; and this world shall come to its final dissolution.

15 Whenever therefore, as to the first of these periods relating to the *Jewish* nation, ye shall see the *Roman* army compassing the city of *Jerusalem*, and erecting their standard in the holy land, which *Daniel* spoke of as the abominable thing that makes desolate †, (*Dan. xi. 31.*) then let him who reads *Daniel's* prophecy, understand that it will soon be accomplished in the conflagration of *Jerusalem* by that army.

16 Then, knowing that the utter destruction of the *Jewish* nation and polity is at hand, let them which are in *Judea* flee for their lives to some distant mountains or secret places, to hide and shelter themselves from the miseries from which there will be no other way of escape.

17 And

N O T E S.

† When the *Jews*, by their cruel persecutions, had driven the apostles out of *Judea*, the congregation of the faithful in *Jerusalem* were ordered, by a divine oracle, revealed to their most approved men, to depart from thence to a village beyond *Jordan*, called *Pella*; and after they were got thither, the

vengeance of God utterly destroyed the wicked generation of the *Jews*. *Euseb. lib. iii. cap. 5.*

‡ It was thus called, because this army of idolatrous heathens, fighting under a banner of images, which the *Jews* abhorred, would lay their temple, city, and country, desolate.

17 Let him which is on the house-top, not come down to take any thing out of his house :

18 Neither let him which is in the field, return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days !

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day :

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved : but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened.

17 And, as this calamity will be exceeding sudden, let not such as may be on the tops of their houses when the alarm comes, lose any time by going in to take their goods along with them † :

18 Nor let such as may be abroad in the fields venture to go home for their cloaths or any of the most valuable things they have in their houses ; but let them flee, as Lot did out of *Sodom*, without any lingering or delay, as ever they hope to escape with their lives in those days of imminent danger.

19 And wo to them who in those perilous times shall be incapable of making a speedy flight, such as women with child, and with infants hanging upon their breasts ! It will be very difficult for them and their tender babes to avoid the furious rage of the enemy.

20 And (sc.) as there will be a necessity of the utmost haste, beg of God so to order it in his providence, that ye may not be called to fly at the most inconvenient and undesirable times ; that it may not be in the winter season, when the days are short, and the roads dirty and incommodious for expedition ; and beg that it may not be on the sabbath-day, when the *Jews* will be apt to stop your journey and retard your escape, and judaizing Christians to scruple travelling for their own safety :

21 For as the sins of that time will be the most aggravated ; so its terrors and miseries will be the most distressing and shocking that ever were felt by any nation from the beginning of the world to that day, or ever shall be afterwards till the consummation of all things.

22 So that if the dreadful calamities of those days should be suffered to continue in all their severities without restraint, it would be impossible that any within the confines of *Judea* should survive them : But God, in his merciful providence, will order them to be shorter than he might righteously have determined and the enemy designed, or than, all things considered, could have been reasonably expected ; that his elect which shall then be living, whether called or uncalled, may not utterly be cut off ; and that the birth of a chosen race may not be prevented, which are afterwards to descend from some of that generation, and to be called in their season, till all the purposes of his grace shall be accomplished towards them.

23 If,

N O T E.

† Here is a plain allusion to the custom of building the *Jewish* houses, which were generally low-built, and flat-roofed, surrounded with battlements about breast high : There they used to walk, sit, converse together, meditate, and pray, and sometimes preach to

to the people in streets ; and they often had stairs or ladders on the outside of the house, by which they could go up and down when they pleased, as seems plainly intimated, *Mark* xiii. 15.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, I O, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, inasmuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: Behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days,

23 If, amidst those tribulations, it shall be reported by deluded or designing men, that in this or the other place the Messiah is risen up to deliver you out of the hands of your enemies; do not give any credit to them.

24 For impostors will appear; some of which will set up for the Messiah; and others will bring in pernicious errors, and pretend to a prophetic spirit, and by magic arts, and other fallacies, will do, or seem to do, prodigious feats, to the drawing away of many; and so strong will their delusions be, that, were it possible to defeat the purpose of God, they would deceive the very elect themselves to their perdition.

25 Behold, I now give you, my professing disciples, warning of these things beforehand, that whenever they appear, ye may neither be stumbled at them, nor misled by them.

26 If therefore any shall spread a report, and say unto you, Behold, the time of salvation to *Israel* is at hand, the Messiah now appears in a certain solitary wilderness, that the people may flock to him for deliverance from their enemies; do not ye go out to meet him: Or if they say, Behold, he conceals himself in some private retirement, waiting for a fit opportunity to discover himself; do not believe it: Look upon all such reports as mere impositions.

27 For as lightning diffuses and makes itself evident through all places, from one part of the heavens to the other, in an instant; so the Messiah shall suddenly appear, with surprising power, to destroy the *Jews* thro' all their land at once, and to spread his gospel with irresistible light and efficacy, far and wide, through the earth: And so his coming to judge the world will be at the last day.

28 For as eagles, which are greedy of their prey, gather about a dead carcass with the speediest flight, wherever they find it; so the *Roman* army, which bears eagles in its ensigns, will rush, with impetuous swiftness, upon the expiring state of the *Jews*, and seize it, like a dead body, for their prey. And innumerable converts will flock to a crucified Saviour, with all alacrity and speed, as a willing people in the day of his power. And, in like manner, all the saints will be gathered to him with exceeding joy, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trump shall sound, and the dead shall be raised.

29 Immediately after the distressing troubles that will arise in the days of the *Jewish* catastrophe, such shall be the desolation upon the temple and *Jerusalem*, and

days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

32 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

31 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door.

34 Verily I say unto

the cities of *Judea*, and so entire the subversion of their ecclesiastical and civil state, that it may be metaphorically represented by the sun, moon, and stars losing their light, and all the ordinances of heaven being dissolved, as the prophets used to express such confusions, (*Isa.* xiii. 18. & xxxiv. 4. *Joel* ii. 31. & iii. 15.); and immediately after like troubles toward the end of the world, there will be, in a literal sense, an amazing change in all the heavenly bodies, which shall be dissolved, (*2 Pet.* iii. 10.—12.)

30 And then the Messiah shall make himself known in his true character, as a sign to be admired, instead of a sign to be spoken against: All the tribes of *Israel* shall then be forced to mourn in reflection on their infidelity, and on their crucifying him, and entailing his blood, in a way of vengeance, upon their own and their childrens heads; and every one shall have such evident discoveries of him, as will be a full demonstration of his exalted dignity and authority, to the joy of his friends, and the confusion of his enemies: And thus it will be in a still more abundant manner, when every eye shall see him appearing in the clouds of heaven, in all his majesty and glory, to judge the world at the last day.

31 And, at the time of his coming to destroy *Jerusalem*, he will send his apostles and ministers, as his messengers, to sound the gospel-trumpet, and proclaim the year of jubilee among the *Gentiles*; and, by means of their preaching, will gather in his elect to himself and to his church, wherever they are scattered through all quarters of the earth. In like manner, at the end of the world, he will send forth his holy angels, who are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation; and they, with a mighty sound, like that of a great trumpet, (*1 Cor.* xv. 52. *1 Thes.* iv. 16.) shall alarm a stupid world, and gather out, from every nation, all the chosen and called of God, how widely soever they may be scattered abroad under the heavens.

32, 33. Now, for your further information and improvement of these things, observe what I am going to tell you under the following similitude: As when in the spring ye see the tender shoots and leaves of the fig-tree begin to sprout, ye are sure that the summer will very soon appear; even so, when ye shall see the several signs I have been speaking of come to pass, ye may be as certain that the time of my coming hastens apace and is just at hand.

34 Yea, as to what concerns the destruction of the *Jews*, and the troubles that shall go before it, I assurely

unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two

redly tell you, All these surprising events are already so near approaching, that there are some now living who shall see them come to pass before they die.

35 And, as to what relates to the final judgment and dissolution of all things †, I assure you, A time is coming, when the present frame of the visible heavens, and of the earth, shall certainly be dissolved, tho' they have continued by the ordinance of God to this day, and it may seem unlikely that they ever should be destroyed; but not one word of what I have foretold you shall ever fail of its accomplishment.

36 But the time for the destruction of the world, at the final judgment, is not so near as ye may be ready to expect: Though there is a day and hour critically and unalterably appointed of God for it, which, by way of eminence, is called *that day*; yet, when this shall be, is a secret reserved in his own bosom: Neither any man on earth, nor the holy angels in heaven, can find it out; nor has my Father revealed it to the Messiah himself as man, or as any part of his commission for making it known to others. (See the note on *Mark xiii. 32.*)

37 However, it belongs to my commission to tell you, as a matter of greater importance, to excite your watchfulness and caution, That the time of my coming to judge the world, of which the destruction of the city and nation of the *Jews* is an eminent type, will be as sudden and unexpected to the generality of mankind, as the dreadful desolation was upon the old world in the days of *Noah*.

38, 39. For as in his days, before the flood came, the people were worldly and sensual, spent their time and were swallowed up in the business and pleasures of life, slighted the warnings which *Noah* gave them, and would believe nothing of their danger till the very day that the deluge surprised and drowned them all; so it will be with the unbelieving *Jews*: They will go on heedlessly in the way of their own carnal hearts, despising all the warnings which I and my apostles shall give them, till, before they are aware, sudden destruction will come upon them, and they cannot escape: And so it will remarkably be with the wicked of the earth, with respect to the judgment of the great day, at the end of the world.

40, 41. Then God will make a wonderful distinction be-

N O T E.

† Here our Lord seems to make a transition to what more directly and immediately relates to his coming to judge the world at the last day, which he discourses on at large in the following chapter. See the notes on *Mark xiii. 32.* and *Luke xxi. 33.*

two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill: the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the good-man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant, whom

between one person and another: As, at the destruction of the *Jews*, among people of the same business and circumstances of life, and, according to human view, in the same danger, like two men working together in one field, and two women grinding together at one mill, some, by a sovereign turn of providence, shall be saved from the dreadful calamity, and others shall be left to fall in it: So, at the day of judgment, some, whom the world could not distinguish, and who knew not how to form a certain judgment concerning themselves, shall be adjudged to eternal life; and others to eternal death, contrary to the expectation of many about them.

42 Since therefore such an awful day will surely come, and ye know not when; it is your great duty and interest to be always observing the tokens, and living in expectation of it, and to be watching over your own hearts and ways, that whatever calamities may befall you in this world, and especially whenever ye come to die, and give up your accounts to God in judgment, ye may not be surprised into ruin before ye are aware.

43 And (h) consider seriously how all wise men use to behave in other cases of importance: As for instance, suppose any house-keeper were to be told, that in some hour of the night, though it were not certainly known which, his house would be set upon by thieves; he would be sure to watch carefully all along, till the danger should be over, that they might not break into his habitation and rob him.

44 It therefore still more highly concerns you, in an affair of so much greater moment, to be always safe and provided against the worst: For tho' ye are assured that calamitous days will come, and that every one of you must die and appear before God in judgment; yet ye know not when, and may be overtaken by these awful events at unawares.

45 In such circumstances then as these, which I have forewarned you of, who do ye suppose will be reckoned an upright and prudent servant among those, whom his Lord has furnished with the knowledge of his will, and made an overseer in his house, for distributing a portion in season to every one according to his need? Is it not the servant that is diligent in improving his knowledge, and all opportunities for a due discharge of his trust?

46 That servant is blessed indeed who shall be found acting such a wise and faithful part in his spiritual concerns,

whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken:

50 The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not ware of;

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

cerns, whenever his Lord shall appear, be it sooner or later, to execute any judgment on the earth; and especially when he shall come to reckon with him at death, and at the final judgment.

47 I assuredly tell you, that his great Lord and Master will advance him to the most excellent dignity and blessedness, and make him partaker of the riches of the glory of his inheritance, in his everlasting kingdom.

48, 49. But if, on the other hand, he who has been intrusted with great gifts and talents, and opportunities of usefulness in his master's house, shall begin to think in his heart that there is no present danger of his Lord's visiting his iniquities, or taking him away by death and summoning him to judgement; and thereupon shall begin to revile his fellow-servants in the church, and to give himself up to immorality, luxury and profaneness:

50, 51. The lord of that unfaithful and foolish servant will come upon him with a terrible surprise, and cut him off from the land of the living, and from all his sensual pleasures, in the midst of his security and wickedness; he will violently separate his soul and body by some dreadful stroke of divine vengeance, and will adjudge him to a share with the worst of sinners and hypocrites in the hottest place in hell, as the just reward of his iniquity, where he will be distressed with the bitterest lamentation and anguish, in the reflections of his own guilty conscience, and under the wrath of God for ever.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How clearly is the Messiah's character supported by those awful predictions that have been so punctually accomplished in the destruction of *Jerusalem!* and with what solemn lustre will it shine, when every eye shall see him appear in the clouds of heaven, to fulfil the rest, at the consummation of all things! How little should the external grandeur and dissolving glory of this world affect us, especially in what relates to the worship of God! and how much better is it to be with Christ, wherever he is, than in the most pompous temple, from whence he is departed in his great displeasure!—This world is full of troubles, and the people and servants of God often have a large share of them for his sake; but how much more terrible distress must the wicked suffer for ever in the future state! While therefore the believer has good hopes, through grace, of escaping the wrath to come, no terrors on earth should dismay or turn him aside from the faith, profession, and holiness of the gospel: And yet it is lawful for the disciples of Christ to flee out of the way of their enemies rage, when the providence of God gives them opportunities for it; and he will restrain and over-rule tribulation and persecution themselves, to the further advancement and increase of his kingdom; for in the midst of judgment he remembers mercy, that he may accomplish the purposes of his grace to the elect, and bring them safe at last to glory. But oh how many others will be misled by the errors of the wicked, and fall into perdition! And with what different sentiments, and events, will the saint and the sinner see Christ at his coming to judgment! With what watchfulness and preparedness then should every one of us be looking, and waiting, for it, that it may not surprise us, before we are aware, into eternal confusion and misery! And with what earnestness should

should we pray for all seasonable appearances of providence and grace in our favour, that we may be hid in the day of the Lord's anger, and may neither be among them whose iniquity abounds, or whose love waxes cold; but may endure to the end, and be saved! Dreadful will be their case, who, in a day of trial and death, shall be found unfaithful, whatever their gifts and professions may be: But this is the great encouragement and comfort of all Christ's true disciples and servants, that he will take care to shelter them from the worst of storms in this world, and from eternal wrath in the next. Blessed are they that shall be found faithful when their great Lord shall come to judge the world at the last day: They shall be owned, and crowned with immortal honours, to their exceeding joy.

C H A P. XXV.

A continuation of Christ's discourse, in the parable of the ten virgins, 1,—13. In the parable of the talents, 14,—30. And in a description of the last judgment, 31,—46.

TEXT.

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

PARAPHRASE.

AT the awful time of the Messiah's appearing to take vengeance on the obstinate *Jews*, but more especially to judge the world at the last day, the state of the gospel-kingdom, and the way of God's dealing with its visible subjects, may be fitly represented by this parable. "Ten virgins, who were invited to a wedding, took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom †:"—So Christ, the bridegroom of the church, having set up his kingdom in the world, invited *Jews* and *Gentiles* to come and partake of its blessings; and many among them professed to be his disciples, to wait upon him, and to wait for him, at his last appearing to judgment.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

2 "Now five of these virgins were prudent and thoughtful; and the other five were inconsiderate and careless:"—So some of those that make a profession of Christ, being true believers, are wise unto salvation; and others, being merely nominal Christians, foolishly deceive themselves with hypocritical pretences, and a formal profession of Christ's name.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

3, 4. "The foolish virgins took their lamps, without any oil to keep them burning; but the wise took vessels of oil with them, to supply their lamps, till the bridegroom

N O T E.

† It was a frequent custom, in those times, to have weddings in the night; when the bridegroom used to go attended with his friends to the bride's house, where she waited for him with her bride-maids, who, when they heard of his approach, went out with lamps to light and conduct him into the house; and the number of virgins present, on those occasions, was seldom less than ten.—Though this parable may be applied particularly to the *Jews*; yet I take it to have a much more

extensive view, because it sets out things common to all who, having heard the gospel, make a profession of Christ's name: And therefore, to save room, I have paraphrased it only in this light, which manifestly includes the other; and if any would also apply it to Christ's coming to destroy *Jerusalem*, as a type of the final judgment, his own thoughts may easily add that consideration of it.

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

groom should come?"—So formal professors, who make a present shew of religion, have no serious concern about, and are destitute of, that grace of God in their hearts which is necessary to an acceptable and final perseverance in their holy profession; but true believers are most of all solicitous about, and are possessed of, a real principle of grace in their own souls, that they may endure to the end and be saved.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

5 "In the mean while, the bridegroom not coming so soon as might have been expected, all the virgins were drowsy, and fell asleep:"—So while thoughts of Christ's coming to judgment represent it as at a distance, the generality of true believers themselves are apt to slacken their zeal, fervour and diligence, and to fall into a remiss, careless, and stupid frame of spirit; and all hypocritical professors naturally sink into a deep sleep of carnal security, as if they apprehended that he would never appear at all.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

6, 7. "But (a) at midnight, there was a sudden loud alarm, saying, Behold, the bridegroom is just at hand; go forth, ye slumbering and sleeping virgins, to meet him; And they all, being roused by this surprising summons, made what haste they could to get their lamps ready to receive him."—So when visible professors are most secure and thoughtless, and in least expectation of Christ's coming to call them to an account, some sudden awful alarms of the near approach of death and judgment rouse them out of their sloth and indolence, whether they be real Christians or not; and both sorts are then in a hurry, and concerned to appear with safety, acceptance, and comfort, before him: And thus it will be with many of God's own people at the last day.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 "And, in the midst of all this confusion, the wise virgins having oil in their vessels to keep their lamps burning, the foolish ones intreated that they would give them some of it, because they themselves had none, and their lamps were gone out."—So true believers, under all their declensions and surprise, will be found to have the saving grace of God in their hearts, at death and judgment, as well as a profession of it; but all hypocrites then, finding themselves destitute of it, will be in the utmost distress; their profession will then come to nothing, and all the light of their specious appearances and false hopes will go out; they will then see their absolute need of that grace, which before they were careless about; and would be glad to be in the condition of sincere Christians, and to have any help from them.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, No.

9 "But the wise virgins replied, We cannot possibly fur-

Nay; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

furnish you with oil, having only just enough for ourselves; but go speedily to them that sell it, and there seek a supply, as we have done:”—So true believers are, and will be sensible, that they have no more grace than is necessary for themselves, that all is little enough, and that they cannot communicate any to others, nor have any works of supererogation to place to their account; they will pity graceless sinners, but not be able to help them any otherwise than by directing them to the means of grace which God has appointed for dispensing it, and in an attendance on which they themselves were made partakers of it.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

10 “And while the foolish virgins were, at the last moment, seeking after oil, the bridegroom came; and they whose lamps were burning went in with him to the marriage-feast, upon which the door was shut:”—So formal professors, who have lived contentedly without the grace of God till they find they must immediately appear before him, are then all in confusion about obtaining it; and while, too late, they are seeking after it, death and judgment seize them, and shut them out of Christ's blessed mansions; but true believers are admitted into the presence of his glory, there to abide, amidst all delights, like persons shut in with him for ever.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

11, 12. “After the door was shut, the foolish virgins came, and called earnestly upon the lord of the feast, saying, We beseech thee to admit us to the wedding; but he replied, I assuredly tell you, I do not look upon you as the companions of my bride, and will regard you no more than perfect strangers.”—So presumptuous hypocrites will be very earnest, at death and judgment, for admittance to heaven: But all their pleas will be in vain; Christ will shew his disapprobation of them, and utterly reject them as none of his.

13 Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

13 Be ye therefore always wakeful and watchful, lest any of you, who profess my name, be found graceless at the day of death and judgment: For, as I told you before, (chap. xxiv. 44.) ye do not know the exact time when I the Messiah shall come to call you to a final account; and if ye, like the foolish virgins, shall be utterly unprepared then, it will be too late to obtain mercy, but ye must be unavoidably excluded from all the glory and the joys of my presence for ever.

14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own ser-

14 For, to give you a further illustration of the state of the gospel-kingdom, and of the way of God's dealing in the last judgment with his professing servants, ye may take it in the following similitude. “A certain man, designing to go into a distant country, called his ser-

servants, and delivered unto them his goods :

servants together, and committed his money to their trust, that they might manage and improve it for his use against his return."—So Christ intimated, that he preached his gospel whilst he was on earth; and gave gifts to his apostles, ministers, and private persons, when he ascended up on high: To some he gave † miraculous powers and extraordinary gifts, to some the means of salvation, and to some special and effectual grace; and, as all things were delivered into his hands, he likewise distributed to some the bounties of Providence, as he pleased: And all these he gave in various proportions, that every one might profit others by them, for the advancement of his kingdom and glory in the world; and when he shall come to judgment at the last day, he will call them all to an account how they have used and improved his gifts.

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

15 "Accordingly he gave to one five talents, (see the note on chap. xviii. 24.) to another two, to a third one, as might be most suitable to their several stations and capacities; and having thus disposed of his affairs, he departed:"—So Christ, before and after his ascension to heaven, distributed his various gifts, in different measures, to ministers and private persons, according to their several capacities and employments, for the edification of the church, and promoting his interest in the world, till he shall come again to judgment.

16 Then he that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.

16, 17. "Then he, to whom five talents were given, immediately set himself to trade with them, and gained five more; and he who had two, doubled them likewise:"—So some ministers and Christians, who are faithful to their Lord, exert themselves for his glory and the good of his people, by a suitable improvement of his gifts and graces, in some proportion to the assistances and opportunities he affords them.

17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.

18 "But the servant, who received one talent, buried it in the earth, and made no use of it for any advantage to himself or others:"—So graceless ministers and professors make no good improvement of the spiritual gifts and means of grace, or bounties of providence, which Christ bestows on them; but bury all their talents in earthly things, are careless about his honour and interest, and are slothful and unprofitable to themselves and to all about them.

18 But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time, the lord of those

19 "The lord of these servants, after he had been gone

N O T E.

† This parable seems most immediately to refer the various gifts and powers which Christ bestowed on his professed disciples before his ascension to heaven; but may be extended to all his dispensations of providence and grace, till he shall come again. See the note on Luke xix. 13.

those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

gone a great while from them, returned, and required every one to give an account of what he had done with his money :—"So, at the end of the world, Christ will appear the second time, and summon all mankind before him, especially those that have enjoyed the gospel, to give an account of what use they have made of the various gifts he has bestowed upon them.

20 And so he that had received five talents, came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents : behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

20, 21. "And he who had five talents came first, and bringing five more, said, Lord, I gratefully acknowledge that thou entrustedst me with five talents ; behold the happy increase ! By trading with these, I have gained another five. His lord replied with approbation, You have proved yourself to be a diligent and faithful steward, in employing those small sums for the purposes for which I gave them ; I will bestow upon you still more abundant riches and honours, that you may be as happy as my favour can make you."---So, at Christ's second coming, his faithful servants and disciples, and particularly such as have been most eminent in his church, will thankfully own the grace that fitted and qualified them for his service, and that was not bestowed in vain, but stirred them up to diligence, and turned to good account : And he will publicly and kindly accept their labours of love for his name's sake, owning them to be evident proofs of his grace in them, and of their fidelity to him ; and, in the riches of his liberality, will advance them to the inheritance of the saints in light, and set them on thrones of glory ; where, according to their utmost capacities, they shall enter into, and be surrounded with, all possible blessedness and exalted delights, resulting from his presence and favour, in a participation of his own immortal joys.

21 He also that had received two talents, came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents : behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

22, 23. "Then he who had received two talents came, and, bringing two more, made the like acknowledgment of his lord's favour, and of a proportionable increase by means of his trading with them : And his lord replied with like approbation of him, and assurances of the great things which he would further bestow upon him."---So when others of Christ's faithful servants and disciples, of lower attainments, appear before his judgment-seat to give up their accounts, they, in like manner with the rest, will thankfully own his favour, and its blessed effects on them ; and he will also freely accept and own their services, in their measure, as equal proofs of the truth of his grace in them, and of their faithfulness to him ; and will advance them to glory and blessedness, as high as they may be capable of, in his everlasting presence and love ; where they will plunge into,

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant ; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

into, and be swallowed up in, a boundless ocean of unutterable joy, which he will give them in communion with himself.

24 Then he which had received the one talent, came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not sowed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

24, 25. "At last he who had received one talent came, and excused his own sloth by an unjust reflection upon his lord, saying, I apprehended thee to be a severe master, who demandedst more than thou gavest, like one who, according to the proverb, would reap where he had not sown, and gather corn where he had never scattered seed; and so I dreaded thy austerity, and would not venture to make any use of thy talent, but buried it in the earth: Behold, here is the money thou gavest me, and I hope thou wilt not insist on more."—So, after the judgment of the righteous, Christ will call the wicked to an account: And graceless ministers and people, who have only the bounties of providence, and gospel-gifts and privileges, are apt to entertain hard thoughts of God, and to excuse their own sinful neglects by unjust reflections upon him, as if he demanded more of them than he had ever given, or would give, and ability to perform; and therefore they resolve to bury their minds in earthly things, and yield themselves up to slothfulness in religion; and they hope to come off, in the day of judgment, because they are not so wicked as some others, and have done no great harm tho' they have done no good.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not sowed:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

26, 27. "But his lord replied, Thou perverse and idle drone; it is plain by your own confession, that you knew I expected an improvement of the money I left with you; and therefore, if you would not trade with it in hopes of a greater increase, you ought at least to have put it out to the banker, that at my return I might have received mine own with common interest †."—So, in the great day of account, Christ will say to the unprofitable, whom he deems to be a slothful and wicked servant, If you unrighteously imagined that I was severe in requiring more than I gave, how durst you neglect an improvement of what you own I bestowed upon you? or how could you think that I would not insist on an improvement of *that*? and who told you, that I would not have rendered your attempts effectual, had you made the best use you could of such advantages as I favoured you with beyond what you deserved or could have demanded? This therefore is all frivolous and abusive pretence, and should rather have been an argument for diligence than for sloth; but that which real-

ly moved you to neglect my service, was your own indolence and dislike of it, and not your want of ability for it.

26 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

28 "Then the lord of these servants ordered the single talent to be taken away from him who had made no use of it, and given to him who had been most remarkably faithful and laborious unto the doubling of his five talents:"—So Christ will strip graceless persons, whether ministers or people, of all the good things he bestowed upon them; and will add signal blessings to them that are eminently faithful and diligent in the exercise of their gifts and graces for his glory and the good of the church.

29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath.

29 For † as every one who has grace and other gifts, and by their influence makes a careful improvement of them, may depend upon an increase of these and other blessings, with abundance of comfort in them on earth; so he shall be crowned with all the riches of a glorious and everlasting inheritance in heaven: But as he that has only the gifts of providence and of gospel-privileges, and makes no better use of them than if he really had them not, may expect to be one way or other blasted before he dies; so he shall be utterly deprived of all good things that he had, or seemed to have, for ever in the day of account.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall he weeping and gnashing of teeth.

30 And then the great Judge of all will order the idle, useless, and wicked servant, to be cast into the dreadful darkness and horror of an eternal hell; where he shall have bitter lamentation and wo, with endless rage and agony, as the just punishment of his sin.

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

31 Now when the Messiah, who condescended to take upon him the nature of man, shall appear to make these various retributions, he will come, not only in the glory of his Father, (chap. xvi. 27.) shining in all the perfections of the Godhead; but likewise in the exalted honours that are peculiar to his person and office as Mediator and Judge of the world, and with a bright retinue of an innumerable company of angels as his magnificent train and ministers of state to execute his commands; and then will he sit in a visible manner, with awful majesty and grandeur, upon his illustrious throne, which he has prepared for judgment.

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and

32 And all mankind, high and low, young and old, saints and sinners, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, of all nations, shall

N O T E.

† It is a little doubtful to me, whether this verse be a continuation of what Christ will say in judgment, or what he said before-hand, to set out the general method of his dispensations here and hereafter; and therefore I have given such a sense as may take in both.

And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats :

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

35 For I was an-hungred, and ye gave me meat : I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink : I was a stranger, and ye took me in :

36 Naked, and ye clothed me : I was sick, and ye visited me : I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an-hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38 When saw we

shall be brought before his judgment-seat to give an account of themselves to God ; and he shall separate the righteous from the wicked, as a shepherd uses to sever his sheep from the goats :

33 And he will set his chosen and called in an honourable situation, at his right hand, as his dear property, that were given to him by the Father, redeemed by his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit ; but the wicked he will set, in a place of dishonour and disgrace, at his left hand, as filthy and abominable creatures, like goats, who loved, and lived, and died in sin, and are none of his.

34 Then, having made this separation between them, and put them into distinct companies, the royal Judge will proceed to pass sentence, first on the company at his right hand, saying to them, with the authority of a king, whose word is with power and shall take effect, and with all the endearments of a smiling aspect and affectionate voice, " Come hither, O ye blessed of my Father, who have found grace in his sight, whom he has blessed and will bless, as he is my Father, and a Father of mercies to you on my account ; take possession of all possible glory and blessedness, riches and delights, in the heaven of heavens, as an inheritance of grace, by right of adoption, which he has provided for you in his everlasting counsels and free appointments, and which he prepared for your use from the beginning of time, when he created the heavens and the earth.

35, 36. " For the tokens of my sheep, to whom this kingdom belongs, are found upon you : Ye have used the talents I gave you, for my glory, and my people's good ; and the evident fruit of your faith and love, which prove their sincerity, appear in this, That, when I was hungry and thirsty, ye gave me meat and drink ; when I was in straits and difficulties, as a stranger, ye courteously entertained me ; when I wanted cloaths to cover and warm me, ye provided them for me ; when I was sick, (*infirmities*) ye paid me kind and compassionate visits ; and when I was thrown into jail for the gospel's sake, ye came to relieve and comfort me."

27, 38, 39: Then the righteous will answer, with all humility, like persons amazed, and, as it were, put to a holy blush, to think that so gracious and honourable a notice should be taken of such poor little mean services as theirs, " Lord, how is it that thou shouldst put such a surprisingly favourable construction, beyond all our desert, on any thing that ever was done by us, most of whom never saw thee in the flesh? When had we

we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

42 For I was an-hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick,

opportunity of ever performing any of these dutiful offices of kindness and charity, and thereby testifying our love to thee, as hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, who needed relief, or as naked, sick, and in prison? Surely nothing we have ever done can be worthy of so high an encomium, much less of so glorious a reward!

40 But Christ, like a king, who will then appear to display the glory of his grace as well as of his righteousness, will reply, "As I know how your hearts stood affected toward me, and how all your works and labours of love were performed for my sake and in obedience to my command; the interpretation I have given of your actions, by their principles, is a righteous judgment; and I will put the best construction upon them to your advantage: Therefore I assuredly tell you, that since ye have done these things to one or other, though it were only to the meanest, of these my members and servants, whom ye now see at my right hand, and whom I reckon as my brethren, I judge what ye did to them, because of their relation to me, as done to myself; and all this I place to my own account, that as ye therein owned and honoured me before men, so I may now own and honour you in the presence of my Father and of his holy angels."

41 After this, Christ will turn to the company of the wicked on his left hand, and pass sentence upon them, saying, with dreadful majesty in his voice and countenance, "Depart from my blessed and glorious presence, ye impenitent unbelieving sinners, who lie under the righteous curse of a broken law for your iniquities; I will be no Saviour to you, who rejected me, and persisted in your sins; but as ye have chosen the service, and done the work, of the prince of darkness, and of the rest of the apostate spirits whom he employed to seduce you, I now banish you from my presence, to keep them company, and to suffer with them the everlasting torments of that unquenchable fire which incensed justice originally prepared for them. And this is a righteous sentence upon you:

42, 43. "For ye have the plain marks of apostasy, impenitence, and unbelief, upon you: It evidently appears, that ye have hid my talents, and made no good use of them; that ye have been unfaithful to your trusts, and are none of mine; in that, when I was hungry and thirsty, ye gave me neither meat nor drink; when I was in straits and difficulties, as a stranger, ye gave me no entertainment; when I wanted cloaths to cover and warm me, ye would not be at any expence to provide them

sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

them for me; when I was sick, ye never came to shew any kindness or compassion to me; and when, for the sake of the gospel, I was cast into prison, ye never came to relieve or comfort me."

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an-hungred, or a-thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

44 Then the wicked will answer in their turn, with a design to excuse and justify themselves, saying, like persons all in confusion and hurry, 'Lord, when did we ever see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not perform the offices of kindness and charity to thee which such circumstances called for? Our eyes never beheld thee in such want and necessity, and we never refused to communicate to thy relief.'

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

45 But Christ will reply, "I, who know your hearts, and all your principles and designs, assuredly tell you, That as, for want of love to me, and of due regard to my commands, ye despised one or other of these my brethren whom ye now see at my right hand, and would not do the before-mentioned things to them for my sake, as induced thereunto by their relation to me; I judge righteous judgment, in reckoning your neglect of them as a disaffection to myself: My sentence therefore shall stand."

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.

46 And, in pursuance of these different awards, from which there is no appeal, these wicked and justly accursed creatures shall depart from my blessed presence into everlasting destruction: But the righteous shall inherit the kingdom, which consists in a complete possession of everlasting life and blessedness.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Oh the inestimable worth of true grace in the heart! When it is at the lowest ebb there, it nevertheless makes a wide difference between real believers, and mere professors of the gospel. Though this may sometimes not be discerned now, it will certainly appear in the day of judgment, when the grace that is in one will not profit another, nor pretences pass for realities; but every one must give an account of himself to God. And oh with what awful majesty and glory will the Lord Jesus appear, when he comes to judge the world at the last day! What a vast assembly will then be gathered together before his tribunal! And what a dreadful disappointment will some meet with there, who deceived themselves with vain hopes here! Christ will then separate between the precious and the vile; will lay them all open in a clear light, with regard to their governing principles and views, as well as the course of their lives; and will judge them upon the foot of proper evidence, and reward them according to their respective works as they shall witness for or against them. Wo to all those that take up with a formal hypocritical profession; that entertain hard thoughts of God, and so neglect the trusts committed to them; or that go about to accuse him, and excuse themselves! The great Judge of all will discover even their most secret iniquity; will confute and pour confusion upon them, for their false pleas either of innocence or of want of proper assistance and encouragement; and, as the just reward of their sin and sloth, will hauln them his delightful presence, and take everlasting vengeance upon them. But blessed are they that have the grace of God in truth, and are there-

by inclined and enabled to be faithful in the discharge of the duties of their stations, whether their talents be more or less. Christ will take a kind and gracious notice of his work in them, and even of the least of their upright services for him: And while they will think meanly of their best performances; and disclaim all merit by them in the great day, he will make the best of them in their favour; and in the rich abundance of his grace will admit them into his blessed presence, and crown them with immortal honour, to their utmost satisfaction and joy, in his everlasting kingdom.

C H A P. XXVI.

The Jews conspire against Christ, 1,—5. A woman anoints his head, 6,—13. Judas sells him, 14,—16. Christ eats his last passover with the disciples, 17,—25. Institutes his supper, and foretells his disciples forsaking, and Peter's denying him, 26,—37. His agony in the garden, 38,—46. Judas betrays him into the hands of the officers, 47,—56. He is arraigned, and condemned in the high-priest's court, 57,—68. And Peter denies him, 69,—75.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had made an end of all these important discourses, he reminded his disciples, that on the approaching passover, which they knew was to be celebrated at *Jerusalem* within two or three days, he, the Messiah, should be betrayed into the hands of the *Jewish* rulers, who were his most inveterate enemies, and would deliver him up to the *Roman* power to be crucified; they having no power within themselves to put any one to that sort of death, (see the note on *John* xviii. 31.)

3 About the time that he foretold this, the chief priests, and doctors of the law, and elders of the people, the men of chief authority, as being members of the *Sanhedrim*, joined together in a confederacy against him; and met in the palace of *Caiaphas*, who was high-priest that year, (*John* xi. 49, 51.) to concert the properest measures for compassing their malicious design.

4 And

N O T E.

† The *Jewish* sanhedrim, or great council, was the supreme court of judicature, which God instituted in the days of *Moses*; and consisted of seventy wise men or elders, besides *Moses* their prince or chief, (*Numb.* xi. 16, 17, 24, 25.): But some learned men suppose, that *Elizab* and *Medad* (mentioned ver. 16.) were added to the seventy, and so made seventy-two, after the rate of six for every tribe of *Israel*. This great council ordinarily sat in a court, or chamber, of the temple, called *Gazit*; and judged of all matters of the greatest consequence. The next court of judicature, inferior to this, consisted of twenty-three; which, sitting in a room by or over the gates of their cities, were called judges and officers in their gates,

to judge the people with just judgment, *Deut.* xvi. 18. Two such councils sat at *Jerusalem*: one in the gate *Shushan*, or the gate of the mountain of the house; and the other in the gate *Nikanor*, or the gate of the court: And one council of this sort sat in the gate of every city that contained at least one hundred and twenty heads of families; these had judgment in matters of life and death in some cases, though not in all: And if in any town or city there were less than one hundred and twenty families, there was a court or consistory of three, which took cognizance only of inferior causes, or such as were not capital. *Vid. Seld. de Synedr.* l. 1. c. 4. § 2. 7, 8. cap. 5. & cap. 10. §. 3, 4. And see *Lighe's* *Temple*, vol. i. p. 1102.

4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him.

5 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaſter-box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head as he sat at meat.

8 But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying,

4 And the scheme they formed and resolved upon was, not to seize Jesus by open violence, which might be hazardous to themselves, and defeat their plot against him, especially at the time when there was such a vast concourse of people from all parts, many of which were well-affected towards him; but to contrive means of getting him privately into their power, and then to put him to death.

5 However, some among them were so apprehensive of the great interest he had in the affections of the populace, that they advised against attempting even this private way of apprehending him, till after the passover; lest the multitude, perceiving the design of the sanhedrim, should be outrageous, and take up arms to rescue him out of their hands: But others were for having him seized as soon as possible; and God, permitting their counsel to take effect, over-ruled it for the accomplishment of his own design, that, at the very time of the passover, the true Paschal Lamb should be publicly sacrificed for us.

6, 7. Now a few days before this †, as Jesus was sitting and eating at a village near *Jerusalem*, called *Bethany*, in the house of *Simon*, who, by way of distinction, was styled the Leper, (see the note on *Mark* xiv. 3.) a certain woman, *Lazarus's* sister, bringing along with her an alabaſter-box of very costly and fragrant ointment, opened the box, and poured the precious ointment upon his head and feet, (*John* xii. 3.) in testimony of her faith in him as the Messiah or God's Anointed, and of her love and respect to him.

8 But when his disciples observed it, some of them were much displeased, saying privately †, What an imprudent extravagance is this? Our Master does not affect such delicacies and profuseness: Why does this woman waste

N O T E S.

† It seems from *John* xii. 1. that what follows, about the anointing of Christ's body at *Simon's* house in *Bethany*, was six days before the passover, and so was three or four days before the time at which he here said, (ver. 1.) *After two days is the passover*: And it is probable, that *Judas's* going with discontent, after this anointing, to the sanhedrim, and offering to deliver Jesus into their hands, was the principal reason that prevailed with them to go on immediately with their design of apprehending him, (ver. 3. 4.) lest they should not meet with another opportunity so convenient for it.—Though in *John* xii. *Simon's* house is not mentioned, and *Lazarus* and *Martha* are said to be at supper; it might be, either that they all dwelt together in the same house; or that *Lazarus* was at *Simon's* house as a guest, and *Martha*

as an assistant in the entertainment; and that *Mary* being there as a friend, was the woman here meant who anointed Jesus. And though both our evangelist and *Mark* mention the woman's anointing only his head, and the apostle *John* speaks of *Mary's* anointing only his feet, it is no unusual thing for one of these sacred historians to supply what was omitted by the others; and the apostle *John* writing last, might, for a further enlargement of the history, add the anointing of his feet: And so all this may very well consist with the history's being the same, as they appear to be in other circumstances. This supposition frees them from various perplexities that otherwise would attend them.

‡ This was probably at the instigation of *Judas*, who murmured at it. *John* xii. 4. &c.

To what purpose is this waste?

8 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

13 Verily I say unto you, Where-soever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver

him up to much precious ointment without any occasion, when it might have been improved to more valuable purposes?

9 For this might have been sold for a considerable sum, and the money been distributed among the poor for the relief of their necessities. Thus they rashly censured her, and were wanting in their respect to their Lord.

10 But Jesus knowing all hearts, and observing not only their murmurings about it, but likewise the different principles that influenced her and them, rebuked them, saying, Why do ye blame this woman, as if she had done amiss? She has herein acted a better part than you: For it is indeed a good work, very proper and seasonable in my present circumstances; and is the effect of her faith in, and love to, me.

11 For as to what ye suggest about disposing of this costly ointment for the benefit of the poor, Ye will always have them present with you as proper objects of your charity, whom ye may have perpetual opportunities of relieving as often as ye are inclined to it; but I shall continue to be corporally present with you only for a very little while, being soon to go to the Father; and therefore ye ought not to grudge this her seasonable expence, to testify the honourable regards she has to me.

12 For this is not so needless a charge as ye imagine, since, in a few days, I must be crucified and buried; and, as she will not have an opportunity to embalm my body then, which, in that case, ye would think a suitable token of her respect to me, she has been secretly influenced to pay me this honour before-hand; and has thereby shewn, that her believing and affectionate homage exceeds yours.

13 I assuredly tell you, This woman's thus remarkably anointing my body against my burial, is such an extraordinary instance of her faith and love, and so much to the honour of my name, that it shall be recorded to her commendation, and to the encouragement of those graces in others, wherever the glad tidings of salvation, founded on my death and resurrection, shall be published, even through all the nations of the world.

14, 15. After this, Judas, surnamed Iscariot, tho' he was one of the twelve apostles whom Christ had chosen to be his most intimate friends and attendants, and always treated with kindness and favour; yet this ungrateful, covetous, and perfidious hypocrite, thro' the instigation of Satan, (*Luke xxii. 3.*) and the discontent of his own mind, went to the chief priests, and asked them, What they would give him to betray Jesus

ver him unto you?
And they cove-
nanted with him
for thirty pieces
of silver.

16 And from
that time he
sought opportu-
nity to betray him.

17 Now the
first day of the
feast of unleaven-
ed bread, the dis-
ciples came to Je-
sus, saying unto
him, Where wilt
thou that we pre-
pare for thee to
eat the passover?

18 And he said,
Go into the city
to such a man,
and say unto him,
The master saith,
My time is at
hand; I will keep
the passover at thy
house with my
disciples.

19 And the dis-
ciples did as Je-
sus had appointed
them; and they
made ready the
passover.

20 Now when
the even was
come,

privately into their hands? assuring them, that for a sum of money he would do it: And as this was what they most of all wanted, they readily agreed to give him thirty shekels of silver †, which was, by the law, the price of a slave, (*Exod. xxi. 32.*) *A goodly price that he was prized at!* (*Zech. xi. 13.*)

16 And yet, mean and trifling as the sum was, this base-spirited creature took up with it; and from that time forward watched for an opportunity to acquaint them with the place to which Jesus privately retired, that they might find and seize him.

17 Now on the first day of unleavened bread, the day appointed of God, and usually observed by the Jews, for killing the paschal lamb, which was to be eaten in the evening, as a memorial of *Israel's* protection from the destroying angel, and deliverance out of *Egypt*; his disciples, knowing that no difficulties or dangers would divert him from observing an ordinance of God, came and asked him at what house he would please to have them make ready for their eating the passover; they being all strangers at *Jerusalem*, and having no habitation of their own there ||.

18 And Jesus, to shew his authority, and his fore-knowledge of all things, ordered *Peter* and *John* (*Luke xxii. 8.*) to repair to *Jerusalem*, where they should meet with a man, whom he described by some particular circumstances, (*Mark xiv. 13.*); and bad them tell him, Their Lord and Master had sent them to let him know ‡, that the time determined of God for his being put to death was just at hand, and to demand liberty for himself and his disciples to eat the paschal lamb together at his house.

19 Accordingly these disciples, without disputing his order or doubting of success, went into the city, found the man whom Jesus had described, and did every thing according to the directions he had given them; and, as this man readily complied with their design, they got the lamb killed in the court of the temple, had it roasted, provided unleavened bread, and wine, and bitter herbs, and made every thing ready for Christ's celebration of the passover with them, in a room properly furnished, and commodious for that purpose, (*Mark xiv. 15.*)

20 Now when, after sun-set, the latter evening came on

N O T E S.

† A shekel was about two shillings and four pence; but, if we reckon it at half a crown, this sum amounted only to three pounds fifteen shillings Sterling.

|| Dr *Lighfoot* says, The houses of *Jeru-*

salem were not to be hired; but, during the time of the feast, were of common right.

‡ Christ's ordering them to tell the man this, seems to intimate, that he was one of his disciples, or at least one of his friends, though not an apostle.

come, he sat down with the twelve.

20 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

21 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

22 And he answered and said, He that dippereth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

23 The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man, if he had not been born.

24 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered

on §, which was the time for the Jews eating the passover, Jesus went to the house, and there sat down with the twelve apostles to supper.

21 And while they were eating, he, knowing all that was in Judas' heart, took occasion to say, I assuredly tell you, that one of you, who, as my friends and family, are now celebrating this feast with me, will treacherously discover me to mine enemies, that they may privately apprehend and put me to death. (See the note on Luke xxii. 21.)

22 Upon hearing this, the disciples were exceedingly alarmed, and troubled within themselves, to think that such evil should befall their Lord, and that any of them should act such a monstrously vile and ungrateful part in it; and each of them, Judas excepted, being more apt to suspect his own than any of his brethren's heart, though he was not conscious of the least inclination or design that way; and being desirous of Christ's clearing him; began, in his turn, to say, Lord, I humbly hope it is not I that shall prove to be this villanous wretch.

23 Christ, not thinking it proper as yet to fix the charge particularly on the man to whom it belonged, replied, One of you who is now putting his hand into the same dish, and eating with me, (see the note on Mark xiv. 20.) is the perfidious disciple, who, under a pretence of friendship, will certainly betray me, according to that ancient prophecy, *Mine own familiar friend, which did eat of my bread, has lift up his heel against me*, (Psalm xli. 9.)

24 I the Messiah must needs undergo the bitterest sufferings, and am willing to endure them, according to the prophecies concerning me: But, how much soever infinite Wisdom will over-rule the wickedness of the traitor to accomplish the most glorious designs, this is no excuse to him, or extenuation of his sin; his righteous punishment therefore will be so exceeding dreadful, that it would have been happy for him never to have had a being, since it is better not to be at all than to be so miserable.

25 Then Judas, who was the traitor Christ pointed at, being so hardened in his wickedness as not to be moved by the terrible wo denounced against him, put

on

N O T E.

§ The time appointed for killing the paschal lamb (*Exod. xii. 6.*) was *בין הערבים* between the two evenings, or in the afternoon before sun-setting; for all the afternoon was called the evening of that day; and the lat-

ter evening began at sun-setting, which was the time for eating the passover. See *Lincoln's* on *Exod. xii. 6, 8.* and *Whitby's* appendix to *Mark xiv.*

† The

swered, and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

on a bold-face; and supposing, under the power of unbelief, that Christ did not know his secret design, or would not discover him to the rest, and fearing lest his silence should be construed into an argument of guilt, he said, Master, I hope you do not mean that I am he who will betray you? To which Jesus replied, in terms that amounted to his saying, Thou art the man. (See the note on *Luke* xii. 70.)

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

26 And at the latter end of the paschal supper, before the table was cleared, Jesus, to shew that he was thereby typified as the Lamb of God who was to be sacrificed for us, took in his hands such bread as was then in common use; and having set it apart for sacred service by thanksgiving and prayer †, he brake it, and distributed it among the disciples, saying, Take, and eat it: For I appoint this sacramental bread to be henceforth eaten as the memorial of my body's being broken for your redemption by my sufferings and death; in like manner as the eating of the paschal lamb was appointed to be a memorial of the preservation of *Israel* from the destroying angel, and of their deliverance out of *Egypt*. (See the note on *Mark* xiv. 22. and *Luke* xxii. 19.)

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it:

27 After the same manner, he likewise took a cup of such wine in his hand as they had at the paschal supper; and, setting this apart, by thanksgiving and prayer, to sacramental use, delivered it to his disciples, saying to every one of them, Drink of this: (See the note on *Luke* xxii. 20.)

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.

28 For I appoint this sacramental wine to be henceforth drank by all my disciples, as the representation and memorial of my blood's being shed for the confirmation of the new covenant and purchasing of all its blessings, and particularly for the forgiveness of the sins of vast multitudes, not of the *Jews* only, but of the *Gentiles* also, even of all that by faith receive the atonement ‡.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until

29 But I tell you, that, from this time forward, I have done with drinking the juice of the grape in commemoration of *Israel's* deliverance; and will have that ordinance continued no longer, than till the things it typified shall be fulfilled (*Luke* xxii. 16.) by a more glorious redemption, in the gospel-kingdom, which will

take

N O T E S.

† The *Jews* loaves were broad and thin, and so might easily be broken.

‡ Though Christ was not yet crucified, he speaks of his death as if it were already past, because it was just at hand, and this ordinance was to be a standing memorial of it in

all after ages: Thus God said of circumcision to *Abraham*, just before he and all his were circumcised, *This is my covenant*, (*Gen.* xvii. 9, 10.); and he said of the passover to *Israel*, just before he had passed over their houses, and delivered them out of *Egypt*, *It is the Lord's passover*, (*Exod.* xii. 11.)

that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night : for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, 'Tho' all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.

34 Jesus said unto

take place after my resurrection, and will call for a new use of wine in the commemorative ordinance I have now instituted : Nor will I any more so freely and familiarly commune with you again in person, till I take you up to heaven ; where I will admit you to still more intimate and delightful fellowship with me, which will be always fresh and entertaining, like new wine that was never drank before, and is of a different nature from that which we have been drinking now ; and where we shall celebrate together, with inexpressible joy, your complete deliverance from all sin and sorrow §.

30 And when, at the close, they had sung a psalm or song of praise suited to the present occasion, Christ, knowing that the time of his being betrayed was just coming on, would not stay to be apprehended in the house, lest he should bring the master of it into trouble ; nor in *Jerusalem*, lest it should occasion public tumults and outrages ; but retired with his disciples to the mount of *Olives*.

31 As Jesus was on his way thither ||, he foretold them, that they would be so surprised and terrified that very night, by reason of the distressing things which would befall him in their presence, that every one of them would desert him ; for the time was just at hand, in which that famous prophecy would be fulfilled, (*Zech. xiii. 7.*) *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man who is my Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts : Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.*

32 But for your comfort, said he, though I shall be put to death, I shall soon rise again : And do not think that I will forsake you, tho' ye will highly deserve it ; no, I, like a shepherd, will go before you, and gather you together again in *Galilee*, where ye shall see me.

33 *Peter*, who was too rash and self-confident, instead of having a godly jealousy over himself, seemed to take it ill that Christ should suspect him, and said, Lord, whatever is the consequence, and whoever shall be afraid to own thee ; yea, tho' every one of thy disciples, and all the world besides, should abandon thee ; yet I am sure, and I promise, that no danger or terror shall ever make me afraid to cleave to and stand by thee.

34 Jesus knowing that he resolved and spoke in his own

N O T E S.

§ Some suppose that our Lord here refers to the time of his eating and drinking with his disciples, for the confirmation of their faith, after this resurrection, (*Acts x. 41.*) But I do not understand how, if he then drank wine, it can in any sense be called new wine ; which relates either to a new use of

it, or to what, for its superior excellence and new delight, may in a figurative sense be called new wine.

|| It appears from ver. 36 that Jesus was not yet come to *Gethsemane*, which lay at the foot of the mount of *Olives*.

unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

own strength, and what would be the event, answered, *Alas, Peter!* I assuredly tell you, that, notwithstanding all these mighty professions of love, zeal, and courage, this very night, before the time of cock-crowing † is past, you will not only be afraid to appear for me; but will shamefully, three times over, deny that you belong to or have any knowledge of me.

35 Peter said unto him, Tho' I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

35 But *Peter*, notwithstanding this fair warning from one who knew him better than he knew himself, still persisted in his vain confidence, and replied with greater vehemence than before, No, tho' my life were to go for it, I assure thee that I never will do so base a thing as to disown thee: And the rest of the disciples, seeing him so resolute, and not being sensible of their own weakness and what temptations might befall them, were induced by his example to join in the like protestations.

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

36 Then Jesus, taking with him all the apostles except *Judas*, who by this time was gone to the chief priests to inform them where they might find him, (*John* xiii. 30.) went with them to a garden, near a village called *Gethsemane*, which signifies a press for olives, and was at the foot of mount *Olivet*, where he trod the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone: For, having entered the garden, he ordered eight of the eleven disciples to stay at a certain place there, till he should retire for prayer.

37 And he took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful, and very heavy.

37 And as *Peter*, and the two sons of *Zebedee*, *James* and *John*, had been eye-witnesses of his glorious transfiguration in the mount, (*chap.* xvii. 1, &c.) he took them along with him to be witnesses of his deepest humiliation and agonies; and, as soon as they were got from the other disciples, he was in great distress and consternation of spirit, under a strong impressive sense of the terrible sufferings he felt, and was going to endure, from the powers of darkness, and from divine justice for his people's sins.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

38 Then, turning to these disciples, he said, My soul is (*πεινῶν*) compassed about with the most grievous sorrows, so that I can hardly subsist, but am ready to die under them; and they will never entirely leave me, till they issue in my death: Stay ye here, and observe how it is with me; and guard against the temptations that

N O T E.

† The time of cock-crowing was usually reckoned from our midnight to three o'clock of our morning; and that about three o'clock was most remarkable, as being commonly the loudest toward break of day: Accordingly this was sometimes called the second cock-

crowing; and at other times, by way of eminence, the cock-crowing; and so the difference is easily reconciled between this place, and *Mark* xiv. 30. where it is said, *This night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.* See the note on *Luke* xxii. 34.

that are coming upon yourselves.

39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

39 Hereupon he retired about a stone's cast from them, (*Luke xxii. 41.*); and prostrating himself upon the ground, in great humility, reverence, and sore distress, he, like a man of sorrows, who could not but have a natural reluctance to sufferings, prayed, saying, O my Father, to whom I stand related as thy dear Son, if the salvation of thy people may be accomplished, consistently with the honour of thy perfections, without my undergoing the bitter agonies and sufferings which thou hast called me to, I earnestly beseech thee to excuse me from them; however, I entirely and freely submit to thy will, that the innocent averions of human nature may not be attended to, but thy purpose and good pleasure may be fulfilled, whatever it cost me: Here I am, do with me what seems best in thy sight, I still delight to do thy will.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?

40 Having thus poured out his soul to his heavenly Father, he returned back to the three disciples; and, finding them all asleep, roused them; and directing his discourse to *Peter*, said, How surprising is this! What, *Peter*! Did you say but now, that you would die with me; and did ye all join with him in that profession? And cannot ye so far deny yourselves, as to keep awake only for one hour, at my command, that ye might shew your affection and concern for me now in my extreme anguish?

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

41 Watch and pray with me in my temptation, as sympathising friends under my sufferings for your sakes; and stand upon your guard, earnestly begging the grace which is needful to preserve you in the dangers that are now coming upon yourselves; lest sloth and drowsiness betray you into mischief before ye are aware, and ye fall into sin, in forsaking and denying me, by reason of the terrors that are now at hand. I know indeed that your hearts are with me; and that ye are sincerely desirous to shew your love to me, and to avoid all iniquity: But, alas! there are remaining corruptions with you, and the infirmity of your weak and frail bodies is a clog and hindrance to you; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would, without the utmost religious care, and special assistance from above.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

42 Having given them this gentle caution and rebuke, he withdrew a second time, and renewed his earnest prayer, saying, O Father, in whom is all my confidence, if it be not consistent with thy glory to save thy people, without my bearing the bitter agonies and sufferings for them which thou hast appointed to me, I
entire-

42 And he came and found them asleep a - gain: for their eyes were heavy.

entirely acquiesce, and freely submit to thy will.

43 Then, coming back to his disciples, he again found them all asleep as at first: For they were exceeding drowsy, and could not keep their eyes open, how much soever they strove for it; it being very late in the night, and they being sunk with grief, (*Luke xxii. 45.*) and extremely tired with the fatigue they had undergone in preparing the passover and attending their Lord.

44 And he, withdrawing a third time, prayed much to the same purport as before, resigning himself unreservedly to his Father's will and pleasure, which had such an absolute ascendancy over him as to be a law within his heart, (*Psal. xl. 8.*)

45 Then returning, and finding his disciples asleep again after they had been twice roused, he said, Well, sleep on now, and indulge yourselves in it, if ye can or dare. It is now too late to shew your kindness to me by watching with me, or to escape the danger that is rushing upon you: Behold, the dreadful time I forewarned you of is come; and I the Messiah am just ready to be treacherously delivered into the hands of wicked men, both *Jews* and *Romans*, in order to their taking away my life.

46 And having got thro' the extremity of his foregoing agony, he resumed his courage, and shewed himself prepared for all events, saying, Arise, let us go and face our danger: Observe, the traitor and his company are just now coming to seize me.

47 And at that very instant, behold, his enemies were upon him. *Judas*, one of his apostles, who had familiarly eat bread with him, appeared at the head of a great number of *Roman* soldiers, and officers of the sanhedrim, (*John xviii. 3.*) which mostly consisted of the chief priests and elders of the *Jews*: By order of this ecclesiastical court, they came armed with swords and clubs, to apprehend Jesus, under the conduct of *Judas*, who had promised to lead them to the place of his retirement, that they might take him without running any risk of opposition from the people.

48 Now, in order to their compassing this design, without danger of mistaking one or other of the disciples for Christ, because it was night, and his face was not sufficiently known by the officers and soldiers, *Judas* told them beforehand by what token they might be sure which was he, saying, Apprehend the person whom I shall kiss; and secure him; for ye may depend upon it, that is the man.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words,

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

47 And while he yet spake, lo, *Judas* one of the twelve came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him, gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he, hold him fast.

49 And forth-
with he came to
Jesus, and said,
Hail, master; and
kissed him.

50 And Jesus
said unto him,
Friend, where-
fore art thou
come? Then came
they and laid
hands on Jesus,
and took him.

51 And he-
hold, one of them
which were with
Jesus, stretched
out his hand, and
drew his sword,
and struck a ser-
vant of the high
priest's, and smote
off his ear.

52 Then said
Jesus unto him,
Put up again thy
sword into its
place: for all
they that take the
sword, shall perish
with the sword.

53 Thinkest
thou that I can-
not now pray to
my Father, and
he shall presently
give me more
than

49 Accordingly he, marching in the front of the company, went directly up to Jesus; and accosting him in the most friendly words, said, Master, God be with thee; all prosperity, joy, and safety, attend thee; and, as a further sign of honour and friendship, and of sincerity therein, he † kissed his face.

50 But (a) Jesus knowing his hypocritical and villainous intention, under these feigned tokens of the greatest affection and respect, reprov'd his perfidiousness and ingratitude, with this meek and gentle, and yet really cutting rebuke: What! my friend, as you profess and ought to be, and at this very time seem to be by putting on an air of the most cordial complaisance; what means this way and manner of your coming, at the same time, with armed men along with you? How do swords and staves, and *Hail, Master*, with a kiss, agree with one another? And why are you yourself present, (το οω παρ,) or with what face can you appear here openly before me, to conduct this horrid scene against me? And whilst he was speaking, the officers seized him, and he suffered himself to be made their prisoner.

51 Things being come to this extremity, and Jesus not rescuing himself, as he easily could if he pleased, out of their bands; behold the rash and inconsiderate rage and zeal of *Peter*, who, having a sword, drew it with all his might, and striking furiously at the head of *Malchus*, one of the high priest's servants, cut off his right ear, (*John* xviii. 10.)

52 Jesus seeing this, immediately commanded him to forbear and put his sword into its scabbard: For, says he, they who, without a just and lawful call, run immediately to the sword to revenge themselves, shall ordinarily fall by it ‡. As for my disciples, the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual: Their way to victory over their enemies is not by opposing force to force; but by prayer, faith, and patience, in hope that God will fight for them. And as to these *Jews*, who now make use of the *Roman* sword against us, they shall, ere long, be themselves destroyed by the arms of the *Romans*.

53 Besides, *Peter*, do not you know, that, if I had a mind to resist and vanquish these enemies, I could, without any more ado, have called upon my Father, who always heareth me; and he would instantly have sent

N O T E.

† Christ probably, in his great condescension and kindness, had used to admit his disciples to salute him in this manner, at their returns to him after they had been for some time absent; and so *Judas* took this liberty,

though he had been from him but a little while.

‡ This, in all likelihood, would have been *Peter's* lot, if Christ not over-ruled the spirits of the armed soldiers to prevent it.

than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus, let him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed him afar off, unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants to see the end.

sent a great army of angels, (see the note on *Mark* v. 9.) to defend me, and to destroy them; and this I could still procure, were I not willing to suffer all that they can inflict upon me.

54 But should I take any extraordinary methods to rescue myself out of their hands, how could the predictions of God's word be accomplished, which foretold my sufferings and death as the principal design for which I came into the world, and to which I am calmly and willingly to submit?

55 Immediately upon this, Jesus, turning himself to the company that were there to apprehend him, said, What means this outrageous manner of your coming against me with swords and clubs, as if I were some desperate villain who must be conquered and made to submit by force of arms? I have not behaved like such an one; nor is there any occasion to treat me with this violence, as if I would resist you: And, were I criminal, ye had fair opportunities of seizing me often enough in the temple, where I, especially of late, have daily appeared, preaching to the people; and yet none of you could find any just occasion, nor would venture, to apprehend me.

56 But † God has now at length suffered you to execute your wicked designs against me, that his eternal counsel, and the ancient predictions of the prophets, relating to my sufferings and death, might be accomplished. Then, when the disciples saw their Lord was fallen into the hands of his enemies, they all forsook him, and fled for fear, as he had foretold them they would, lest they likewise should be seized and punished together with him.

57 And they who had taken Jesus into custody hurried him away first to *Annas's* house, (*John* xviii. 13.) and then to the palace of *Caiaphas* the high priest; where, tho' it was in the dead of the night, the scribes and elders were got together to sit in judgment upon him.

58 In the mean while, *Peter*, having a little recovered his fright, followed Jesus at a distance, as they were carrying him to *Caiaphas's* house; and, soon after the company were entered, he went in, and mingled himself with the servants, that he might be screened from suspicion, and might see the issue of this affair, whether Christ's enemies would proceed to extremity against him, or whether he would miraculously deliver himself out of their hands.

† Some have thought these may be taken as the words of the evangelist, who makes this remark. But as *John* vii. 53. may be rendered, *this is done*; so, the scriptures must be fulfilled, are recited as Christ's own words to the multitude in *Mark* xiv. 49.

59 Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus to put him to death;

60 But found none: yea, tho' many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us, whe-

59 Now the chief priests and elders of the people, and the other members of the sanhedrim, having by their authority seized and bound him, and yet having nothing criminal to lay to his charge, were very inquisitive and industrious to find out proper tools, that, right or wrong, would give information against him of some crime, which might furnish them with a plausible pretence to condemn him as deserving to die.

60 But they could meet with none sufficient to answer their end: Nay, though they got many that were wicked and malicious enough to testify false things against him; yet their falsehoods were so evident, and so inconsistent with one another, that they confounded themselves, and the council could make nothing of them to convict him of any capital crime: But, at length, two false witnesses appeared;

61 And † misreciting and misconstruing some words he had formerly spoken, about raising the temple of his body from the dead three days after it should be killed, they alledged, with horrid virulence and contempt, "We heard this wretch say, that he could and would demolish our famous temple, where God dwells and is worshipped, and build it again in three days;" which they supposed might prove him to be an enemy to that holy place, and to be acted by the spirit of *Beelzebub*.

62 And as Jesus made no reply to such a false and frivolous charge; but, as a *sheep before her shearers is dumb*, so he opened not his mouth, (Isa. liii. 7.); the high priest got up in a rage, and said, in an insulting manner, What! do you stand mute, in contempt of the court? Do not you hear what these have deposed? What defence are you able to make against an accusation, by two witnesses, of such a high crime and misdemeanour? Or why do they thus witness against you, if it be not true?

63 But still Jesus continued silent; not because he did not know how to refute such a palpable calumny; but that he might let them take their own course, who he knew were resolved to cut him off, whatsoever he might say for himself, and to turn every thing against him. Then the high priest urged him to accuse himself, saying, I solemnly charge and command you upon oath, by the name of the great, the living, and all-seeing God, that you frankly declare unto us, whether you

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† They made a false recital of Christ's words, in order to their wresting them: For he did not say, *I see, or I will destroy*, as in *Mark* xiv. 58.; but, *Destroy ye this temple*, *John* ii. 19.: And to *this temple*, they ad-

ded, *made with hands*, *Mark* xiv. 58.; thereby restraining the sense of his words to the temple at Jerusalem; whereas he spoke with a reference to the temple of his body, which they would destroy, *John* ii. 21.

whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted

you really think yourself to be the true Messiah, who is God's eternal Son.

64 When he put this important question in so awful a manner, Jesus thought it high time to be plain and open in his confession, and therefore replied, *It is as you have said; I indeed am he*, tho' ye do not believe it. However, I tell you all, (*v. 64*) The time is coming, when I, who am the true Messiah, being the Son of man as well as the Son of God, shall be seen, by the whole council and all the people, exalted in dignity and power at my Father's right hand, and visibly appearing in the clouds of heaven, according to ancient prophecies, (*Psal. cx. 1. and Dan. vii. 13.*): In a little time, ye shall see the wonderful effusion of my Spirit to glorify me: After that, shall ye see me coming to judge and destroy this city and nation: And at the last day, ye shall see me coming in all my glory to judge the world: And though now I am arraigned, like a criminal, at your bar; ye shall then be arraigned at mine, and forced to own, that I am the Christ, the Son of God, as I now declare myself to be. (See the note on *Luke xxii. 70.*)

65 The high priest hearing this, immediately rent his garment, in token of detestation and abhorrence, (as the Jews used to do when they thought any one spoke blasphemously,) and said, He has now reproached the great and living God, by assuming such glory and power to himself as belong only to him: What occasion have we to search for other witnesses, or to hear any farther evidence against him? Behold how he is now condemned out of his own mouth; all the company have heard his bare-faced blasphemy.

66 What think ye of these words? Has he not herein plainly witnessed against himself as a blasphemer? To which the majority † of them, at least, replied, Yes, yes; he is certainly guilty of a capital crime, for which by our law he ought to die.

67, 68. As soon as they had thus unrighteously condemned him ‡, some of the company, as was prophesied, (*Isa. l. 6.*) began to spit in his face with indignation and contempt, which set others on to abuse him with all manner of rude indignities: Some of them

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† If Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus, who seem to have been members of the sanhedrim, were present on this occasion, the first of these did not consent to Christ's being put to death, *Luke xxiii. 50, 51.*; and we may well suppose the same of the last.

‡ It is probable, that, upon the foregoing

confession, the council either retired for a little while, or ordered Jesus to withdraw, till they might consider what further steps to take with him; and that then their officers, who had him in custody, were the ring-leaders of all this insolence and barbarity, at the instigation of the priests. See the notes on *chap. xxvii. 1. and Luke xxii. 63.*

ed him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands.

68 Saying, Prophetically unto us, Thou Christ; who is he that smote thee?

69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

70 But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

73 And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them, for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

74 Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

75 And Peter remembered the words of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

insolently boxed and buffeted him, (*επαλαγματον*); and others, having blindfolded him, made their game of him in a ludicrous manner, and struck him with their hands, and with rods, (*ιππακτωσαν*), saying, Now, you who pretend to be a prophet, give us a specimen of your skill, and name this and the other man that smote you.

69 Whilst all this was doing, Peter continued, not in the court, but in a lower part of the room among the servants, (*Mark* xiv. 66.); and as he was sitting there, a certain maid-servant, observing him, came to him, and said, I verily believe you are one of the disciples or friends of this Jesus of Galilee who were with him in the garden.

70 But Peter being surprised and filled with fear at this unexpected charge, made a rash answer all in a hurry, saying, in the hearing of the whole company, I know nothing of Jesus, nor what you mean by my being with him.

71 A little while after, he went out into the porch, and another of the maid-servants, seeing him there, said to some of the by-standers; Certainly this sorry fellow was one of Jesus of Nazareth's followers, and was with him when he was apprehended.

72 Then Peter, over-hearing her, broke out into a violent passion; and, to bear her down, and take off all suspicion from himself, roundly swore that he did not so much as know the man she spake of.

73 And a little after this, some others of the company attacked Peter a third time, saying, It surely cannot be true that you are not one of Jesus of Galilee's disciples; for even your pronunciation shews you to be a Galilean, you have the very brogue and clownish accent of that country.

74 Then he being in the utmost consternation, and not knowing what to say for himself, resolved to stand it out to the last; and so backed his denial with volleys of oaths, and horrid imprecations, saying, I insist upon it, that I have no acquaintance with this man, and never saw him till now: And immediately, upon this last most shocking denial, the cock crew, toward break of day, as Christ had foretold him, (*ver.* 34. see the note there.)

75 And Peter no sooner heard it, than he reflected upon the previous warning Christ had given him, saying to him, Before the time of cock-crowing is past, you will three times over deny me: And calling this to mind, his heart was melted into deep contrition for his great and aggravated sin; and going out from the company, to give free vent to his grief, he sorely lamented his case, weeping bitterly.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How great were the sufferings of the Son of God, in which he likewise shewed him-

himself to be real, a perfect and holy man; and which could never have been so great, had they not been for the sins of men! He trod the wine-press of his Father's wrath alone; none of his disciples bore any part in the work, whereby he took away sin, reproach, condemnation and death, from us. For this purpose he readily submitted to his Father's will, and, according to ancient prophecies, endured the worst of agonies, abuses and shame, for us: But he, who was then arraigned as a criminal at the bar of men, and was treated with cruelty and ridicule by the vilest of them, shall appear in all his glory, to the joy of his saints, and the confusion of his enemies, at the last day.—How thankfully should the children of God celebrate the memorials of their dear and dying Saviour! And why should any of them think much of sufferings for his sake, who has undergone so much for theirs, and has taken out the sting of all that can befall them! But O how malignant and hideous an evil is sin, which cost our Lord so dear to make an atonement for it! And into what monstrous forms does it shape itself; sometimes deliberately pursuing the most horrid villainies, under a disguise of religion and friendship; and at others hurrying even God's own people into self-confidence on one hand, and dreadful defections on the other, yea, though very rarely, into lying oaths and cursings, under the power of strong temptations, passion, and fear! How jealous should we be over our own hearts; and how should we dread being left to ourselves, or resolving and acting in our own strength! What need have we to be humble, and to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation, since, when once it begins to prevail, none knows how far it may carry us! But if at any time we have fallen by our iniquity, our repentance ought to be answerable to our sin; and if we have the grace of God in truth, when we have sinned grievously, our reflections upon it will fill us with such sorrows as often make one weep bitterly.

C H A P. XXVII.

Christ delivered to Pilate, 1, 2. Judas's despair and death, 3,—10. Christ's trial before Pilate, 11,—14. The clamour of the people against him, 15,—25. His being sentenced to be crucified, and the execution of it, 26,—44. Remarkable signs attending his death, 45—56. His burial, and his sepulchre watched, 57,—66.

TEXT.

WHEN the morning was come, all the chief priests, and elders of the people, took counsel against Jesus, to put him to death.

And when they had bound him, they led him away,

PARAPHRASE.

JESUS having been thus examined and condemned by the council, they retired for a little while †; and, when the morning-light appeared, the whole sanhedrim, consisting mostly of the chief priests and elders, went into further consultations about what course they should take that might be most effectual to cut him off.

2 And as the Romans had lately taken the chief power of life and death into their own hands, the sceptre having departed from Judah, just as the great Shiloh, or promised Messiah, came, (*Gen. xlix. 10.* see the note on *John xviii. 31.*) the council ordered him to be bound like a capital offender; and then, leading him thro' the streets, to make him a public spectacle of their tri-

N O T E.

† This seems from *Luke xxii. 46.* to have been a second meeting of the sanhedrim after a short recess: But then, either the evangelist *Luke* placed the examination of Christ, about his being the Son of God, in a different order from the evangelists *Matthew* and

Mark; or else, at the council's meeting again, they re-examined him upon that article, to see whether he would stand to the assertion that he had before given to their question about it.

away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

triumph, rage, and scorn, they brought him, as an infamous malefactor, to Pontius Pilate, who at that time was the Roman governor of Judea; and so fulfilled Christ's own prophecy, that they should deliver him to the Gentiles to be crucified, (chap. xx. 19.)

3 Then Judas which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

3 Then Judas, who had treacherously betrayed him into their hands †, as soon as he found that his Master suffered himself to be condemned by the council, and to remain under their power who were likely to procure his death, he was filled with horror and agony, in reflection on his own aggravated wickedness; and wishing, tho' too late, that it had never been committed, he went and returned the thirty pieces of silver for which he had sold his Lord, to the chief priests and elders from whom he had received them,

4 Saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.

4 Saying, to Christ's honour, to their caution, and his own confusion, I have been guilty of the worst of villanies, in betraying an innocent person even to death. But, instead of their taking conviction of their own crime in hiring him to do it, they put it off with a slight, and said, What care we? That is no fault of ours; you must look to it yourself: We do not know that he is innocent, whatever you do; nay, we have judged him worthy of death.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

5 And when he saw with what neglect they treated him, and that there was no stopping their prosecution of Jesus, he, in the vexation and terror of his mind, threw down the money they had given him † in one of the chambers of the temple; and, overwhelmed with insupportable anguish and despair, retired into some solitary place, and there § was suffocated, and fell down headlong with such agony and violence, as to burst the rim of his belly, and let out his bowels, (Acts i. 18.)

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and

6 Upon Judas's leaving the money with the chief priests, they took it up; but || hypocritically pretended that

N O T E S.

† Judas, in all likelihood, hoped that Christ would have confounded his enemies, or miraculously made his escape, and that he himself should have got their money without any damage done to his master:

‡ It seems by his throwing down the money in the temple, that the sanhedrim were adjourned to their council-chamber in an apartment of the temple, to finish their consultations against Jesus there. If so, the history stands in its due order; and there is no need of placing this fact after the condemnation of Christ by Pilate, as the Harmonists generally do.

§ The expression here used, ἀνῆλθεν, he hanged himself, or was suffocated; and that in

Acts i. 18. ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐνοῦ κατακτάμενος, he falling headlong, burst asunder in the midst; he easily accounted for, and reconciled, by supposing, either that he was strangled with grief or by the power of Satan in him, and, falling down, his bowels gushed out; or that, if he hanged himself, the rope, or that to which it was fastened, broke, and so he fell down; and if this were at the top of some precipice, it occasioned the greater violence in the fall, and the more signally manifested the righteous judgment of God in so uncommon a death of a matchless traitor.

|| It is likely that they had taken it out of the treasury of the temple to hire the traitor, under pretence that this was for the service of God.

and said, it is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

that it ought not to be put among the offerings for the temple, because it had been employed to procure the shedding of human blood: And, though they made no scruple of pursuing an innocent man to death, they were unwilling to take the silver again for their own use, lest they should thereby bring the load of guilt, and the odium of it, upon themselves, which was contracted by its having been the price that obtained the delivery of Jesus into their hands in order to his being put to death.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potters field, to bury strangers in.

7 But (†) they contrived to ease their own consciences, and put a fair gloss upon what they had done, by disposing of the money in some public charity; accordingly they purchased with it a piece of ground, which was called *The † potter's field*, to be a burying-place for such proselytes of their religion as they thought were not worthy to be interred in the same places with themselves.

8 Wherefore that field was called, *The field of blood*, unto this day.

8 Therefore the name of that field was changed; and the providence of God so ordered it, for perpetuating the memory of their infamous crime; it being from that time forward called *Aceldama*, which signifies *The field of blood*, (Acts i. 19.)

9 (Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

9, 10. By these remarkable circumstances, that which was figuratively expressed by the prophet, was really accomplished in what these Jews did to Christ, where it is said, (Zech. xi. 12, 13.) *† They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: A goodly price that I was prized at of them! And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.*

10 And gave them for the potters field, as the Lord appointed me.)

11 When the Jews had brought Jesus before Pilate, they, knowing how jealous the Roman government were of all attempts to throw off their yoke, accused him of setting himself up for the Christ; which they interpreted to imply, that he set up for king of the Jews, to deliver them from *Cesar's* power, (Luke xxiii. 2.) and, as he stood arraigned under this charge at *Pilate's* bar, he interrogated him upon that head, saying, Do you in-

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art

N O T E S.

† This seems to have been a field owned by some potter, or used to supply potters with earth, or to receive broken pieces of pots.

‡ As these words are only found in *Zechariab*, and not in *Jeremiah*, some suppose they were first spoken by *Jeremiah*, or written in some apocryphal book of his which is lost, and were afterwards repeated, as some other things were, by *Zechariab*; on which account the Jews used to say, that the spirit of *Jeremiah* was in *Zechariab*: Others suppose that the prophecy of *Jeremiah* was placed first in the volume of the prophets, and so

was the running-title of all that volume: Others think that the ninth, tenth, and eleventh chapters of *Zechariab*, were written by *Jeremiah*: Others observe that the Syriac and Persian versions read, *It was spoken by the prophet*, without naming by whom: And others suppose, that the transcribers might mistake *Zu* for *Ja*, as bishop Hall says he has seen these names abbreviated in an old manuscript. However, it is of little importance which of these ways we take to account for this difficulty, since it does not affect the doctrine itself.

Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.

13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearst thou not how many things they witness against thee?

14 And he answered him to never a word, inasmuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?

18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

19 When he sat down on the

indeed profess to be the king of the Jews? To which Jesus replied, It is as you say, in a certain sense of the words; though not so as to imply a temporal dominion, like the kingdoms of this world, (*John xviii. 36.*)

12 And while the chief priests and elders of the people multiplied clamorous accusations, he, knowing his own innocence, and the apparent weakness and inconsistency of their charges, and knowing that his time was come, took no care to answer them, but silently committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

13 Then Pilate said, Do not you hear how your accusers depose, that you pervert the nation, forbid to give tribute to *Cesar*, make yourself a king, and incite the people to rebellion through all *Jewry*, and that by their law you ought to die because you make yourself the Son of God? (*Luke xxiii. 2, 5. and John xix. 7.*) What have you to offer against all these charges? Why do not you clear yourself?

14 And yet, tho' he was thus pressed to answer, he still continued entirely silent; so that Pilate was greatly amazed to think what might be the reason of this uncommon behaviour.

15 Now it was customary for the governor of *Judea* to gratify the people with the release of some prisoner, whom they should chuse, at every passover, in honour of that festival, which was a commemoration of their own deliverance out of *Egypt*.

16 And it fell out at this passover, that they had a notorious malefactor in prison, one *Barabbas*, who had headed several seditious persons in an insurrection, and been guilty of robbery and murder in the riot, (*Mark xv. 7.*)

17 When therefore the chief of the Jews were gathered together to demand judgment against Jesus, Pilate, supposing that they could hardly prefer so infamous a rogue as *Barabbas* to him, made a proposal to them, that, since he was to release some one prisoner at that feast, they should chuse which they pleased of the two whom he would mention; and they were, this abominable wretch *Barabbas*, and Jesus whom many among them esteemed as their Messiah.

18 For the governor was well satisfied by their management in the whole of this prosecution of Jesus at his tribunal, that it was envious and malicious, on account of the high reputation he had gained among the people, who it might be hoped would have appeared on the side of one that had been so great a favourite of many of them.

19 And he was the more confirmed in his good opinion of Jesus, and in his inclination to favour him, by

the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream, because of him.

19 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took wa-

a message that was brought from his wife whilst he was sitting in judgment on this cause: For she sent an earnest and solemn warning to him, saying, I beg of you not to pass any severe sentence upon that righteous man who is now before you; for I have been exceedingly terrified in an uncommon dream about him this morning; and am sorely afraid, lest he should be condemned, and you and your family should fall under the vengeance of God for it †.

20 But the more God seemed to appear for him, the more the chief priests and elders of the Jews set themselves against him; and by their interest with the common people, took all possible pains to prevail upon them to demand that *Barabbas* might be freed, and that Jesus might be put to death.

21 But *Pilate* being rather desirous to set Jesus at liberty, as being persuaded of his innocence, put the question a second time to the whole multitude, saying, Which of these two persons do ye insist upon being set at liberty? And they, under the influence of the chief priests and elders, answered, *Barabbas*.

22 Upon this the governor said to them, What then would ye have me do with Jesus, who is esteemed by many to be your Messiah? Shall I release him also? Or will ye leave it to me to do as I think proper with him? But they all answered, as with one consent, Let him be condemned to be crucified, and so suffer the most shameful death that can be inflicted upon him.

23 *Pilate* replied, Why do ye insist on his being crucified? What capital crime has he been guilty of to deserve it? I do not find that ye have proved any thing against him, for which, according to the *Roman* laws, he ought to die. (See the note on *Luke* xxiii. 22.) But, for want of evidence, they cried out with the greater fury and clamour, We hate him, and cannot endure the thoughts of his living; nothing less will satisfy us than that he be crucified.

24 The governor then finding it was in vain to strive against the stream, and that they grew more and more outrageous and desperate by all that he could say to convince or soften them, was in a great strait between his own judgment and conscience on one hand, and his fears of the people's rage on the other; and therefore, to stifle his own convictions, and at the same time quiet the multitude, he thought of an expedient, which he preposterously imagined would acquit himself from guilt,

NOTE.

† This was a special appearance of Providence to bear witness to Christ's innocence, whilst his enemies were loading him with unjust reproaches.

water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

15 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.

16 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

guilt, whilst he gratified them; and that was, to yield to their importunity, and yet protest against the fact: And so he called for a basin of water; and washing his hands †, in the presence of all the people, said, By this significative action I clear myself, and testify, before God and you, that I am not guilty of shedding the blood of this righteous man, whom ye force me to condemn; ye alone shall be answerable for it to God and the whole world, whatever may be the consequence.

25 Then all the assembly, in the heat of their rage, replied, Be it so: We fear no guilt or danger on this score; if, as you imagine, there should be any, we acquit you, and take it all upon ourselves: Let it be revenged upon us and ours to the latest posterity. So rash and presumptuous were they, in entailing the most dreadful curse of God upon themselves, and upon their children yet unborn!

26 Pilate having got this poor salvo for his own conscience, and being over-awed by their tumultuous clamours, proceeded to discharge Barabbas, that notorious malefactor, whose crimes were so great and complicated, that it can hardly be thought he ever could have obtained a release, had he not been put in competition with the holy One, whom they wickedly abhorred: And when he had ordered Jesus to be severely † scourged, in hopes that such an ignominious and cruel punishment might have satisfied the people, but found that even this would not appease them, (*John* xix. 1. &c.) he at last passed sentence upon him, and delivered him up to the Roman officers to be crucified ‖.

27 That

NOTES.

† Some think that Pilate, having lived among the Jews, did this in conformity to a custom he had learned from them, according to *Deut.* xxi. 6, 7. and *Psal.* xxvi. 6. But others suppose it was in conformity to a rite of this nature among the Gentiles, as well as Jews, who, to cleanse themselves from the blood they shed, used to wash their hands.

† Whipping or scourging, in criminal cases, was a punishment frequently used both by the Jews and Romans. The Jews commonly inflicted it by a whip of three cords, and limited the number of stripes to thirty-one, (*1 Cor.* xi. 29.); and so they gave only thirteen strokes with the scourge of three lashes, that they might be sure not to exceed forty stripes, according to the law in *Deut.* xxv. 3. But the Romans most usual way of scourging was with such rods or wands as the victors carried in a bundle before their chief magistrates: And they, not confining themselves to the Jewish number, were exceeding

cruel in this sort of punishment, as appears from Eusebius's account of their inflicting it on the primitive martyrs; of whom he says, "All the spectators were astonished when they saw their flesh torn with scourges, even to their veins and arteries, so that their very bowels might be seen:" *Euseb. Eccles. Hist.* lib. iv. cap. 15. And as our Saviour was scourged at Pilate's order, it seems to have been done by his officers after the Roman fashion, and to have been very severe as well as disgraceful; for Pilate thereby intended to move the compassion of the Jews toward him in order to his being released, rather than to have him scourged in order to his being crucified, as appears from *Luke* xliii. 15, 16, 21. *John* xix. 1.—6.: And to you Ισταν φραγγιλλας περιδουκιν, &c. may be rendered, Having already scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

‖ When a person was crucified, he was nailed to the cross, as it lay upon the ground, through

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews.

30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head:

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

32 And as they came out, they found

27 Then Pilate's guards seizing Jesus; dragged him into the common hall; and there they brought their whole company about him, inhumanly to insult him; and to make themselves merry with him; they being more disposed, by their temper and profession, to fall in with the fury of the people, than with the timoroufness of the governor.

28 And as they had heard that he was prosecuted under the character of the king of the Jews, they, in derision, pulled off his own clothes, and put upon him a red cloak, such as the soldiers used to wear, to mimic the scarlet robes of princes.

29 And, having wreathed a parcel of thorns into the form of a crown, they, to carry on the jest with barbarous mockery, set it upon his head, at once to ridicule and torment him; and putting a reed, or hollow cane, (*καλαμῶν*.) into his right hand for a sceptre, answerable to his sham robes and crown, they, in a way of jeer and scorn, knecled down before him, and used the form of salutation that was given to kings and emperors, saying with a taunt, Hail, long live the king of the Jews.

30 And then with indignation and contempt, they spit in his face; and, taking the cane out of his hand, struck with it upon the crown of thorns, that their points might the more painfully pierce his head.

31 And after they had glutted themselves with making him their sport, and with abusing and putting all manner of indignities upon him, they stripped him of his mock robe, to signify that they had divested him of all his kingly authority; and put his own coat upon him again, that those soldiers might have their booty who were to be most immediately employed in his execution; and then, obliging him to carry his own cross, (*John* ix. 17.) they led him like a lamb to the slaughter, and hurried him away through the city to the place of his crucifixion, which was without the gates of Jerusalem, (*Heb.* xiii. 12.)

32 But fearing lest he should faint, and die under the burden, and so they should lose the opportunity of gratifying

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through each hand extended to its utmost stretch, and through both the feet together; then the cross was erected, and the foot of it thrust, with a violent jog, into a hole prepared in the ground to receive it; and this jog disjoined the body, whose whole weight hung upon the nails, which went through the hands and feet, till the person expired by mere dint of pain. This kind of death, which was the most cruel, shameful, and cursed death that could be devised, was used only by the Romans for slaves, and the basest of

the people, who were capital offenders: But Jesus was to endure this, that the very nature of the death itself might intimate, *his bearing our sins in his own body on the tree*, and *being made a curse for us*; 1 Pet. ii. 24. Gal. iii. 13.

§ As it seems from *John* xix. that some of these things were done to Jesus before Pilate had condemned him, we may suppose that they were afterwards acted over again: or else, that this evangelist, and Mark (*chap.* xv. 16.—20.) recited them all together as things of a like nature.

found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

34 They gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.

35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments; casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

36 And sitting down, they watched him there:

37 And set up over his head, his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

tifying their cruelty in a public, shameful, and miserable execution; when, as they were going out of the city, they met with one Simon, a Cyrenian, who was coming that way out of the country, they pressed this man to carry the cross after him †. (*Luke xxiii. 26.*)

33, 34. And when they came to a place, a little way out of the city, called in the Hebrew language, or Syriac dialect, *Golgotha*, which signifies *The place of a skull* ‡, instead of giving him a stupifying potion of spiced wine, as they used to do in compassion to malefactors when they were to be crucified, they gave him a cup of vinegar mixed with gall, (see the note on *Mark xv. 23.*); thereby literally, though undesignedly, fulfilling an ancient prophecy concerning him, (*Psal. lxi. 21.*) And when he had tasted the sour and bitter potion, as much as was sufficient to give him the nauseous relish of it, he refused to drink it, that he might take nothing either to increase, or to make him insensible of, his pain.

35 Then they nailed his hands and feet to the cross, and reared it up, with his body hanging by the nails upon it; and having stripped him at least of his upper garments, the four soldiers that were his immediate executioners divided some of his clothes among them; and as the uppermost of all, being a mantle or cloak, was one piece of cloth without any seam, and would be spoiled by cutting it into pieces, (*John xxi. 23.*) they cast lots for it; and therein likewise, without their own design, fulfilled another prophecy of him, (*Psal. xxii. 18.*) where it is said, *They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

36 And having done this, they set themselves down to watch and guard him, lest the people should take another turn whilst they saw him in this miserable plight, and should rise and rescue him.

37 They likewise fastened an inscription upon the top of the cross over his head, which Pilate had ordered, (*John xix. 19.*) viz. "*This is Jesus the king of the Jews*," that all spectators might know who he was, and upon what accusation he was crucified: And so what they

N O T E.

† This Simon was probably suspected to be one of Christ's disciples; and he either carried one end of the cross, Christ going before and still bearing the other, it being one part of the punishment and ignominy of them that were crucified to carry their own cross; or else, Christ, having been fatigued by the foregoing watchings and abuses, was too faint to stand under any part of it; and so Simon carried it all, in the company after him, or at least, as some think, that piece of wood

which was to be fastened across the upright post, and which was all that used to be carried by the malefactor.

‡ This, in the Greek, is *Γολγοθα*, which, according to its signification, is (in Latin) *Calvary*, or *The place of a skull*, *Luke xxiii. 33.*; and it was so called, either because criminals used to be executed there; or because there was the common charnel-house, or repository for dead men's bones and skulls.

they designed for his reproach, was over-ruled by Providence for his honour, as it was an assertion, not of any real crime, but of a glorious truth concerning him.

38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him: one on the right hand, and another on the left.

38 At the same time there were two highwaymen (*λῃσταί*) crucified on each side of him, he hanging in the middle, and one of them on his right hand and the other on his left, that the multitude might be so much the more incensed against him as if he were the worst of the three; and, in this manner, according to ancient prophecy, *he was numbered with transgressors*, (*Isa. liii. 12.*)

39 And they that passed by, reviled him, wagging their heads,

39 And as all these indignities were put upon him; so even the travellers, who passed by as strangers on the public road, by the side of which he hung, shook their heads in a scornful and insulting manner, and upbraided him, using taunts and jeers, even to blasphemy, (*βλασφημῶν αὐτόν*), saying,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

40 *Aba!* what is become of your vain boasts now? You that pretended to such mighty feats as to pull down the temple and build it up again in three days time, let us now see whether you are able to save yourself from dying, or to deliver yourself out of the hands of justice: If, as you pretended, you really are the Son of God, now is your time to give us a proof of it, by loosening yourself from the cross, and going away: Come, let us see what you can do.

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,

41 In like manner the chief priests, together with the scribes and elders of the people, whom education and good manners, and a consideration of their character, one would have thought, should have taught better, were so malicious and sordid as to deride and scoff at him, saying,

42 He saved others; himself he cannot save: if he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

42 He pretended to do wonderful miracles in delivering others from distempers and death, and to be the Saviour of *Israel*; but now, poor creature, he is not able to deliver himself: If he be indeed the Messiah, as he vainly boasted, let him now shew his divine power by coming down from the cross in our presence; and then it will be time enough for us to believe in him.

43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

43 He indeed put on a great air of sanctity, and pretended to high confidence in God as his Father, calling himself his Son whom he had sent; but if there is any thing in all this, and God has any favour for him, or he has any interest in God, How comes it about that he does not deliver him, as ye see he does not? By this we may be sure that this man is an impostor.

44 *Yea,*

N O T E.

† This insulting demand intimated, as if all the unquestionable miracles he had wrought before, in healing the sick, and raising the dead, stood for nothing, and were not to be believed; unless he would do that, which, in

reality, would have been inconsistent with the great design of his coming into the world for the redemption of his people. See the note on *Luke xxiii. 35.*

; *Luke*

44 The thieves
slit which were
crucified with
him, cast the same
in his teeth.

45 Now from
the sixth hour
there was dark-
ness over all the
land unto the
ninth hour.

46 And about
the ninth hour
Jesus cried with a
loud voice, say-
ing, Eli, Eli, la-
ma sabachthani?
that is to say, My
God, my God,
why hast thou
forsaken me?

47 Some of
them that stood
there, when they
heard that, said,
This man calleth
for Elias.

44 Yea, so general was the run against Christ, that even one of the highwaymen likewise who were fellow-sufferers with him, was so daring, amidst his own agonies, and just at the point of death for his own crimes, as to vent his spleen against him in vile reproaches, for pretending to be the Messiah and the Son of God, and not saving himself and them †.

45 Now, as Jesus was hanging on the cross, there was a miraculous eclipse of the sun, which continued from twelve o'clock to three in the afternoon, and spread darkness over all the earth §, (οτι σκοτεινεν η ολη γη) to testify an abhorrence of the wickedness which was then in committing; and to intimate Christ's sore conflicts with divine justice and all the powers of darkness, and the withdrawalment of all comfort from him.

46 And about three o'clock, after a long and silent conflict in his own soul, Jesus, being in the utmost agony, even unto death, cried out with a loud and doleful voice, which shewed the extremity of his pain and anguish together with the strength and fervour of his spirit, saying, in the mixed dialect of Hebrew and Syriac, which was much used in those days, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*; that is, as those words signify, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Thereby at once expressing his faith and trust in God as his Father, and at the same time a most distressing sense of his delivering him up into the hands of his enemies, letting loose the powers of darkness upon him, withdrawing the comfortable discoveries of his delight in him, and impressing upon his soul a terrible sense of the wrath due to the sins of his people, which he was then bearing to make an atonement for them.

47 He no sooner spake these words, than some of the by-standers hearing them, and either ignorantly or wilfully mistaking their meaning, said, He calls for the prophet *Elias* to come and help him: Tho' he pretended to be the Messiah himself, he now finds that God, whom he

N O T E S.

† Luke xxiii. 39, 40. speaks of only one of the thieves who reviled our blessed Lord, while the other discovered a quite different temper, and rebuked his companion: But it is not unusual for the plural to be put for the singular number, where there are more of like characters spoken of than one: See several instances of this in the note on Matt. xxi. 7. However, some suppose that they both began at first to upbraid him; but that one of them, being soon convinced, by the grace and power of the dying Saviour, changed his tone, and spake honourably of him.

§ Luke xxiii. 40, 41, 42.

§ It is reported, says *Suidas*, that *Dionysus* saw it in *Egypt*; and knowing that it could not be a natural eclipse, because it was at the time of the full moon, and lasted three hours together, he, though a heathen philosopher, said, *Either the Divinity suffers, or sympathizes with a sufferer; or the frame of the world is dissolved.* Vid. *Pol. Synop. in loc.* But were we to suppose, with others, that this darkness was only over all the land of *Palestine*, it was no less miraculous.

† When

he styled his father, fails him; and would now be glad of any relief from *Elias*, who we own is to come before the Messiah to prepare his way.

43 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink.

49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether *Elias* will come to save him.

50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

51 And behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

48 And immediately one of them, instead of offering him a refreshing cordial, ran and filled a sponge with vinegar, and sticking it upon the top of a reed, or of a long stalk of hyssop, (*John* xix. 29. see the note there,) put it to his mouth for him to suck it, designing thereby to abuse and tease him, and do all that might be distasteful to him.

49 In the mean while, there was a great cry among the people, in a way of derision and insult, saying, Ah, let him alone, he calls for *Elias*; let us see whether that prophet, or any one in heaven or earth, will come and deliver him; his case is desperate, none can help him.

50 Soon after this, Jesus cried out again with a strong voice, saying, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit*, (*Luke* xxiii. 46.) and that just as he was expiring; to shew, that, notwithstanding all the terrible things he had endured †, nature still retained so much strength and vigour, that his life was not forced from him, but that he freely resigned it up at his Father's command, because, as he knew, the finishing point of the great work of redemption was then come: And so, by his own consent, he immediately breathed out his last, (*John* xix. 30.)

51 And behold the surprising miracles that attended his death! The vail of the temple, which separated the holy of holies from the court of the priests, was, by an invisible power, rent quite through, from the top to the bottom, in the sight of the priests, who just then were ministering there, it being the time of the evening sacrifice: God thereby signifying, that the temple at Jerusalem was no longer to be regarded as the sanctuary of the Lord; that all the mysteries pertaining to it were unfolded and fulfilled; that the partition-wall was broken down, and *Jews* and *Gentiles* were admitted to equal privileges in the new dispensation of grace founded on the death of Christ; and that a way was opened, thro' the vail of his flesh, for all true believers to enter into the holiest of all, even heaven itself, (*Heb.* x. 19, 20.) There was likewise so great an earthquake, as not only made the ground shake and tremble by its mighty shock, but split even the rocks themselves; God hereby signifying his detestation of the horrible wickedness of Christ's crucifiers, and the great alterations he was making in the church and the world, for the destruction of the power of Satan, and advancing of the kingdom of his dear Son.

52, 53. The

N O T E.

† When nature fails, it incapacitates one to speak, in the very article of death, with a loud voice; and *Pilate* wondered at our Lord's being so soon dead, *Mark* xv. 44.

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of saints which slept, arose,

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

55 And many women werethere (beholding afar off) which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:

56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

52, 53. The sepulchres also of the dead were by this earthquake shattered, and laid open; and, after Christ's resurrection, the bodies of many holy persons which lay interred in them, were raised by his power out of the sleep of death, (see the note on *John* v. 25.) and came forth from their tombs; and, for the proof of this remarkable fact, they going into *Jerusalem*, (which for many ages was called the holy city, because of God's special residence in his temple there,) shewed themselves alive to many of the people, † who might be acquainted with them before: God hereby signifying, that Christ, by his crucifixion and resurrection, had conquered death and the grave; and that, in the virtue thereof, all the saints, of which these were a sample, should rise again at the last day.

54 Now when the *Roman* captain and his soldiers, that were upon guard at the execution of Jesus, saw some of the awful prodigies which appeared at his death; though they were heatbens, and, like soldiers, hardened in their tempers, and had just before insulted and reviled him, they were in the utmost consternation and fear, and even constrained to give an honourable testimony to him, saying, Certainly, whatever has been said or thought to the contrary, this person was indeed the Son of God, as he professed to be; otherwise, God would never have thus concerned himself about him, and shewn his displeasure in this terrible manner at his being put to death.

55 There were likewise a company of women standing among the spectators at a distance from the cross, and looking upon their crucified Lord with weeping eyes and aching hearts, who, out of their great love to him, and desire to hear the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth, came along with him as far as from *Galilee*, the best part of an hundred miles or more, and who cheerfully ministered of their own substance to him for his accommodation in the way; but now, alas! could do nothing toward his relief or comfort.

56 Among these were *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had cast seven devils, (*Mark* xvi. 9.); and *Mary*, the mother of † *James the less* and of *Joseph*; and *Salome*, (*Mark* xv. 40.) the mother of *Zebedee's* two sons, viz. *James* and *John*; all faithful disciples, who stuck by him, as well as they could, to the last, and were eye-

N O T E.

† Some suppose that these saints were the patriarchs; others, that they were the Old-Testament martyrs; but it seems more natural to apprehend that they were such as *Simon*, *Zecharias*, and *John the Baptist*, who believed in Christ, and were known to many in *Jerusalem*.

† He was called *James the less*, to distinguish him from the other *James* the brother of *John*, because as is most likely, he was less in stature than the other. See *Hammond* on *Mark* xv. 40.

eye-witnesses of every thing that passed.

57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

57 Now in the evening, a little before sun-set, the sabbath then drawing near, there came a certain rich man, *Joseph of Arimathea* by name, an honourable counsellor (*Mark* xv. 43.) and a religious holy man, who was likewise one of *Jesus'* disciples, well affected in his heart toward him, tho' he had been too shy of publicly owning him, for fear of the sanhedrim, of which he was a member. (See the note on *Luke* xxiii. 50, 51.)

58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus; then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

58 This great man, being spirited on the present occasion to give an open testimony of his regard to Christ, went boldly to *Pilate*, who as chief magistrate had the disposal of the bodies of those that had been crucified; and begged leave to have the burying of the body of *Jesus*, that he might prevent its being ignominiously thrown into the earth with the two malefactors that were crucified with him: *Pilate* immediately granted his request, and accordingly sent a warrant for the body to be delivered to him.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

59, 60. By this authority, *Joseph* took it down from the cross; and, having it in possession, wrapped it round in a clean linen cloth, according to the common custom of decent funerals among the *Jews*; and then put it into a new sepulchre, which he had ordered to be cut out of a solid rock, and in which no corpse had ever been laid before; and, having blocked up the passage into it with a great stone, to complete the interment and secure the body, he returned home.

60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

61 And *Mary Magdalene*, with the other *Mary* the mother of *James* and *Joses*, followed *Jesus*, like true mourners, to his grave, and placed themselves over against it, to indulge their sorrow, and to take notice where his remains were disposed of; that, as soon as the sabbath should be past, they might testify their affection and respect by an embalment, (*Luke* xxiii. 56.)

62 Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

62 Now the next day, which was the *Jews* sabbath in their passover-week, being the day after that in which they used to prepare for it, the chief priests and *Pharisees*, who at other times seemed to be the most scrupulous, and even superstitious observers of its ceremonial rites, and often quarrelled with Christ for his acts of divine power and mercy on that day, assembled together, and went in a body to *Pilate*, with a petition, saying,

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while

63 Sir, † we well remember, that this impostor (as they

N O T E.

† Christ often said this to his disciples: But I do not find any account of his declaring it expressly to the common people or the rulers.

lers of the *Jews*; unless when he spoke of the temple of his body, *John* ii. 19, 21. And if they here refer to what he then said, how par-

while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as you can.

66 So they went and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

they blasphemously called the Amen, the faithful and true witness) said, whilst he was living, That, tho' he should be crucified, he would rise again from the dead & in three days.

64 We therefore entreat the favour of you to order a sufficient number of soldiers to guard the sepulchre, till the three days be expired; lest, to carry on the deceit, his disciples should go in the night and steal away his corpse, and then report among the people, that, according to his own prediction, he is risen from the dead: For, if this should happen, the last error, in not taking effectual care to prevent the trick, would be of more mischievous consequence than the first which we have been guilty of in suffering him to live and preach so long: This will be thought a mighty confirmation of his character; and people will be in more danger of being seduced by the doctrine he taught, than ever.

65 Pilate, to gratify the ridiculous fears they pretended to have about such a vain and hazardous attempt of the poor timorous disciples, replied, Ye have a guard of your own in the tower of *Antonia*, for the service of the temple; go and detach from them as many soldiers as ye please, and such as ye yourselves can most depend upon; let them to watch the sepulchre, and use all the precautions ye are capable of to secure it, that ye may be sure whether he rises again to life or not.

66 Accordingly they went and did their utmost to make all things safe, sealing the stone, and placing a band of soldiers there to observe and guard it §.

RECOLLECTIONS.

The hideous nature of sin may be seen in the treachery of *Judas*; in the invidious false accusations of the high-priest and others; in the unrighteous judgment of *Pilate*, against the convictions of his own conscience; in the vile abuses of the officers, soldiers, and mob, all combining against our blessed Lord; and in the whole of the complicated sufferings he endured to make reconciliation for iniquity. Oh what is man! how fickle, wicked, and vain! one day crying *Hosanna to the Son of David*; and a few days after, *Crucify him, crucify him; release to us not this man, but Barabbas*! But whoever were the criminal instruments of cruelty,

NOTES.

perverse and iniquitous was their construction of these words, as relating to the temple at *Jerusalem*, when he was upon his trial before the council Chap. xxvi. 61.

‡ After three days, signifies after the commencement of the third day; Luke ii. 44, 45, 46: And so it is of the same import with, in three days, and on the third day; the expressions being used promiscuously, one for the other, *Matth.* xvi. 21. *Mark* viii. 31. *Luke* ix. 22 and *John* ii. 19 And our language is akin to this, when we call that a *serfian* ague, which comes every other day. See the note on *Matth.* xii. 40. and Bishop

Pearson's note on art. 5. of the Creed.

§ They set *Pilate's* signet, or the public seal of the sanhedrim, or some other seal, upon a fastening which they had put to the stone: And all this uncommon caution was overruled, by the providence of God, to give the strongest proof of the reality of Christ's ensuing resurrection: since there could be no room for the least suspicion of a deceit, when it should be found, that his body was raised out of a new tomb, where there was no other corpse, and this a tomb hewn out of a rock, the mouth of which was secured by a great stone, under a seal, and a guard of soldiers.

cruelty, and whatsoever were the righteous terrors of God against him, the transgressions of his people were the procuring cause of all. Had it not been for their sins, he had never been falsely accused, reproached and insulted, crowned with thorns, scourged, spit upon, and crucified, and had never been filled with bitter anguish under his Father's desertions: But the prophecies of a suffering Saviour were then to be fulfilled in him; and God over-ruled and ordered all things to accomplish the eternal counsel of his will for the redemption of the church, and at the same time to give an honourable testimony to Christ's personal innocence and excellence, and to his character as his Son and the true Messiah. This he did, by the mouths of his enemies themselves; by the astonishing miraculous indications of his own abhorrence of them; and approbation of him; and by an exact accomplishment of scripture prophecies in him: And oh with what submission, patience and willingness, did he yield to the worst that befel him according to his Father's will! With what undaunted courage did he witness a good confession, when called to it! and what care did Providence take to turn his enemies over-solicitous precautions into means of making it more unquestionably evident that he is truly risen from the dead! How should we detest all iniquity; and every thought of preferring a *Barabbas*, or any thing else, to Christ! and how should we dread imprecating, or entailing, God's curse upon us, like the *Jews*; or being left to *Judas'* repentance, and to the terrible vengeance that followed in!—How dear should a dying Saviour be to us! And how patient should his disciples be under all injuries for his sake, who suffered so many for theirs! And, like the good women, that abode by him to the last, how resolutely and faithfully should we follow him through all difficulties and dangers, and shew our affection to him all our days!

C H A P. XXVIII.

Christ's resurrection, 1,—8. His appearance to the women, 9, 10. The ridiculous contrivance of the Jews to stifle the belief of his resurrection, 11,—15. His appearance to the eleven, and giving them their commission, 16,—20.

TEXT.

IN the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.

2 And behold, there was great a

PARAPHRASE.

NOW after the Jewish sabbath was ended †, early in the morning of the first day of the week, about break of day, *Mary Magdalene*, and *Mary* the mother of *James*, having bought sweet spices, (*Mark* xvi. 1.) set out to see whether the sepulchre were as they left it; and, if opportunity offered, to embalm the body of Jesus.

2 And while they were consulting in the way, (*Mark* xvi. 3.) how to get the heavy stone removed, which they had seen rolled against the mouth of the sepulchre, behold a surprising event! There was an exceeding great

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N O T E.

† Christ was buried on the latter part of the sixth day of the week, (*chap.* xxvii. 61.) lay in the grave all the seventh day, and rose on the morning of the first day of the following week, which, reckoning from four o'clock on the Friday evening, to four on the Lord's-day morning, was thirty-six hours after he had been buried, and which answered his own and some other predictions about the time of his resurrection on the third day. This was long enough to prove undeniably,

that he was really dead; but not so long as to necessitate the putrefaction of his body, which was not to see corruption, *Psal.* xvi. 10. or as to suffer the thoughts and discourse about his death to begin to die among the people before he should rise again. And such is the wisdom and grace of God, that he would not have the glorious fruits and consequences of this grand event delayed, after his justice was fully satisfied by the death of his Son.

earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

concussion of the earth †, resembling what will be at the general resurrection; and God gave testimony to his Son, to his justice's being satisfied by his sufferings and death, and to his legally discharging him from the prison of the grave; for a glorious angel was dispatched, as an officer from heaven, with a commission, not to raise him from the dead, which was done by his own and his Father's power, but to roll back the stone, as an evidence that God and angels approved of his discharge: And when the angel had done this, he sat in a visible form upon the stone, ready to comfort and encourage the women, who, as well as the watch, (ver. 4.) saw him sitting there §.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

3 The countenance of this angel was exceeding illustrious, glittering like the brightness of lightening, and his garments shone with a light which made them appear as white as snow.

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

4 And the soldiers who were set to watch the sepulchre were so amazed at the sight of this heavenly messenger, that they trembled, and were struck with such terror, as overwhelmed their stout hearts, and made them look as pale and spiritless as dead men.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

5 And as the good women were likewise frightened at the sight, (*Mark xvi. 5.*) the angel immediately spake, in a tender and encouraging manner, to them, saying, Do not ye give way to any fears; there is no reason why ye should be terrified like the soldiers, or should apprehend any danger; for I know that ye are hearty friends to Jesus, and are come hither with a good design, to seek for him, and to testify your affection to him, who was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said: come, see the place where the Lord lay.

6 He is no longer here, in the state of the dead, as ye sorrowfully suppose; for he is really risen to life again, according to what he told you whilst he was with you: Come along with me †, examine the sepulchre, and behold with your own eyes, that there is no corpse in the place where the body of your Lord and ours lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples

7 And as his word, and your own eye-sight according to it, are plain evidences of his resurrection, go with all possible speed, and let his disconsolate disciples know

N O T E S.

† How could the soldiers be supposed to continue sleeping, amidst such a terrible commotion as this, if they had been asleep before, as was afterwards pretended, ver. 13.?

§ The evangelists, *Luke xxiv. 4.* and *John xx. 12.* speak of two angels that appeared on this occasion; but it seems as if only one of them appeared sitting on the stone, without the sepulchre, and then going into it, was seen with another angel, sitting one where

the head, and the other where the feet of the body of Jesus had lain.

† Dr Clarke very probably conjectures, that at the angel's speaking these words, he rose up, and going before the women into the sepulchre, said, Come and see the place where the Lord lay; which plainly reconciles what St John relates, *John xx. 12.* this being one of the two angels there mentioned.

disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, and did run to bring his disciples word.

9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came, and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave

know that he is certainly risen from the dead; and, for the further confirmation of this to yourselves and them, observe, and be sure to tell them, (*Mark xvi. 7.*) that he will go before, and appear to them in *Galilee*, at a great distance from *Jerusalem*, where he used to converse with them, and where they may meet together without fear of danger from their enemies; there shall they all see him: Remember, I have faithfully discharged my trust in assuring you of this, and see that ye discharge yours in reporting it to them; it shall surely come to pass according to my word.

8 Then the women, recollecting what Christ had said about his resurrection, (*Luke xxiv. 8.*) immediately went from the sepulchre, with awful surprise at what they had seen, and with abundance of joy at what they had heard, and made all the haste they could to carry the glad tidings to the disciples. (But see the note on *John xx. 2.*)

9 And, as they were going upon this errand, Jesus himself unexpectedly met them in the way, and saluted them, saying, All happiness attend you; rejoice and be exceeding glad: And they, being satisfied that it was Jesus, fell down before him with prostrate reverence, took hold of his feet to express their humble affection to him and earnest desire not to let him go, and paid him their solemn adorations as their risen Saviour.

10 Then Jesus encouraged and comforted them, saying, Do not be surprised, nor apprehend any danger or delusion; but, as the angel ordered you, go to my disciples, whom I still own as my brethren, tho' they so lately disowned and forsook me, and bid them make the best of their way out of *Judea* into *Galilee*; and there I will appear to them, that they may have an ocular demonstration of my being risen indeed.

11 Now as soon as the women departed from the sepulchre, behold how the providence of God ordered the very enemies of Jesus to bear witness to his resurrection! Some of chief note and authority among the soldiers who were appointed to watch the sepulchre, went into *Jerusalem*, and acquainted the chief priests how terribly they had been frightened with the earthquake and with the appearance of an angel; and that the stone was rolled away from the mouth of the sepulchre, and the body of Jesus was gone.

12 Upon this, the chief priests and elders met together; and instead of yielding to conviction, and repenting of their horrible crime in crucifying Christ, they were so desperately hardened in their wickedness, that they consulted how to sham the evidence; in order to

gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

which, covetous as they were, they spared no cost, but bribed the soldiers with a great sum of hush-money, and put a ridiculous lie into their mouths, saying,

13 "Conceal the account of what ye saw and heard, and give it out, that, while ye happened to fall asleep, the disciples of Jesus came in the night and stole his body away:" Little considering that this story confused itself, since, if they were all asleep, they could not know what was doing in the mean time; and if any of them were awake, they would soon have alarmed the rest, and prevented such an attempt.

14 And that the soldiers might venture to make this report without fear of punishment for their neglect of duty in sleeping while they were upon guard, the chief priests and elders, who, had this story been true, would have been the forwardest of all others to get them severely punished, promised, that, in case it should reach *Pilate's* ears, and he should go about to call them to an account for it, they would undertake to stand their friends, would use all their interest with him, which was very great, to pass it by, and would certainly save them harmless.

15 Accordingly the soldiers, who had lately seen what an ascendancy they had over him in the prosecution of Jesus, accepted the bribe, and strictly obeyed these orders, tho' they had been so terrified just before at the earthquake and vision of the angel: And this senseless story of the disciples stealing away the body of Jesus by night, was so industriously propagated, and encouraged by the sanhedrim and the unbelieving *Jews*, that it became a common report among them for many years, tho' they never attempted to prove it upon the disciples, or to prosecute them on that account, or to object this to them, when they came to preach a risen Saviour.

16 While these things were transacting at *Jerusalem*, the eleven apostles followed their instructions, and took a long journey to a mountain in *Galilee* †, where Jesus had appointed a general rendezvous of his disciples, that he might shew himself to them all together.

17 And when they saw him, they knew him to be the very same person whom they had used to converse with before his death; and being thereby satisfied of the truth of his resurrection, and of all that he had ever said of himself as the Son of God and the Saviour of *Israel*, they in a solemn manner paid divine worship to him: But there were some among them, whose faith at first was weak and wavering, and who could not immediately

N O T E.

† This was probably mount *Tabor*, where he had been before transfigured; and it seems to have been here that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once. 1 Cor. xv. 6.

18 And Jesus came, and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen.

ately persuade themselves that he was risen from the dead.

18 And Jesus, for their further satisfaction, drew near, and speaking to the apostles in a familiar, tho' authoritative manner, said, God my Father has now fully vested me in all the powers of my office as the Messiah ; he has given me, under that character, universal and absolute authority over all persons and things both in heaven and earth, as the reward of my sufferings, and in pursuance of my great design of *giving eternal life to as many as he has given me*, (John xvii. 2.)

19 Go ye therefore, spread yourselves abroad by virtue of my commission, and with a dependence on my power and grace ; and disciple all the nations of the earth, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, by preaching the gospel to them wherever ye go ; introduce them as subjects into my kingdom †, and as scholars into my school, by a sacred rite of mine own appointment, to be continued thro' the gospel-dispensation, baptizing them with water *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, i. e. baptizing them by the authority, and into the faith, profession, and worship, of the eternal Father, Son, and Spirit, to whom they are to be devoted equally and alike, as three divine Persons, and the one God of the Christian religion, whose name, answerable to their nature, is one, in opposition to all other Gods.

20 And further to complete their discipleship, lead them into the full extent of their privileges and obligations according to my gospel ; teaching them to observe, and (επιτη) carefully to preserve, in faith and practice, all the doctrines and duties, both moral and positive, and none but those, which I have given you in charge to make known to them, and to enjoin upon them : And tho', as to my corporal presence, I am leaving this world and going to the Father ; yet, while ye thus keep close to my commission, as God was with *Moses*, so am I by my spiritual presence with you, and will be so at all times, wherever ye may be, to protect, counsel, assist, and succeed you ; and I will continue to be present with you, and your successors in the gospel-ministry, thro' all ages, to the end of the world : So it shall be

N O T E.

† It seems to me, that *μαθητεύειν πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, disciple all nations*, relates to the whole design of Christ's commission for making disciples to him ; and that *βαπτίζοντες, and διδάσκοντες αὐτοὺς, baptizing, and teaching them*, are mentioned as particular branches of that general design, the order of which was to be determined by the circumstances of things : And these indeed made it necessary, that in disciplining adult *Jews* and *Hea-*

thens, they should be taught before they were baptized ; But other circumstances, in the settled state of the gospel-kingdom, make it as necessary, that in disciplining the children of believers, they should be first baptized, and afterwards taught, as the children of *Jews*, and of proselytes to their religion, were first circumcised, and when they grew up were instructed in the faith of the God of *Israel*.

be †; and so let all faithful ministers expect it to be, as they cannot but desire that it may be.

RECOLLECTIONS.

As Christ was delivered for our offences, so he was raised again for our justification. His resurrection was as evident as could be necessary; God himself bore witness to it by a miraculous earthquake; angels and men, friends and enemies, who could not be deceived in so plain a case, united in their testimony to it; and nothing but the most silly, loose, and self-contradictory pretence for want of a better, was ever offered against it by the most inveterate enemies of that age among the *Jews*: Yea, the backwardness of Christ's own disciples to give credit to it, till their unbelief was overcome by irresistible evidence, is a further confirmation of it. The unquestionable proof of this fact is a high demonstration that the whole scheme of Christian religion is divine; that all the glorious characters, offices, and powers, which Christ ever claimed, were his due; that God's justice is satisfied; and that our faith and hope may be securely placed in him: This is the safety and joy of them that seek Jesus; but will be the terror and confusion of his enemies.—How happy are they whom Christ will own for his brethren! How gracious are his visits, how rich his consolations to them under all their troubles! and how mercifully does he condescend, even to the most doubting among them! On the other hand, to what surprising lengths of folly and hardness, wickedness and falsehood, do they run, who set themselves against him, and are abandoned of him!—But behold the blessed tidings of gospel-grace to sinners of all ranks and nations! The crucified and risen Jesus has all power in his hands for saving work; and has sent forth his servants with his commission to proclaim it, and with his promise to assist and succeed them in it: Let them observe his charge, and hope in his word; and let their hearers learn, and yield to his authority, look for his presence in the ways of his own appointment, and devote themselves and theirs to the sacred Three, as the one eternal God, in whose name they ought to be baptized; and let us all fall down and worship him, saying, *Amen*.

N O T E.

† It is uncertain whether *Amen* be Christ's or the evangelist's word; and therefore the paraphrase takes in the sense which both the suppositions require.

A PRACTICAL

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION

OF THE Evangelist M A R K,

In the form of a PARAPHRASE.

C H A P. I.

John the Baptist's office, 1,—8. Christ's baptism, 9,—11. His temptation and preaching, 12,—15. His calling disciples, 16,—20. The people's astonishment at his doctrine, 21, 22. His miracles, in curing a possessed man, 23,—28.; and Peter's mother-in-law, with all that came to him, 29,—39.; and a leper, 40,—45.

TEXT.

THE begin-
ning of the
gospel of Jesus
Christ the Son of
God;

1 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance,

PARAPHRASE.

THIS sacred history begins with an account of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the anointed Saviour, who was the only begotten Son of God;

2 The ushering in of whose appearance and preaching was by the ministry of *John the Baptist*, according to ancient predictions of the prophets: For *Malachi* represents God the Father as speaking of him, and saying, (chap. iii. 1.) *Behold, I send my messenger, whose special office, like that of a forerunner, is, to go just before thee, (meaning the Messiah;) and he, by his doctrine and baptism, shall prepare the way for thy appearing.* (See the note on *Mat. xi. 10.*)

3 And the evangelical prophet *Isaiah*, long before, speaking of the same person, said, (chap. xl. 3.) *The voice of one, who will hereafter cry in the wilderness, shall be in this manner, "Let my doctrine and baptism be entertained, relating to the Messiah's kingdom, that ye may be ready to receive him, who is the Lord Jehovah, and is just at hand to appear in the flesh among you; and that ye may lay aside the perverse prejudices which would oppose his access to your hearts."*

4 According to these prophecies, *John the Baptist* began his ministry in the less populous parts of *Judea*, (*Mat. iii. 1.*) a little before Christ was to enter on his public office; and he preached to the people the doctrine of repentance, upon the encouragement of the ap-
proach-

ness; for the remission of sins.

proaching dispensation of grace, in order to their obtaining forgiveness of sins, thro' the Saviour, who was coming to set up his kingdom among them; he likewise baptized them with water, that he might signify all this by a visible sign, might lay the baptized under a special obligation of regarding it, and might raise their hopes of finding mercy in this way.

3 And there went out unto him all the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

5 And the general expectation of the Messiah's appearing in those days brought vast multitudes to him, from all the cities, towns, and villages of *Judea*, and from *Jerusalem* itself; and all that professed repentance for their sins were publicly baptized by him in the river called *Jordan*, they going a little way into its shallows, for the greater convenience and expedition of *John's* applying the water to them. (See the note on *Mat. iii. 6.*)

6 And John was clothed with camels hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey:

6 Now this *John* lived and behaved answerable to the doctrine he preached: He wore the habit of a mortified prophet, which was a coarse garment made of camels hair, and was girt about his waste with a leathern girdle; and his common diet was of the meanest sort, such as locusts and wild honey, which were plentifully found in that wilderness. (See the note on *Mat. iii. 4.*)

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me; the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.

7 And the great point he aimed at in his preaching, was to assure the people, that not he himself, but another, then ready to appear, was the promised and expected Messiah, saying, There is one of far superior authority, power and dignity to myself, whose forerunner I am, with whom I do not deserve to be once compared, and for whom I am utterly unworthy to perform even the meanest offices, such as untying his shoes or carrying them after him: And as his person, so his administrations are every way more excellent than mine.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

8 I indeed am come to baptize you with water, as an external sign of inward purity; and this is all that I can do: But the incomparably more excellent Person, who comes after me, shall baptize many of you with an efficacious effusion of the Holy Spirit, to confirm his doctrine, and to sanctify and cleanse you from your iniquities.

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

9 While *John* was in this manner preaching and baptizing, Jesus himself took an opportunity of coming from the place of his usual abode in *Nazareth*, a city of *Galilee*, and was baptized by him at *Jordan*, († *ἐν τῇ ἰσχυρίᾳ*;) that he might fulfil all righteousness by an entire compliance with every ordinance of God.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens

10 And immediately as he was coming up the ascent from the water (*ἀνορύσσας*;) he beheld the heavens parted

N O T E.

† The preposition *ἐν* very commonly signifies *at*, as well as *in*.

was opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.

parted asunder as when it lighteneth, and the Holy Spirit coming down, and hovering over his head like a dove, (*ὡς περιστερά*;) to distinguish him from all others by a special miraculous testimony of God's favour from heaven, and in token of his being then anointed with the Holy Ghost. (See the note on *Mat. iii. 16.*)

11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

11 And, together with this extraordinary appearance, there was an audible voice, directed to Christ, from the excellent glory, saying, 'Thou art, by way of eminence and peculiarity, my dearly beloved Son, in whose person and undertakings I am greatly delighted, and in whom I graciously accept all that believe in thee, being well pleased with thee for thine own sake, and with all that are in thee for thy sake too.'

12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

12 Presently after he was thus baptized, and owned, and filled with the Holy Ghost, this good Spirit moved him, by a powerful impulse, to retire into a still less inhabited part of the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

13 And he continued there forty days and forty nights, assaulted with various temptations of Satan, which he overcame; and surrounded with savage beasts, of which he remained unhurt; and at length the blessed angels, who are his servants, came to congratulate him upon his glorious victories, and to supply him with proper food after his great conflicts and long fasting. (*Matth. iv. 2.*)

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

14 While *John the Baptist* continued publicly to exercise his ministry, our Lord shewed himself but little to the world: But as soon as *Herod* had shut up *John* in prison, and stopped his mouth, Jesus would not suffer the word of God to be bound; but came himself into *Galilee*, publishing thro' all that country the holy gospel of the spiritual kingdom which he was come to set up in the world.

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

15 And to shew the harmony between his own and *John's* ministry, he began with saying, The set time appointed of God promised to the fathers, predicted by the prophets, pointed out by *John*, expected by the *Jews*, and longed for by the faithful in *Israel*, is now come, for the manifestation of the Messiah: The Judaical rites and ceremonies, carnal ordinances, and worldly sanctuary, are in a little while to cease; and a spiritual, holy, and heavenly kingdom, is to be set up, in all its purity and glory, as the last dispensation of mercy to sinful men: According therefore to the design, and by the grace, of this kingdom, which can never be moved, repent of your violations of God's law, and of all your false confidences in yourselves; and embrace the blessed doctrine of salvation, by belie-

ving in me, as made known therein, for the remission of your sins and obtaining eternal life.

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: (for they were fishers.)

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

16 Now as he was travelling about to preach the gospel, and was passing by the lake of *Gennesareth*, he took notice of two men, *Simon* and *Andrew*, who were brethren, and, being fishermen, were casting their net into the lake. (See the note on *Luke* v. 2.)

17 And Jesus, designing to make them apostles, spake to them, saying, Follow me, by submitting to my authority, embracing my doctrine, and imitating my example; and I will employ you in a more excellent and noble work than that of catching fish out of the sea; ye shall have the honour and the pleasure of fishing for immortal souls, and of being instrumental in drawing them out of a state of sin and misery into a state of salvation.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

18 And his words were with such power, that they, in obedience to his call, immediately left their fishing trade, and became not only his disciples †, but from that time forward his constant attendants, devoted to his service for the good of souls.

19 Then, going a little further, he observed two more, who were likewise fishermen and brethren, viz. *James* and *John*, the sons of *Zebedee*, who were also employed in their secular trade, being in a boat mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath-day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

20 And he spake in like manner with divine energy to their hearts, by which he made them a willing people; and immediately, without conferring with flesh and blood, or consulting their temporal interests, they, leaving their Father *Zebedee* and the hired servants in the boat, and giving up all the profits of their trade, went ashore, and became Christ's constant followers, to receive his instructions and do his will.

21 All these went along with Jesus, as his disciples, to *Capernaum*; and the first sabbath after they entered that great city, he went into one of their synagogues or places of public worship, and preached the gospel of his kingdom there. (See the note on *Luke* iv. 16.)

22 And the common people were amazed at the excellence of his discourse: For such was the nature of his doctrine, and the manner of his delivering it, that they thought he spoke evident and important things, with surprising majesty and divine-like authority, and not

N O T E.

† They had believed in him, and on occasions followed him as his disciples, before; *John* i. 40, 41, 42. But now they were called to be his constant followers, in order to his

training them up for the apostleship; and therefore they quitted their secular business, and devoted themselves entirely to his service.

not uncertain traditions according to the trifling formal custom of their rabbies.

13 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

23 Now, among others in the synagogue, there was a man possessed of an evil spirit, which gave our blessed Lord a proper opportunity of confirming his glorious gospel by a remarkable miracle; for the devil, making use of this man's organs of speech, cried out aloud, like one filled with consternation and terror, at the thoughts of Christ's power over him,

14 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the holy One of God.

24 Saying, in a style of reproach, and yet in a way of dread, O thou Jesus of Nazareth, do not exert thy power against us the infernal spirits, to disturb or dispossess us; we are no match for thee, and do not care to have any thing to do with thee: What! art thou come to destroy our dominion over men, which we have so long been in possession of, and are still permitted to exercise in this world? I too well know, that thou art the Messiah, the Son of God; and am contented to own this, if thou wilt but let us alone.

15 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

25 But as Jesus would not be soothed by the devil's flatteries, nor receive testimony from him as if he were in confederacy with him, he exerted his divine power and authority; and, with a severe reprimand, ordered him to say no more about what he was, but to quit possession of the man, tho' ever so much against his will.

16 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

26 The evil spirit no sooner heard this, but he was filled with rage to think that he must be forced to yield; and, immediately throwing the poor man into terrible convulsions, as if he would have torn him to pieces, he made a hideous outcry, to express his own reluctance, and to frighten the people; and so came out of the man, who, in that instant, was perfectly healed.

17 And they were all amazed, inasmuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

27 And all the multitude were struck with astonishment to such a degree, that they could not forbear saying one to another, What a surprising power over devils is this? And what divine and heavenly doctrine must it be which this Person teaches beyond all that we ever heard, and which he thus confirms beyond all that we ever saw before? For he does not pray like a dependent, nor use a great many ceremonies like our exorcists, in casting out evil spirits; but speaks like a sovereign, with the authority and majesty of a God; and such power goes along with his commanding words, that the devils themselves are forced to obey him!

18 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

28 And this so wonderfully raised his reputation among them, that they presently spread the fame of his extraordinary doctrine and miracles thro' all Galilee and the neighbouring countries round about.

29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her.

31 And became and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils, and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto

29 Immediately after this, Jesus coming out of the synagogue with his disciples *Peter* and *Andrew*, *James* and *John*, they went into the house at *Capernaum* where *Peter* and his brother *Andrew* dwelt.

30 And *Peter's* wife's mother being at that time sick of a fever, some of the company acquainted Jesus with it, begging that he who had done so great things for others, would please to shew his compassion in healing her. (*Luke* iv. 38.)

31 Thereupon, going into the room where she lay, he took hold of her hand and raised her up; and his divine power wrought so effectually at the same time, that the fever immediately ceased, and she was in an instant restored to such a degree of health and strength, that she went about the business of the house, and managed the entertainment which was made for him and the family, as if nothing had ailed her before.

32 And after sun-setting, when the sabbath was ended, according to the *Jewish* way of computing it from evening to evening; the people then thinking themselves at liberty to carry about their sick, and meeting with no obstruction to it from the *Pharisees*, brought abundance of diseased persons, and such as were possessed with devils, that he might heal them.

33 And there was a vast concourse of people from all parts of the city, who were gathered about the door of *Peter's* house, where Jesus was, to lay their sick before him, and see what he would do unto them.

34 And in the greatness of his power and goodness, he, like the Sovereign Lord of life and health, perfectly cured great multitudes that were sick of various kinds of diseases; and dispossessed many devils, and would not permit those evil spirits to speak in a way of opposition to him, no; nor to proceed in their declarations that they knew him, (or, *οτι ονουν αυτον*.) he not needing their testimony, nor being willing to encourage it, lest any should make a bad construction of it as if he acted in concert with them.

35 Very early the following morning, long before break of day, Christ got up and went into a solitary place for retirement; where being alone, free from all company, he spent some time in secret prayer. (See the note on *Luke* iv. 42.)

36 Then *Peter* and the other disciples his companions, perceiving that Jesus had withdrawn himself, went out to search after him.

37 And upon their finding him they told him, that, whilst he was retiring there, a great multitude of people were

unto him, All men seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also : for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and said unto him, I will ; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away ;

44 And said unto him, See thou say nothing to any man ; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

were inquiring after him, with earnest desire to see him again, and enjoy more of his blessed company.

38 He replied, I must not, for the present, return to abide with them ; come with me to the neighbouring towns and villages, where I may likewise preach the gospel, as well at *Capernaum* : For my commission from my Father is not restrained to one particular city ; but I am sent to go about doing good, by my doctrine and miracles, whilst I continue on earth.

39 Accordingly he, travelling thro' all *Galilee*, preached in their synagogues wherever he came ; and confirmed his excellent doctrine, by casting out devils, as well as performing many other miraculous cures.

40 And among the rest, while he was in this country, (*Luke v. 12.* see the note there,) a certain leprous person came to him ; and, kneeling down in all humility before him, earnestly besought his mercy, saying, Such is thy power, and so great and many are the wonderful cures which thou hast wrought, that I am fully persuaded, desperate as my case is, if it seem good unto thee, thou canst easily heal me.

41 And Jesus, being full of tender compassion toward this miserable creature, immediately stretched out his hand, and laid it upon him, to shew that he was a prophet, and even Lord of the law, who was not bound by its ceremonial rites, which forbid the touching of a leper ; and said unto him, I am as willing as I am able, or as you can wish me to be : I will that your desire be fulfilled ; I say unto thee, Be thou cleansed from thy leprosy.

42 These words were no sooner pronounced, but they became effectual ; what he spake was done ; in that very instant the leprosy was removed, and the man was thoroughly healed.

43 Upon this, Jesus gave him a strict charge to behave suitable to the signal mercy he had received, lest a worse evil than the leprosy from which he was cleansed should come upon him ; and so dismissed him.

44 And to decline every thing that looked like ostentation or raising a tumult, as also to prevent the rage and envy of the *Pharisees* as far as possible, Jesus said to him, Do not divulge among the people what I have done to you ; but, as the law direct, (*Lev. xiii. 2, &c.*) go and present yourself to the priest, that he may examine and give judgment in your case ; and, upon his acknowledging you to be clean, offer the sacrifice of divine appointment in the writings of *Moses*, for purification, in token of your thankfulness to God, (*Lev.*

xiv. 4, &c.) He commanded him to take this course, as an unexceptionable evidence to the *Jews* of the reality of the miracle, of his own divine power in working it, and of his observing the law of *Moses*; and as a testimony against them who afterwards should reject him.

43 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

45 But the man was so transported with joy at the surprising mercy he had received, that, forgetting one part of Christ's charge, he could not tell how to forbear proclaiming the cure, wherever he came, for the honour of his kind Benefactor, who was indeed worthy to be praised. And the people, upon knowing of it, came in such prodigious multitudes to see, and hear, and be healed by Jesus, (*Luke* v. 15.) that, for a considerable time, it was so inconvenient for him to go publicly into any town, and gave so much umbrage to his enemies, as put him upon retiring into solitary places, where he spent much of his time in prayer, (*Luke* v. 16.) but wherever the people heard he was, they travelled from all parts, far and near, to come to him.

RECOLLECTIONS.

The law and the prophets were till *John*, whose ministry was the dawn of the gospel day: O glorious day of light and joy to lost sinners! The sum of the evangelical doctrine concerning Christ is, that he is the anointed Saviour, and the Son of God; and the sum of what it calls us to is, repentance toward God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. How fully are these blessed truths established by many witnesses! by Christ's own and *John's* preaching; by his Father's testimony, his Spirit's notification, and his own divine miracles and baptizing with the Holy Ghost; by his victory over Satan; by angels ministering to him; and by the concurring testimony of the Evangelists, who agree in their report about these things! And the great design of all is, to prepare the way of the Lord that he may be received into the heart. How is he to be admired of all that are about him! They that know his name, will think well of him, and follow hard after him. And oh with what majesty and power does he speak, by his word and Spirit! How easily can he reach the heart, dethrone the devil, and heal the leprosy and sicknesses of our souls! How cheerfully do his people yield, and how is Satan forced to fly, in the day of his power! Nothing is too hard for him to do: And we need not go far to seek him now, as many were forced to do in the days of his flesh; but may find him spiritually present wherever we are, whether engaged in the lawful business of life, as the disciples were when he called them; or in secret prayer, after his own example; or in assemblies together in his name, to speak to him and hear from him: And we should follow him for whatever we want; for faith will ever find him as willing as he is able to help us: And when he has shewn us mercy, how should we remember to own and honour him, by obeying his commands!

C H A P. II.

Jesus heals one sick of the palsy, 1,—12. Calls Matthew from the receipt of custom, and vindicates his own conduct in eating with publicans and sinners, 13,—17. Justifies his disciples not fasting for the present, 18,—22.; and their plucking ears of corn on the sabbath-day, 23,—28.

TEXT.

AND again he entered into Capernaum after some days, and it was notified that he was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

3 And they came unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord, having continued for some time in places remote from populous towns, privately returned to Capernaum; but a rumour was soon spread thro' the city, that he was come to the house of Peter, where he had been before. (Chap. i. 29.)

2 And presently crowds of people flocked thither; so that not only the house was too little to contain them, but many could not so much as get near to the door: And Christ, making no distinction of places for religious worship, published the gospel to as many of them as could come within hearing.

3 And while he was preaching, his miracles having made him very famous, there came four men, carrying upon their shoulders a paralytic in his bed, whose distemper had so lamed and enfeebled him that he was unable to help himself.

4 And finding the crowd so great, that there was no possibility of pressing thro' it, and in that way to get near to Jesus, they contrived another method to come at him: And, in the eagerness of their desire to obtain a cure, they spared no pains; but † got up on the outside of the house, and uncovered the top of it, and then let down the sick man in his bed through the roof, into the room where our blessed Lord was preaching to the multitude.

5 When Christ perceived the extraordinary faith of the paralytic, and of his friends, that broke thro' such great difficulties, and proceeded with such resolution, to lay him at his feet for healing; he, to shew his approbation of it, said, with wonderful majesty and mercy, to the man sick of the palsy, Son, be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven; and it shall be unto thee according to thy faith.

6 But, as soon as he spake these gracious words, some of the Jewish doctors then present perversely cavilled in their own minds, reasoning after this manner against them:

7 What horrid blasphemy is this man guilty of, in pretending to such a power as is undoubtedly the peculiar prerogative of Deity! For who but God himself can forgive sins? It is only his right, which cannot be

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NOTE.

† As the houses of the Jews were usually low-built with a flat roof, and they often had stairs or fixed ladders on the outside; so, for the convenience of going up and down within side of the house, they, it seems, had a trap-door or a lattice with a covering (2 Kings i. 1.) on the flat of the roof: And so the

friends of this sick man might carry him up thither, and forcing open the door, which was fastened within, might convey him through this break of the roof, into the room where Jesus was preaching to the people. See the notes on Matt. x. 29. and xiv. 17. and Lightf. Har. Heb. in loc.

communicated to any creature whatsoever.

8 And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit, that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth, to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all, insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

13 And he went forth again by the sea-side, and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi, the son of Alphæus, sitting at the receipt of cu-

8 Then Jesus, as perfectly knowing in himself what were the most secret murmurings of their hearts as if they had spoke them out ever so plainly in his hearing, immediately said to them, Why do ye entertain such injurious and malicious reasonings in your thoughts against me, as if I were guilty of blasphemy in saying this?

9 Let me ask you, Which is easiest? to forgive this man's sins, that are the original cause of all distempers; or to take off their effect, by healing his desperate disease, and, by an absolute power in myself, enabling him to rise and walk with such strength as to carry his own bed? Cannot he who does one of these, as easily do the other likewise?

10, 11. But to give you an evident proof that I, who am truly a man and the promised Messiah, have absolute power and authority in myself, even whilst I am on earth, to forgive sins, I will take off this effect of sin, in such a sovereign manner as is peculiar to God: Then turning to the man sick of the palsy, he spake in the following strain, with all the majesty and power of a divine person, I say unto thee, Arise this instant; and, to shew that thou art perfectly healed at once, take up thy bed, in the presence of all this company, and carry it home. (See the notes on *Mat. ix. 2.* and *Luke v. 23.*)

12 And he no sooner commanded, but it was done: The man immediately arose in full strength, took up his bed, and carried it away, pressing through the crowd, (*παρὰ τὴν ὄχλον*) And Christ managed this cure in such an absolute god-like way, as astonished all the people, who could not but own that there was something divine in his words and actions; upon which they gave glory to God, with acknowledgments that they never saw any thing like it before; tho', thro' their prejudices, they did not readily comprehend how by this proof it appeared that he was God.

13 After this, Jesus went out of *Capernaum* again to the shore of the lake of *Gennesareth*; and great multitudes flocked to him there, where he as readily preached the gospel to them, without any scruple, as if he had been in one of their synagogues.

14 And walking by the sea-side, he observed a certain man in his way, whose name was *Levi* †, the Son of *Alphæus*, and who was sitting at the toll-booth to receive the tribute that was to be paid for importations and exportations; and, tho' he was in an office of ill re-

N O T E.

† *Levi* is called *Matthew*, (*Matt. ix. 9.*); and all circumstances shew, that they were two names which belonged to the same person, as *Saul* was also called *Paul*.

custom; and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

15 And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples: for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to fast; and

pute, Christ, to shew the riches and the sovereignty of his grace, said to him, Follow me: And these words were attended with such a divine power upon his soul, that he immediately quitted his scandalous, tho' profitable post, and became one of the disciples and constant followers of our Lord.

15 And, this man's heart being moved with pity towards his former sinful companions, he invited them, together with Jesus and his disciples, to an entertainment at his house, that they might have the advantage of hearing and conversing with him: And such was the gracious condescension of our Lord, that, when he and his disciples sat down to eat, he admitted of many tax-gatherers, and other men of ill character, to sit and eat with him.

16 And when this was observed by some of the *Jewish* doctors and *Pharisees*, who were men of a self-conceited and censorious spirit, they took offence at it, and disputed with his disciples about it, saying, How can your master, who pretends to be an holy prophet, justify his so familiarly keeping company with such detestable people as tax-gatherers and the vilest of men, whom we refuse to converse with that we may not be defiled by them.

17 But Jesus, hearing how invidiously they charged him, replied, I am not a companion of sinners to countenance them in their wickedness, but a spiritual Physician to heal them: And they who, like you, have a vain conceit of their own righteousness, as if they needed no better, will not value one of my character as of any use to themselves; but they who, like these notorious sinners, have no such opinion of themselves, are more easily brought to a conviction of their sin, and of their need of a Saviour. Now the principal design of my coming was not to reform a righteous world; nor is my gospel likely to be effectual among those who think they are holy enough already; but I am come to bring them to repentance unto life who are the greatest of sinners, and are sensible of their sin and danger, and would be glad of a recovery.

18 There were likewise exceptions made against Christ by some disciples of *John the Baptist* and of the *Pharisees*, who, under their respective teachers, had been trained up to frequent fastings †. They, wonder-

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N O T E

† The *Pharisees*, besides such fasts as were of divine institution, added many others of traditional, and of their own appointment; and placed so much religion in them, that

one of that sect vainly boasted of his fasting twice a-week, Luke xviii. 12. And as *John the Baptist* betook himself to an austere, abstemious way of life; so his disciples multi-

and they come, and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up, taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles, else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred; but new wine must be put into new bottles.

23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn-fields on the sabbath-day, and his disciples began

ing that the followers of Jesus were not under some austere discipline, came and asked him, saying, What is the reason that, notwithstanding the solemn doctrines you preach, your disciples are not ordered to keep days of fasting, as we do, in obedience to the obligations laid upon us severally?

19 In answer to this, Jesus said, I am, as *John* himself declared concerning me, (*John* iii. 29.) the spiritual Bridegroom to whom the church is espoused; and my disciples are at present to be considered as the children of the bride-chamber, or the guests of the marriage-feast, that are to rejoice with me: How improper then would it be for these my wedding guests to be dull in my immediate presence, and to fast on these joyful days? It would be very unseasonable for them to do this, whilst I am with them under that character.

20 But, in a little while, I shall depart from them, and they will be exposed to many difficulties and troubles; and then will their time for solemn humiliation and fasting, as it now is for those of you that are the disciples of *John*, your master being lately taken away from you, shut up in prison, and in danger of his life.

21, 22. But for them to keep days of fasting in their present circumstances, would be as unsuitable as to go about to mend an old rotten garment with a piece of new cloth, which would look uncomely, and the first stretch would make a bigger hole than before: (See the note on *Mat.* ix. 16.) Or it would be as improper as to put new fermenting wine into old and decaying bottles made of † leather or of skins, (*αρκε,*) which endangers the bursting of the vessels and the loss of the wine; but, in common prudence, people use to put new wine into new and strong bottles, that both may be preserved. So religious fastings are to be suited to the circumstances of things, and to proper seasons and occasions for them; or else you lose all their excellence and advantage, and do more harm than good by them: And days of mourning and fasting would be as disagreeable to the present joyful circumstances of my disciples, whilst I the Bridegroom am with them, as the holy liberty and spiritual comforts of the gospel are to the servile temper and taste both of the *Pharisees* and of *John's* disciples.

23 At another time, as our Lord, on a sabbath-day, was walking in a path that lay thro' a corn-field, (see the note on *Luke* vi. 1.) his disciples were with him; and being

N O T E S.

plied fasts, in imitation of their master, and of the custom of the *Pharisees*.

† Wine used to be put into vessels of goat-

skins, for carriage from one place to another; and the bottles of those days were made of leather.

gan as they went to pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath-day that which is not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an-hungred, he, and they that were with him?

26 How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shew-bread, which is not lawful to eat, but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

being hungry, plucked some of the ears, and, rubbing out the corn with their hands, began to eat it for present refreshment.

24 As soon as the superstitious and captious Pharisees observed this, they cavilled with Christ about it as a violation of the sabbath, saying, See what your disciples are doing: Why do you, who pretend to preach holy doctrines, suffer them to take such a sinful liberty of profaning the sabbath-day? (See the note on Luke vi. 2.)

25 To which Jesus replied, How can ye pretend that this is a breach of the sabbath, since hunger must be satisfied, and works of necessity are allowed to take place even of God's own appointment of ceremonial rites relating to the observation of his law, and much more of your human traditions about them? Have ye never read what David and his company did, in a case of like necessity?

26 Do not ye know how in the days of Abiathar, who soon after was high priest †, David went into the tabernacle, and he, together with his company, being hungry, eat of the shew-bread, which in common cases none but the priests were by the law allowed to eat? Why then do ye find fault with my disciples for such a trifle as plucking and eating a few ears of corn to satisfy their hunger on the sabbath-day? Surely necessity makes this as lawful as that, which neither God nor you have ever blamed.

27 And as this instance shews, that ceremonial circumstances, and especially the strained niceties of men about them, must give way to necessary duties of moral obligation: So it is to be remembered, that a great part of the morality of the sabbath lay in its being made for the good of man; chiefly for the spiritual benefit of the soul, that it may be at liberty to serve God and have holy communion with him; and partly for the relief of the body, that it may have rest from the fatiguing labour of the week: And it is plain, that as man was created the day before the institution of the sabbath, he was not made for the sabbath, nor could be bound by its law to abstain from what is necessary to the support of

N O T E.

† It appears from 1 Sam. xxi. 6. that this was in the days when Abimelech, the father of Abiathar, was high-priest: But as Abiathar was more notified, and more remarkably concerned in David's affairs, than Abimelech, as appears from 1 Sam. xxii. xxiii. and xxx.; and as he, soon after this fact, became high-priest, and perhaps at this very time acted as his father's deputy in that office; it is no great wonder that it should be

recited as done in his days, rather than in Abimelech's: And if we only admit of an easy supposition, that Christ here speaks of the days in which that more famous man was well known, and not of the days of his high-priesthood, it seems to me that all the laboured criticisms are needless which many learned men have used to rack this passage and reconcile it to the history.

28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

of his life.

28 † The Messiah therefore has undoubtedly a divine right to order what he thinks for the good of man, in subservience to the great design of a sabbath; and my disciples are not to be blamed for using the liberty which I gave them to eat a little corn, for the refreshment of the body, and sitting it for the holy services of the day. (See the note on *Mat.* xii. 8.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What is the great design of our attendances on Christ, but that we may honour him, and receive a blessing from him; that he may speak to our hearts, and give us the faith which approves of him and is approved of by him; and that he may heal all our diseases, and forgive our sins? His divine power and grace for these purposes are worthy of our admiration and praise: And humble souls, who by faith receive him, will prize and honour him, to their own salvation; while proud and prejudiced hearts are ever objecting against him, to their own perdition. He came to save the chief of sinners; and will reject none that see their need of him, and are willing to be saved in his own way. And oh with what wisdom and tenderness does he deal with his disciples! How beautiful are his appointments of every duty in its season; and how indulging is his proportioning our duties to our circumstances! He calls his followers sometimes to rejoice, and at others to fast and mourn; his presence fills them with joy, and his absence with grief: But as their day is, so their strength shall be: Let his word be our rule, and his authority our obligation, in observing sabbaths, and in all other duties of the Christian life: and let his grace make us prize his service, and encourage us in it, since all is designed for our own advantage.

N O T E.

† By the Son of man some here understand man in general. But as this was a known character of the Messiah, *Dan.* vii. 13.; so it is constantly used, and that almost ninety-times, by our Lord, with a peculiar refer-

ence to himself. This is a sufficient reason with me, why in this place only it should not be taken in another sense. See *Wibsey's* note on *Mat.* xii. 1. and *Hammond's* on *Mat.* xii. 8.

C H A P. III.

Christ heals a withered hand, and many other diseases, 1,—12. Cures twelve apostles, 13,—21. His answer to the blasphemous cavils of the scribes, 22,—30. And preferring his disciples to his nearest relations, 31,—35.

T A T.

AND he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath-day, that they might accuse him.

P A R A P H R A S E.

OUR Lord returning to *Capernaum*, went again, (*chap.* i. 21, and ii. 1.) according to his usual custom, into the synagogue to preach on the sabbath-day; and there was a certain man, whose hand was sinew-shrunk and wasted to skin and bone.

2 And the *Pharisees*, suspecting that the melancholy circumstances of this man might move Christ's compassion toward him, had their eyes upon our Lord, to see whether he would go about to heal him though it were the sabbath-day; that if he should, they might accuse him as a sabbath-breaker, who deserved to be put

3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? but they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judæa,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Si-

to death.

3 But (*xas*) Jesus knowing their malicious thoughts, and designing to vindicate such a merciful act from the false imputation of a breach of the sabbath; ordered the man whose hand was lame, to come forth from the company and stand before him.

4 And turning himself to the *Pharisees*, he said, Pray answer me this plain question: Which is most pleasing to God, and most suitable to the design of a sabbath? to do an act of necessity and mercy on that day, or to neglect it when opportunities and occasions offer for it; to preserve life and the usefulness of it, or to suffer a man to languish and die when it might easily be prevented? (See the note on *Luke* vi. 9.) And they were so confounded with the question, being at a loss how to answer it without either justifying him, or exposing themselves to the rage of the people, that they thought it best to make no reply at all.

5 Then having cast his eyes about and looked upon them, with holy anger in his countenance at their perverse and unreasonable opposition to him, and with grief at the obstinate blindness of their minds and hardened temper of their hearts, he, in their hearing, applied himself to the cripple, ordering him to stretch forth his lame hand: And such divine power attended the word of command, that the poor wretch was instantly enabled to do it; and his withered hand became as sound, and plump, and well, as the other.

6 Upon this the *Pharisees*, being baffled, and vexed to think what credit he gained among the people in spite of all their attempts to defame him, went and consulted with some of the *Herodian* sect, what pretence they might make, and what measures they might concert with the greatest safety and success, for putting him to death.

7 But Jesus, knowing their wicked design, and that the time for resigning his life was not come, left the city, and went with his disciples to the shore of the sea of *Galilee*†: And the common people had so high an esteem of him, that having learnt whither he was gone, vast numbers flocked after him from the countries of *Galilee* and of *Judæa*.

8 And great multitudes went to him from the city of *Jerusalem*, and even from so far as *Idumæa* and the regions beyond *Jordan*, and from the coasts of *Tyre* and

Sidon;

N O T E.

† From this lake or sea, which was about eight leagues in length and five in breadth, *Galilee* lay toward the north; *Judæa*, *Jerusalem*, and *Idumæa*, toward the south; the parts beyond *Jordan*, toward the east; and *Tyre* and *Sidon*, toward the north-west.

Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him; because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12 And he straitly charged them, that they should not make him known.

13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would; and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach:

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter,

Sidon; being induced to it by the fame of his great miracles, which was spread among them.

9 And at length, the throng increasing, he ordered his disciples to provide him a boat, that he might have the convenience of going into it, and of putting off a little way from the shore; and so might preach to the people, without danger of being pressed and incommoded by the crowd.

10 For, since he had been at this place, he had cured so many of their diseases, that all who had any distempers made up to him as well as they could of themselves, or by the assistance of their friends, every one trying to get near enough to touch some part of his body or clothes, that they also might be healed, as they believed they should if they could but touch him.

11 And such as were possessed by evil spirits, as soon as they saw him, prostrated themselves before him; and the devils were forced to confess that he was a divine Person, and the true Messiah, saying, Thou art the Son of God, before whom we are not able to stand.

12 But that there might not be the least appearance as if Jesus acted in confederacy with Satan according to the malicious suggestion of his enemies, (ver. 22.) he charged the evil spirits to be silent, and not say what they knew concerning him: And that he might not so much as seem to affect the applause of men, he ordered those whom he had healed not to divulge what he had done for them; his works, which were wrought before many witnesses, friends and enemies, being sufficient to speak for themselves.

13 After this, Jesus went up an high hill, where he spent a whole night in prayer by himself; and in the morning, (*Luke vi. 12, 13.* see the notes there,) he, like the sovereign lord and disposer of his own gifts, called from among his professed disciples such as he pleased, and they drew near to him.

14 And he appointed twelve of them to be the constant attendants of his person and service; to be witnesses of his doctrine, life and miracles; and to go forth with commission, as his apostles, to preach the gospel.

15 And, for the confirmation of its doctrine, and of their commission to preach it, he invested them with miraculous powers, that by his authority, and by virtue derived from him, they might heal all manner of diseases, and cast out devils, wherever they should go.

16,——19. Now the names of the twelve, whom he chose to be his apostles, and conferred these powers upon, were: First, *Simon*; to whom he added the name

17 And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James, (and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder,)

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddæus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.

20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

22 And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem, said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

of Peter. Secondly, James. Thirdly, John his brother; both being the sons of Zebedee, to whom Christ gave the name of † *Boanerges*, which, in the Jewish language, signifies *Sons of thunder*. Fourthly, Andrew. Fifthly, Philip of Bethsaida. Sixthly, Bartholomew. Seventhly, Matthew; who was likewise called *Levi*, and had been a publican. Eighthly, Thomas, surnamed *Didymus*. Ninthly, Another James; who was the son of Alphaeus, and was called *James the less*. Tenthly, Thaddæus; who was also called *Lebbeus* and *Jude*, and was the brother of James. Eleventhly, Simon the *Canaanite*, who was also called *Zelotes*. And twelfthly, Judas Iscariot, who proved an infamous traitor to his Lord. (See the notes on *Mat. x. 3, 4.*) And all these went with Jesus ‡ into an house to attend him, and to receive instructions from him in order to their being fitted for the apostleship.

20 And as soon as the common people understood that he was there with his disciples, they gathered together again, and came thither with earnest desires to hear and see more of him, so that he and the twelve could hardly find time to eat enough for their necessary refreshment.

21 Then his relations and friends, hearing how the people crowded so fast about him, came with great hurry and concern to get him away from them: For they said one to another, His zeal surely transports him too far, and he will § faint thro' excessive fatigue, and for want of spirits and of due refreshment.

22 At another time, when by his divine authority he commanded deliverance to one who was possessed with a devil, (*Mat. xii. 22, 24.*) some Pharisees and doctors of the law, who came thither from Jerusalem, maliciously reproached him, saying, That he himself was possessed and acted by *Beelzebub*; and that, by the power and authority of this chief of the devils, he forced them out of persons, whenever he dispossessed them.

23 Upon which he desired these revilers to draw near; and, to confute their malicious suggestion by similitudes, said, How preposterous and self-contradictious is it to suppose that one devil would dispossess others, and so destroy their own interest!

24 If

N O T E S.

† They were probably so called, to denote their remarkable warmth and zeal, and the fervent manner of their preaching.

‡ This seems to have been the house at Capernaum where Christ dwelt, *Mat. iv. 13.*; and from this time forward, the twelve may

be looked upon as his domestics; and probably now it was that he ordered Judas to take the bag into his custody for the use of the family.

§ *Ephra* signifies one that faints, and one transported to excess, as well as one that is beside himself.

24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies, wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because they said,

24 If any nation or kingdom is divided into factions, and fights against itself, such a civil war in its own bowels must necessarily bring it into confusion and desolation.

25 And if any family is divided into parties which oppose and endeavour to turn one another out of doors, it is impossible that such a family should long subsist.

26 And thus it must be with respect to the devil's kingdom and family, if what ye suggest were true: For if one devil sets himself to dispossess others, and that for the confirmation of doctrines which like mine are directly contrary to their own designs, it is impossible their interest should maintain its ground; they are too great politicians not to know this; and therefore ye may be sure that they would never act in concert after such a manner, to ruin the common cause which they are all engaged in.

27 Again, If a strong man has got possession of an house, it must be owned that no other can forcibly break into it and take away his goods; unless, by a superior power, he first overcome and bind him, or some way defeat his resistance; then indeed, and not till then, he will easily carry off his goods: It is therefore a plain case, that so powerful a being as Satan is would never in any instance quit possession at my command, who am come to destroy his work, and to deliver wretched creatures out of his hands; unless he were forced to it, by my irresistible power over him.

28 I assuredly tell you, by way of caution against the greatest crime that can be committed, and ye are running into, That all other sins and blasphemies, of what nature or kind soever, which any man can be guilty of, are within the reach of pardoning grace, and shall be forgiven to him that believes in me.

29 But, as what I have now done is by the Spirit of God; and as the last and highest dispensation of mercy is approaching, in which the miraculous illuminations and powers of the Holy Ghost for the confirmation of the gospel will appear with still more evident demonstration; whosoever shall continue to be so obstinate and spiteful then, as to ascribe his wonderful and divine operations to the devil, shall never be capable of forgiveness; but shall be exposed to everlasting destruction without remedy, since no other means of conviction and recovery shall ever be afforded him. (See the note on *Mat. xii. 31.*)

30 The reason of his speaking in this awful manner was, because the scribes and Pharisees (ver. 22.) had mali-

said, He hath an unclean spirit.

31 There came then his brethren and his mother; and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren:

35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

maliciously and blasphemously represented him as possessed by *Beelzebub*; and had affirmed, that what he did by the Spirit of God, in casting out devils, was done by the power of their chief.

31 But to return to what was hinted (ver. 20, 21.); While Jesus was preaching to the multitude round about him, *Mary* his mother, and some of his other nearest kindred, (see the note on *Mar.* xii. 46.) fearing lest he should over-spend himself, and not being able to get near because of the crowd, desired some of the company to let him know that they wanted to speak with him.

32 Accordingly one and another of the people that sat near said to him, Observe how your mother and brethren call to you, who, not being able to get thro' the crowd, wait without to speak with you.

33 But he replied to them that told him of this, What concern have I with my kindred according to the flesh, whilst I am about my Father's business? And who do ye think I esteem as my nearest and dearest relations, even as my mother and my brethren?

34 No sooner had he spoke these words, but turning to his disciples, who sat about him, and looking and pointing to them, he said, Behold, these are they whom I have taken into the nearest relation to myself, whom I as affectionately love as if they were my natural mother and brethren according to the flesh, and whose eternal welfare lies so near my heart, that no consideration of earthly kindred can make me desist from doing what is necessary to promote it †.

35 For whoever he be that shall heartily believe and practise the will of God as revealed in his word, and as particularly relating to me, he is the person whom I account my dearest relation in a spiritual sense, and will treat with all the affection and regard that are due to a brother, a sister, and a mother.

RECollections.

Sabbaths are to be sanctified by acts of piety and mercy; and how remarkably exemplary was our blessed Lord for both these! How justly did the people admire and crowd about him; and how many are the blessings he came to bestow; and yet how great was the envy and malice of his obstinate enemies against him! He nevertheless was tenderly touched at the hardness of their hearts; and, to melt them, proclaimed the riches of divine forgiveness for the worst of sins, excepting that against the Holy Ghost: And how solemnly did he warn his most wilful and inveterate enemies to take heed of this sin, that they might not entail unavoidable damnation upon themselves! His interests and designs are directly opposite to the

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† Christ, in this preference of his true disciples to the virgin *Mary* considered merely as his mother according to the flesh, not only shews his high and tender affection to

them, but seems designedly to guard against the excessive and idolatrous honour which he foresaw the *Papists* in after ages would pay to her.

kingdom of darkness, as devils know; whatever some, under their malignant influence, may blasphemously suggest to the contrary: And therefore he hath granted commissions to many servants to publish his holy gospel; and has given us the strongest assurances, that he will most affectionately embrace and treat all those as his dearest relatives, who shall believe in him through their word. May this Saviour be ours! and may we never reject him through unbelief!

C H A P. IV.

The parable of the sower, 1,—9. Its explication, 10,—20. Its application, 21,—25. The parable of the corn which grows insensibly, 26,—29. The parable of the grain of mustard-seed, with a general account of Christ's parables, 30,—34. His laying a storm at sea, 35,—41.

TEXT.

AND he began again to teach by the sea-side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea, on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables; and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hark ye; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:

4 And it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the foregoing discourse, Jesus returned again to the shore of the sea of Galilee, that the multitude might have an opportunity of hearing: Accordingly such vast numbers thronged after him, that for the convenience of being heard, and of freeing himself from the pressings of the crowd, he got into a boat; in which he sat down, according to the usual custom of the Jewish doctors, to preach another sermon, while the people stood as auditors on the land.

2 And, in this discourse, he went into a very familiar and instructive way of teaching them many important doctrines, by comparisons taken from earthly things which they themselves were well acquainted with: Accordingly he began to represent the preaching of the gospel, and its different effects upon various sorts of persons, in the following manner. (See the note on Mat. xiii. 3.)

3 Attend to what I say, and observe it as a matter of the greatest consequence: "A certain husbandman went into his field to sow his corn:"—Thereby intimating that he was come by his person and ministry, and the ministry of his servants, to spread abroad the gospel of the kingdom among the people.

4 "And it happened, that, as the husbandman was sowing his corn, some of the grains fell upon a common beaten path in the field, where, lying on the surface of the ground, without any earth to cover it, the birds came and eat it up:"—So the gospel is preached to some heedless hearers, who never seriously consider or reflect on what they hear; and the devil soon justles it out of their thoughts.

5, 6. "Another part of the seed was cast upon a stony soil, which had but a thin covering of earth; and there it quickly began to sprout; but no sooner did the sun

diately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth.

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased, and brought forth some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him, with the twelve, asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you

sun shine with its scorching beams, which were strongly reflected from the bed of stone just underneath, than it withered away, having no root sufficient to keep it alive."—So there are other hearers, who do indeed attend to the word, and are affected with it, and, under present impressions, have some good desires and resolutions answerable to it: But this goes no deeper than a superficial touch upon their passions; and when the heat of temptation and persecution for righteousness-sake beats upon them, their stony hearts give such force to those trials, that they cannot stand against their terrors; and, for want of a rooted principle of grace in the soul, all the promising appearances soon come to nothing.

7 "There was likewise some of this seed which fell on a piece of ground all over-run with young briars and thorns; and these, out-growing the corn, smothered and destroyed it, so that it never brought forth fruit to any perfection."—In like manner there are others, who hear the word with great attention, and seem to make some progress in their notions and profession of the gospel; but their hearts are so over-charged with the hurries, cares, riches, and pleasures of this world, that all these hopeful beginnings are stifled in the birth, and never produce any holy effects to the glory of God and their own salvation.

8 "Lastly, another part of the seed was sown in a good soil; where it took root, sprung, and grew up regularly, and brought forth corn with a fine increase, from thirty to an hundred fold."—So there are other hearers, whose hearts are fitted and inclined, by divine grace, to mix the word with faith, and to receive the truth in the love of it; who understand, consider, and believe what they hear, and that with a reference to themselves; and who, yielding the obedience of faith, bring forth fruits of righteousness, more or less, all the days of their lives.

9 And, to intimate the great importance of these things, Jesus added in the close, Whoever he be that is capable of hearing and desirous of instruction, let him seriously weigh and lay to heart what I have been saying.

10 Our Lord having delivered this parable without any explanation; as soon as the people were dismissed, and the twelve apostles with some others of his disciples were with him alone, they intreated him to interpret it to them; seeming, at the same time, to shew some surprise and concern that the multitude were left in the dark about it. (*Mat. xiii. 10.*)

11 And in reply, he said to them, God, in the wise

you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:

11 That seeing they may see, and not perceive, and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

12 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

13 The sower soweth the word.

14 And these are they by the way-side, where the word is sown; but when they have

and holy dispensations of his grace, has given, and will further give, a plain discovery of the great truths of the gospel to you, whom, in his sovereign pleasure, he has made his peculiar favourites: But as to those, who, by their obstinate impenitence and unbelief, exclude themselves, like heathens †, from the blessings of my kingdom; and do not so much as desire my instructions, but wilfully shut their eyes against what light they have, and thereby forfeit further vouchsafements; I deliver myself to them only in parables;

12 That, according to an ancient prophecy, (Isa. vi. 9, 10.) which is fulfilled in them, they seeing my undoubted miracles, may not, through their own wilful blindness of mind, be convinced by them; and that, hearing my spiritual and heavenly doctrine, they, under the power of their own inveterate prejudices, may not inquire after its true meaning, nor embrace it; being righteously given up to the chosen infidelity and obstinacy of their own hearts, that they may never be enlightened to their conversion, nor obtain remission of sins to their salvation.

13 Having thus accounted for the reason of his treating his own disciples with more peculiar favour than others, he said, by way of gentle reproof to them for the dulness of their apprehension, What! are ye at a loss about the meaning of so plain a similitude as this, which represents things that ye are already acquainted with? How then will ye be able to understand and receive other parables, which I shall deliver, to represent things that ye have at present no notions of ‡?

14 Then he particularly explained to them the parable of the sower after this manner, saying, By the seed was meant the word of God; the husbandman, who sowed it, signified the preacher of it; and the ground, on which the seed fell, represented the hearers of the word.

15 § The common beaten path, where there was no earth to cover the seed, signified such careless hearers of the gospel as do not regard or retain it; but, thro' the hard-

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† Here seems to be an allusion to the Jews way of speaking concerning the Heathens, as in Isa. these who were without; and to intimate, that, for their infidelity, they should be cast out of Christ's kingdom. Luke xiii. 25, 28.

‡ Christ may herein refer to such parables as relate to the more spiritual and sublime doctrines of the gospel, that depended on his death and resurrection, and to the casting off of the Jews and the calling of the Gentiles, which the disciples prejudices in favour of

their own nation would render very obscure and difficult for them to take in.

§ As, in common language, sometimes seed, and at others the ground on which it is cast, is said to be sown; so in this interpretation of the parable we are to understand it with relation to the different sorts of ground on which the seed is sown, since it is designed to represent different sorts of hearers, and the different entertainment they give to one; and the same preaching of the gospel.

have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns: such as hear the word,

19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirty fold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

21 And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

hardness of their own hearts, and the subtilty of Satan, it is soon thrown out of their minds, and they are deprived of all saving advantage by it.

16, 17. The stony soil, which had but a thin covering of earth, where the seed soon began to sprout, but presently grew sick, and died away by the heat of the sun for want of a root sufficient to keep it alive, represented many hearers, who at first indeed are affected with the glad tidings of the gospel as with a pleasant song, and for some little time give an assent to them; but not having received them by a true and lively faith in their hearts, nor being rooted and grounded in love, they lose their first slight and flashy impressions, and turn utter apostates, as soon as a day of trial, by reproaches, losses, and persecutions for the gospel, comes upon them.

18, 19. And the ground over-run with briars and thorns, which, growing up, smothered and destroyed the corn, signified such hearers as attend to the preaching of the gospel, and seem to love it, and to make a good proficiency in their observation and profession of it; but hurries, and solicitous cares about the things of this world, the false enticements of its riches, and eager desires after its pleasures, get such a power over the heart, as nip the promising appearances in the bud, and render them ineffectual to holy and saving purposes.

20 And to conclude: The good soil, where the seed took root, sprung, and grew up regularly, and produced good corn, in a thinner or more plentiful crop, represented those hearers of the word, who, under divine influence, heartily believe and entertain it, and produce excellent fruits of holiness, tho' some twice or thrice as much as others, as long as they live in the world.

21 Our blessed Saviour, having thus explained the parable to his disciples in all its parts, proceeded to make the following application of it. As a candle, when it is lighted, should not be whelmed under a vessel, or concealed under a bed or any other dark covering; but be set up in a candlestick, to give light to all about it: So the light, which I communicate to you, my disciples, by a clear explication of this and other parables, and by the whole of my instructions, is not to be confined to yourselves, and concealed from others; but ye ought to shine as lights in the world, by shewing forth the power of these truths upon your own hearts and lives, and by preaching them to others for their conversion, edification, and salvation.

22 For there is

22 For none of my doctrines are to be thus suppressed

is nothing hid which shall not be manifested: neither was anything kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

sed and hid; but they shall be published in all their truth, excellence, and importance: Nor have I concealed any thing for the present from this people, whose prejudices resist the light, with a design that it should never be publicly made known in the clearest manner possible; but that, in due time, it should be preached openly, by the ministrations of my servants, to all nations, for the obedience of faith.

23 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

23 Observe therefore what I say; and let every one of you, who is capable of hearing and receiving these things, reflect upon them, and lay them to heart, that he may behave accordingly.

24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear, shall more be given.

24 He furthermore said unto them, The things I have been speaking of are matters of the utmost consequence: Attend therefore to what ye hear, that it may have its proper influence upon you; and take heed that ye do not give ear to any doctrines inconsistent with these; but try the spirits, whether they be of God, (1 John iv. 1): And remember, that in proportion to your care and faithfulness in receiving and improving the advantages which have been already communicated to you for the good of others as well as of your own souls, still further instructions and assistances shall be given, that your profiting may appear unto all men.

25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

25 For every one who cordially receives and acts according to the endowments which God has freely bestowed upon him, for propagating the interest of his Son and of true religion in the world, shall have further vouchsafements of light and assistances for it: But every one who has no heart to make a due improvement of them for these valuable purposes, shall be deprived even of those privileges which before he had been favoured with. (See the note on Luke viii. 18.)

26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground,

26, 27. After this, Jesus taught the people by several other comparisons; and said, with a particular reference to such fruitful hearers of the word as had been represented by the good ground, "The state of the gospel-kingdom is like an husbandman's sowing seed in a good soil: Though, after he has sown it, he takes his rest by night, and goes about his other affairs by day, it nevertheless continually and insensibly grows up and increases in a manner which neither he nor any man else can give an account of."—So when the word of God becomes effectual, and a principle of grace is planted in the heart; though the preacher, who was instrumental in sowing it, takes no further pains about it, but, committing it to the blessing of God, applies himself to other parts of his work; yet it lives, and prospers in the soul,

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up he knoweth not how.

soul, while the manner, in which its principle operates to produce the increase, surpasses all conception of human minds.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

28 "For as the earth, after it has been sown with seed, brings it to maturity by imperceptible degrees, first in the blade, then in the ear, and at last in the ripe corn; and does all this by virtue within itself, under the influence of the heavens:"—So when once the heart is seasoned with grace, the precious seed flourishes, and brings forth fruits of righteousness, by virtue of its vital principle in the soul, under the special influence of the Spirit of God.

29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

29 "But as, at the time of harvest, when the corn is fully ripe, the husbandman reaps it with his sickle:"—So at the end of the world, they who ministered under the great Lord of the harvest in sowing the seed, shall find their converted hearers to be their joy and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming; when they shall reap the fruit of their labours with joy, in presenting them to him †."

30 And he said, Whenceunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

30 Then said he, By what further similitude shall I represent the doctrine of the gospel, and the state of my kingdom in the world? Or by what further comparison shall I describe it to you?

31 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

31 "It may be fitly said to resemble a grain of mustard seed, which, at the time of its being sown, is indeed one of the least of all the seeds that are cast into the earth:"—So my gospel, the work of grace in the heart, and the state of my kingdom in the world, make but a little figure, and are scarcely discernible in their first beginnings.

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches, so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

32 "But as a grain of this seed grows up to be one of the largest sized plants among all herbs, and shoots its branches to such height and strength, that the birds of the air may shelter themselves in it;" (see the note on *Matt. xiii. 32.*)—So my gospel and my grace shall grow and spread to such a degree, that however they may be despised, or not discerned at first, they shall in

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† Several parts of this parable are incapable of being applied to Christ himself, who searches the reins and hearts, has a comprehensive knowledge of all that is doing in the souls of his people, and is continually maintaining and increasing his work in them, by various means, and fresh supplies of his grace; and therefore, I have rather chosen to consider it with relation to the ministers of the gospel, to whom I think all its parts may fairly be applied, as in the paraphrase: But if, as is generally thought, the scope of this parable be only to shew, that the work of

God increases by secret and insensible degrees we know not how; in that general scope, it may be applied to Christ himself, and perhaps may have a particular reference to the fruits of his personal ministry on earth, though he was to leave this world and go to the Father, and would no more visibly appear to manage the affairs of his kingdom amongst us, till he shall come at the end of time, and send forth the angels, his reapers, to gather the good seed into his heavenly kingdom.

† These

a little while diffuse, with great power and delight, through the whole soul, and extend themselves far and wide, that *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* may find rest and comfort in them.

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

33 To these comparisons for the illustration of spiritual things, Jesus added many others; by which he instructed the people, though with obscurity and by degrees, yet in a way as easy and familiar to them as they were capable of understanding and receiving.

34 But, as he knew the prejudices they were generally under, he only delivered the similitudes themselves, without any explanation; that they who were desirous of instruction might reflect upon them in their own minds, and gather some useful hints from them about things which afterwards they might more clearly understand upon seeing them come to pass: And when he and his disciples were together alone, he took opportunities to unbofom himself to them, with great familiarity and friendship, in clear explications of his mind and will therein.

35 Now Jesus, having work to do among the *Gadarenes*, ordered his disciples, as soon as it grew night, to row him over to the other side of the lake of *Gennesareth* toward *Gadara*, (chap. v. 1.) that he might lose no time.

36 Accordingly, the great crowds of people being dismissed, his disciples immediately carried him in the same vessel from which he had been preaching to the multitude; and several other boats attended him †.

37 And while they were crossing the lake, a terrible storm of wind ‡ beat so fiercely upon them, and raised such boisterous and swelling waves, that in a little time the vessel was almost full of water, and in the utmost danger of being lost.

38 In the mean while, Jesus, having been fatigued with the labour of the preceding day, lay fast asleep on a pillow at the stern of the vessel; and his disciples, being frightened at their danger, ran and awaked him, saying, all in a hurry, Lord, we are just upon the point of being cast away. What! canst thou sleep, and not mind this dreadful storm? Hast thou no compassion for us? And wilt thou suffer us all to be drowned?

37 Then he got up, and, like the sovereign Lord of the universe, commanded the wind to cease, and the waves

33 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

34 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship: and there were also with him other little ships.

35 And there arose a great storm of wind; and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

36 And he was in the hinderpart of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

37 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto

N O T E S.

† These boats probably carried companies of people, who were desirous to hear more of his doctrine, and see more of his miracles, and to follow him wherever he went.

‡ *Αναταξ* signifies any violent storm, or tempest; and so there might be a terrible rain, &c.

unto the sea,
Peace, be still:
and the wind cea-
sed, and there
was a great calm.

40 And he said
unto them, Why
are ye so fearful?
how is it that ye
have no faith?

41 And they
feared exceedingly,
and said one
to another, What
manner of man
is this, that even
the wind and the
sea obey him?

waves of the sea to be calm and quier, and not to roar and rage any longer; and he no sooner spake, than it was done: The wind immediately fell, the surface of the water became smooth, and the noise of the sea and of the waves was stilled. (*Psal. lxx. 7.*)

40 He likewise, turning to the disciples, reproved them for their distrustful fears, saying, How strange and unbecoming is it, that after all the experience ye have had of my divine power, and affectionate regards to you, ye should still question either my ability or my will to save you; and that when ye need most faith, ye should seem to have none at all!

41 And as before they had been greatly terrified at the storm; so now they had an awful fear of his Majesty, who had, in such a godlike way, rebuked the winds and waves, and reproved them for their distrust of him in their danger: And all the company were wonderfully amazed, saying to each other, What a surprising sort of person is this, who, by his own authority, and with such an air of sovereignty, commands the winds and waves, and they immediately obey him! Surely he must be more than a man, who hath thus gathered the wind in his fists. (*Prov. xxx. 4.*)

RECollections.

It is melancholy and alarming to think how many unfruitful sorts of hearers there are, and how few that mix the word with faith, and entertain the truth in the love of it to their own salvation. What need have we to watch carefully against Satan, and against the snares that arise from the affluence and pleasures, cares and terrors, of this world! How should we look well to our own hearts, that they be upright and sincere; and, at the same time, look upwards for divine grace, to enable us to take heed how we hear, and what improvement we make, lest we provoke God to leave us to ourselves, and to take away the privileges which we already have!—And oh what a blessing is it to be among the objects of distinguishing grace; to whom it is given to know the secrets of God's covenant, to whom Christ imparts his mind and will as to his friends, and whom he enables to bring forth good fruit in its season! The more experience we have of this, the more thankful we should be for it, and the more concerned to improve it, that we may have still more abundance. And, blessed be his name, the least beginnings of his work in our souls shall be preserved, and gradually increased and perfected; and the smallest appearances of it in the world, shall, in due time, break out and spread with light and power, and fill the earth. Christ is concerned for his cause, and never will neglect it; and, whilst he is present with his people, they are safe, whatever storms or mischiefs may threaten them; a word from his mouth will silence all our fears and troubles, and secure us amidst surrounding dangers: He is the mighty God, and the Prince of peace; we therefore need not doubt of his power, or his will, to save to the uttermost all that come unto him, and to the Father by him: Lord, help our unbelief.

C H A P. V.

Christ casts out a legion of devils, and suffers them to enter into the swine, 1,—20. He heals a woman of the bloody-flux, in his way to

Jairus's house, 21,—34. And raises Jairus's daughter from the dead,

31,—43.

TEXT.

AND they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Saviour having laid the storm which arose as he and his company were passing over the sea of Galilee, they soon after landed on the eastern side, in the country of the Gadarenes, who were mostly Gentiles.

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit,

2 And he was no sooner got ashore, than a man possessed of the devil, that vile and malicious spirit, came out from among the tombs, where he used to wander about; and it was providentially ordered that he should meet with Jesus.

3 Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no not with chains:

3 This poor miserable creature was so hurried by the power of the devil, that he would not dwell in any house, nor wear any clothes; but roved about naked for a long time, (*Luke* viii. 27.) like a madman, in solitary places, among the sepulchres of the dead, which increased his own terror and the terror of all who came that way, (see the note on *Mat.* viii. 28.); and so great was his strength and rage, that no human power or art could tame him, or get chains strong enough to hold him.

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him.

4 For he had often been clogged with fetters, and bound with chains; but he snapped them asunder like a twined thread; so that he continually broke loose, and was so untractable, that nobody knew how to manage him or keep him under restraint.

5 And always night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

5 And, in this forlorn and frightful manner, he ran, both night and day, like a wild man, up and down the mountains and among the tombs, making hideous outcries, and cruelly wounding and gashing himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

6 But as soon as † this fierce and ungovernable creature saw Jesus at a distance, the devil who possessed him was so over-awed at Christ's appearance, that he was even forced to carry him toward the Saviour; so that he ran with all speed, and falling down at his feet, paid him solemn homage.

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee,

7 And the evil spirit, knowing who Jesus was, cried out aloud, with horror and dread of his divine majesty and power, O thou Saviour of men, I own that thou art indeed the Son of the most high God, and that I am no match for thee; but, as I have no interest in thee, I beg that I may have nothing to do with thee: And, as

NOTE.

† *Matthew* (chap. viii. 28.) mentions two of these miserable creatures; and it is probable that this, so particularly spoken of here, was the most remarkably fierce and un-

governable; and perhaps he was a *Heathen*, and the other a *Jew*, and therefore more notice is taken of this than of him. See *Lightfoot's* *Hor. Hebr.* on *Mark* v. 1.

thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God; that thou torment me not.

I suppose the season appointed of God for shutting me up in prison, and completing my miseries, is not yet come. Why shouldest thou confine and distress me now before-hand? I earnestly beseech thee, by the truth of God, who has given me time to punish mankind till the final judgment, that thou wouldest not compel me to retire from this world into the place of torment.

8 (For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.)

8 The reason of his expostulating with Christ in this manner, was because he had said, 'Thou vile spirit, I command thee to quit possession of the man.' (See the note on *Luke* viii. 29.)

9 And he asked him, What is thy name? And he answered, saying, My name is Legion: for we are many.

9 And, upon the devil's going into this remonstrance, Jesus, to make the company the more sensible of the poor man's calamitous condition, and of the exceeding greatness of his own power and mercy in delivering him, publicly asked the evil spirit, By what name he called himself: To which he replied, My name is Legion †; and that very justly, for a vast number of spirits under my command have taken possession of this man.

10 And he besought him much, that he would not send them away out of the country.

10 Then the chief devil, and the whole legion, (*Luke* viii. 31.) joined in importunate intreaties, that, as they were not in *Judea* among God's own people, but in a Heathen country, he would permit them to continue to act their pleasure there, where they had reigned among the Heathens and apostate *Jews* like the rulers of the darkness of this world, and, by their long experience of that people's temper and behaviour, knew how to manage their temptations the more dextrously against them.

11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains, a great herd of swine feeding.

11 Now it happened at this time, that there was a great herd of swine feeding about the mountains at some distance, (*Mat.* viii. 30.)

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

12 All the evil spirits therefore united their earnest request, saying, If thou wilt not suffer us to keep possession of this man, yet let us at least be permitted to take possession of those swine; hoping thereby to prejudice their owners against Christ, and to maintain their own dominion still in their hearts.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits

13 And Jesus, for wise and holy reasons, (see the note on *Mat.* viii. 32.) readily intimated, that he would not restrain them from taking their own course with those brute creatures: Whereupon the devils, departing from

N O T E.

† The number which constituted a legion of *Roman* soldiers, was, like our regiments, uncertain; some reckon them at 6000, and others at 12500: However, the devil's giving himself this name, intimates, that those only who possessed this man were very numerous; and, being united in their malicious

designs, were very powerful and warlike, under the government of a chief, who is emphatically called *Satan*, the *old serpent*, the *prince of devils*, and the like; and therefore the evil powers that possessed this man, are sometimes spoken of in the singular, and at others in the plural number.

rits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they came to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

16 And they that saw it, told them how it had been to him that was possessed with the devil, and also concerning the swine.

17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 However, Jesus suffered him not;

from the man, went into the herd of swine; and had such a malignant influence upon them, that they all presently ran mad, and were furiously hurried down a precipice into the sea, where they perished in the waters, being in number about two thousand.

14 Then the keepers of the herd, being surprised and terrified at this sight, ran to the city and parts adjacent, telling what they knew of the surprising story about the man and the swine, wherever they came: And great multitudes hastened away to this place, that they might be satisfied how far it was true.

15 And when they came up to Jesus, and saw that the man by whom they had often been terrified whilst he was possessed with a legion of devils under the command of one of their chiefs, was now come to himself; and that, sitting with his clothes on, he behaved in a regular and decent manner; they were greatly astonished at the miracle, and filled with an awful dread of the power which Jesus had so remarkably exercised over the devils themselves on this occasion.

16 And they who were eye-witnesses of all that had passed, related to these people the particular circumstances both of the recovery of the miserable demoniac, and of the devils entering into and destroying their swine by Christ's permission.

17 This made them so much the more afraid of Jesus, lest they should suffer some further loss and damage by his means: And as they were more concerned about their temporal than their spiritual interests, and were more affected with vexation and fear at the destruction of their hogs, than with joy and hope at the signal mercy which had appeared in the cure of this dangerous raving and distressed man; they all, with one consent, intreated him to go out of their country, little thinking what a blessing they thereby put away from themselves.

18 Jesus, justly offended at their folly and wickedness, took them at their word; and when he re embarked in the vessel to go back again over the lake, the man who had been freed from the diabolical possession was so affected with the mercy, that he earnestly desired leave of his great Deliverer to suffer him to attend him, that he might enjoy his blessed company, and continue under his protection to secure him against the return of evil spirits, and under his instruction to lead him into the knowledge of a still better salvation from sin and the wrath to come.

19 However, as Jesus could both preserve and teach him at a distance as well as if he were personally present,

not; but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

sent, and taking him along with him might have seemed to favour of ostentation; and as it might be more for the advancement of his interest and kingdom, to leave such a standing monument of his power and compassion in that country; he would not consent to his coming away with himself, but ordered him to return home to his friends and acquaintance, and to let them see and hear what a miraculous deliverance the Lord Jesus had wrought for him, and what affecting and encouraging pity he had therein extended to him. (See the note on *Luke* viii. 39.)

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.

20 Accordingly the healed man obeyed Christ's command, and in a transport of gratitude and joy spread the report of his power and mercy toward him in all the towns and villages of *Decapolis* †; and all the people in those parts, knowing what this man had been, and seeing what a happy change was made upon him, easily credited his account, and were astonished at the power of Jesus, who had exercised such authority over devils, and wrought such a surprising deliverance for him.

21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.

21 In the mean while, Jesus having crossed the sea of *Galilee* back again in the boat, and landed on the western shore, abundance of people, who waited for tidings of his return, flocked about him when they found him by the sea-side.

22 And behold, there cometh out of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

22 And, observe a most remarkable occurrence! Soon after this, there came a person of considerable figure and authority among the *Jews*, whose name was *Jairus*, one of the rulers of their synagogue, (see the note on *Mat.* ix. 18.); and when he saw Jesus, he kneeled down, prostrating himself at his feet, in a posture of great humility and reverence, to testify his faith in him,

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death; I pray thee, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

23 And earnestly intreated him, saying, My young daughter lies dangerously sick, if not already dead, at my house; I humbly beg your compassion on her behalf; for I verily believe, that, if you would please to go home with me, and but touch her, she would certainly be restored to health, how desperate soever her case now may be.

24 And Jesus went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

24 And though there was weakness in this faith, which intimated as if our Lord could not have cured her without going and laying his hand upon her; yet, as he knew it to be sincere, he, for its further encouragement, readily went along with this ruler, being attended with his disciples, and vast crowds of people, who pressed upon him on all sides from the eagerness of their

N O T E.

† *Decapolis* was a country containing ten cities, which were chiefly inhabited by the Gentiles, and of which *Gadara* was one.

their desire to see the event.

25 And a certain woman which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up: and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus immediately knowing in himself, that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31 And his disciples said unto him,

25, 26. Now among these there was a woman who had been grievously afflicted for twelve years past with a dangerous discharge of blood, and had tried all possible means within her reach for a cure; in so much that she had gone through tedious courses of physic, and reduced herself to poverty by the great expence; but all to no good purpose, she still growing rather worse than better.

27 She therefore, despairing of all other relief, and hearing much of the mighty power and goodness of Christ, got into the crowd, next to him, among those that followed him; and being too modest to mention her case, she privately put her hand out and touched his clothes.

28 For such was her faith, that she thought within herself, If I can but get near enough to touch his garment, though it be only its utmost border, I shall as certainly be healed of this disease as others have been of theirs.

29 And her faith and hope were fully answered: For she no sooner had done this, but a miraculous alteration was made upon her at once; and, from that very moment, she sensibly found herself to be as perfectly cured of her distemper as if she had never ailed any thing at all.

30 In this manner she was healed without the privity of any of the people about her, and she thought that no notice would have been taken of it: But as our Lord himself knew what he had done, by † a free emanation of that divine power which he had in himself and could exert whenever and in what way he pleased; so he thought proper to discover it, for the manifestation of his own and his Father's glory, and for the encouragement not only of this woman's, but likewise of Jairus's faith, who was then with him; and, in order thereunto, he turned round in the crowd to look behind him, and asked, Who it was that had touched his garment? meaning, with a design of getting a cure from him.

31 His disciples, not understanding his drift, were surprised at this question; and replied with too much pert-

N O T E.

† It is never said of the apostles, as it is here, and *Luke vi. 19. viii. 46.* & of our Lord, that (*δυναμις*) power or virtue went out of them for healing: They on the contrary disclaimed it, ascribing the entire efficacy to Christ, *Acts iii. 12, 16.* Nor could this be said of any, but of the sovereign Lord † Disposer of life and death, and of sick-

ness and health: But Jesus, as God, had power residing in himself, which he could exert at pleasure, and by which alone he could heal all sorts of diseases, and chase away every unclean spirit; his dispossessing of which may be reckoned among the cures he wrought by the virtue that went out of him, *Luke vi. 13, 19.*

him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John, the brother of James.

pertness, How can it be otherwise, whilst, as thou seest, the great crowd is pressing upon thee on every side? Strange! that in such circumstances thou shouldst say, Who touched me?

32 However, Jesus, taking no notice of their amazement at it, continued looking about among them that were near him, like one that would see what might occur to discover the person who as he said had touched his clothes.

33 Hereupon the poor woman being conscious of what she had done, and of what a wonderful cure she had received, and finding that it would be in vain for her to think of hiding it any longer, was afraid that she had presumed too far, and that Christ was angry with her, either for taking a wrong method of obtaining her cure, or for endeavouring afterwards to conceal it; and therefore she came with a trembling heart before Him who could as easily kill as save alive; and humbly prostrating herself at his feet, openly declared the whole affair, just as it was, in the hearing of all the people.

34 And Jesus as openly encouraged and comforted her, saying, Thou daughter of Abraham, and child of God, thy faith has honoured me, and I both have and will put an honour upon it; thou art blessed, and art welcome to the mercy thou hast found; go home as one made glad with God's salvation, and be assured that thy distemper shall never return upon thee more.

35 Whilst our Lord was speaking these words, there came some messengers from Jaius's house, to let him know that his daughter was actually dead; and that therefore it would be to no purpose to give the great Prophet any further trouble, by desiring him to come thither to do any thing for his child.

36 Jesus, perceiving that at this message the tender father was mightily grieved and discouraged, spoke comfortably to him, saying, Do not give way to distressing and despairing thoughts at these melancholy tidings; only believe in my power and goodness, that I am able and ready to raise your daughter even from the dead, and it shall be unto you according to your faith.

37 Then, to avoid all appearance of seeking his own honour, he ordered that none of the multitude, nor even of his own disciples, should go with him into the house, excepting Peter, James, and John, that by those three witnesses the truth of the miracle he was going to work might be sufficiently testified; but, together with these, he admitted the father and mother of the young dam-

damsel to be present, who were most concerned in the affair, (ver. 40.)

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

38 And, as soon as he entered the house, he found a company of mourning friends, neighbours, and relations, gathered together; and some playing dismal tunes upon musical instruments, (*Mat. ix. 23.*) according to the custom of those days on such occasions, (which took its rise from the Heathens, and was designed to excite dolorous passions,) with weeping and bitter lamentation for the death of this young person.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

39 But Jesus, observing this, said, What means this tumultuous noise and excessive lamentation? The young creature is not, as ye imagine, so dead as not to revive; but is like one fallen into a state of insensibility and rest, out of which she shall immediately awake again.

40 And they laughed him to scorn: but when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

40 At this their mourning was turned into a scornful laughter, as if he talked like a weak or delirious person, they being all fully satisfied that she was really dead: However; he, taking no notice of their jeers, ordered the room where the young virgin lay to be cleared of all the company of scorers; and thereupon went into it, with only her father and mother, and the three disciples before-mentioned.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, (I say unto thee,) arise.

41 And, in the presence of all these, he went up, and, taking hold of her hand, spoke to her, with an air of divine majesty and sovereign authority, in words of the Syriac language, which were well known to signify, *Young woman, arise.*

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years: and they were astonished with a great astonishment.

42 He spake, and it was done; divine power went forth with his words; and immediately, her soul returning into her body, she got up, and, to shew that she was not only restored to life, but likewise to perfect health and strength in that instant, she walked about the room; for she was so far advanced in age as to be capable of this, being about twelve years old: And her parents, being eye-witnesses of all this, were exceedingly affected with, and amazed at, the greatness of so miraculous a favour.

43 And he charged them straitly, that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

43 Then, having ordered them to give her proper food, for the further sustenance of that life which he had restored, to shew that she still retained animal nature; he strictly forbade their divulging this miracle, that he might avoid every appearance of vain-glory, might prevent too great a resort of people to him, and might not enrage the scribes and Pharisees against him; the time for his death, and for the full manifestation of his glory, being not yet come. But it could not be concealed; (*Mat. ix. 26.*)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a cruel tyrant is Satan over all his vassals! how tormenting to them, and how unwilling to quit his hold of them! And yet how unable to stand before the power of our blessed Lord, whenever he comes to dethrone him! The Saviour's compassion is as great as the devil's malice is implacable; and yet he sometimes suffers that mischievous enemy of mankind to exert his furious rage against our persons or property, for the trial of our love and obedience, or for the punishment of our iniquities. But how great is their wickedness and folly who prefer any secular interests to him, and who for their inordinate love to the world desire him to depart from them! If he takes them at their word, how dismal is the consequence! But while some reject him, he will find out others to receive him! and when he withdraws from his own people, it is but for a season: He will surely return again, and honour the faith that honours him; and whatsoever difficulties or infirmities attend their trust in him, he is ready to encourage and relieve it. He heals by his own divine power, which resides in himself; and comforts those whom he heals: And if his mighty acts are sometimes to be only the subjects of private admiration and praise; yet how cheerfully should they be proclaimed, whenever it may be most seasonable, and subservient to his own and his Father's glory, and to the good of others.

C H A P. VI.

Jesus being contemned by his own countrymen for the meanness of his parentage, works but few miracles among them, 1,—6. He sends forth twelve apostles, 7,—13. The opinion of Herod and others concerning him, 14,—16. The occasion and manner of John the Baptist's death, 17,—29. The apostles return to Jesus, and give an account of the success of their ministry, 30,—34. He feeds five thousand with five loaves and two fishes, 35,—44. Walks on the sea, 45,—52. And heals all that touch him, 53,—56.

TEXT.

AND he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And when the sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue; and many hearing him, were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN our Lord had wrought the forementioned miracles, he returned to the city of *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, the place of his conception and education, where many of his acquaintance and relations still resided; and took his disciples along with him thither.

2 And there, upon the first return of the sabbath, he repairing, according to his custom, to their stated place of public worship, explained the law and the prophets to the people, and discoursed about the things of his kingdom; and this he did with such wisdom and authority, that many of them were exceedingly amazed, and could not forbear discovering it, saying, How is it possible, that a man of his low life and education should preach at this rate, and do the things he talks of? How surprising is it, that he should be master of so much knowledge and elocution, and that such remarkable miracles should be performed by him in confirmation of his doctrine!

3 Is he not the son of one *Joseph*, who is known to have

the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Juda and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? and they were offended at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 And he call-eth unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two;

have been only a poor carpenter in this town? And did not he himself, for many years, work at his Father's trade? (See the note on *Luke ii. 51.*) Was not *Mary* his mother? Were not *James* and *Joses*, *Judas* and *Simon*, all mean and obscure people, his chief relations? And are not some of his nearest female kindred poor women, who are still living in low circumstances amongst us? (See the note on *Mat. xii. 46.*) And their prejudices arose so high, that they despised him; and, disdaining to be his disciples, were ashamed to own him.

4 But, in answer to their offence at him on these accounts, Jesus told them, that a sort of proverbial saying was then plainly verified with regard to him, *viz.* That a teacher sent of God is ordinarily more honoured and better received among such as never knew him before, than amongst his own townsmen and old acquaintance, kindred and family, who, under the power of envy, are apt to form their judgment of him, not by his real worth and the excellence of his life and doctrine, but by worldly considerations of his person and parentage, and by the meaner appearances he formerly made in private life.

5 And therefore, tho', if he pleased, he could have worked as many miracles at this place as at any other; yet he had no ordinate or moral power for it; he judging it absolutely unfit to throw away his miracles upon those whose obstinate perverseness would turn them into arguments of greater enmity and envy against him, as well as into higher aggravations of their own guilt and condemnation. Nevertheless he cured a few sick people that were brought to him and had faith to be healed, by only laying his hands upon them; which was sufficient to confirm his doctrine, to leave that people without excuse, and to shew them what greater benefits they lost by their contempt of him.

6 Then he removed from *Nazareth*, like one greatly amazed at their obstinacy in rejecting both him and their own mercy merely on account of the meanness of his family; and, taking a circuit through other parts of *Galilee*, he preached in all the little country-towns and villages there, where he had been less known.

7 About this time, Jesus, designing by degrees to spread his gospel in several places where he could not go in person to preach it, called together the twelve, whom he before had chosen to be his apostles, (*chap. iii. 1, 4, &c.*) and began to employ them, sending them out by pairs to preach in the cities of *Judea*, that their testimony might have the more weight, and that they might

two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse;

9 But be shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out and preached.

might mutually assist and encourage one another in their work: And, for the confirmation of their doctrine, he conferred upon them a power of working miracles, even to the casting of devils out of possessed persons.

8, 9. And to the instructions which he gave his apostles about the doctrines they should preach, he added others relating to their behaviour; expressly ordering, that they should make no provision for their sustenance or defence in their journey; nor incur themselves with, or be anxious about, victuals, or clothes, or even money to defray their expence; but that they should set out, just as they were, with only one walking staff, one coat, and one pair of shoes or sandals; thereby intimating, that their present progress would be but for a little while, that the labourer is worthy of his hire, that God would raise them friends in his providence for all needful supplies, and that they were to live by faith upon him for it.

10 He likewise said to them, Whenever ye go into any city or town to preach my gospel, and shall meet with an agreeable family that is willing to hear your words and give you proper entertainment; fix your quarters there, without shifting them, till ye leave its neighbourhood, that ye may not put any damp upon the affection of your friends, nor seem to be whimsical, or to want to pamper sensual appetites.

11 And if ye go to any place where the people will neither admit you into their houses, nor regard the message of salvation with which I send you, withdraw from thence to some other town; and, at your departure from them, shake off the dust of your feet, as a signal of the abhorrence which God and ye yourselves have of their provoking obstinacy and infidelity, and as an intimation that they deserve to be trodden under foot, and that ye will take no further pains with them, but leave them to his strict and righteous judgment: (See the note on Luke ix. 5.) I assuredly tell you, that the punishment of the sinners in such a town or city shall be more abundantly severe, in the great day of account, than that which *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* suffered when God rained fire and brimstone from heaven upon them to consume them, or than that which the wicked inhabitants of those ancient cities shall suffer at the final judgment; in as much as these sin against greater light, and mercies, and obligations, than they did.

12 With these directions and powers the apostles went forth, two and two, to execute their Lord's commission; and, wherever they came, they preached upon the

preached, that men should repent.

13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.

14 And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad;) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

15 Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for He-

the nature, the necessity, and the motives of repentance, with reference to, and by arguments taken from, the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, which was just ready to appear among them.

13 And, to prove the divine authority of their commission, they cast out great numbers of devils in Christ's name, and miraculously cured many persons that were afflicted with various kinds of diseases, using only anointing with oil, as an external symbol, and as an ordinance for the faith of them that were healed †.

14 The apostles doing all these things in the name of Jesus, spread his fame with increasing honour, till at length it reached the ears of *Herod* the tetrarch; (see the note on *Mat. xiv. 1.*): And when he came to hear of the mighty works that were done by Jesus and by his disciples, he was struck with great surprise and terror, saying, under a consciousness of guilt, Surely this is that great prophet and holy man *John the Baptist*, whom I wickedly put to death, and whom God has righteously restored to life; and therefore these wonderful works are wrought by him, to prove his innocence and his divine mission, and to bring vengeance upon me for beheading him.

15 Others had different opinions about him: Some supposed him to be *Elijah the Tishbite*, whom the *Jews*, misled by a mistaken notion of a prophecy in *Malachi iv. 5.* expected to appear just before the coming of the Messiah; others took him to be one of the ancient prophets, raised again from the dead; and others thought he was some new prophet sent of God, like those of old.

16 But, whatsoever were their various conjectures concerning him, *Herod*, whose guilty conscience needed no accuser, could not be beat out of it, but that *John the Baptist*, whom he had murdered, was raised from the dead, and that it was he who appeared with so much reputation and power among the people.

17 For *Herod*, a good while before this, (see the note on *Mat. xiv. 6.*) had ordered *John* to be taken up, committed to jail, and loaded with irons, till at length he put him to death; all which was done, in a way of revenge upon him, for the censure he had passed upon

Herod's

N O T E.

† Anointing with oil was used by the apostles, not as means of healing; for then the cures would not have been miraculous, as these evidently were: But oil being a known symbol of health and joy, the apostles used it in the name of the Lord, (*Jam. v. 14.*) as an external sign of what he would do, in that, as certainly as their bodies were anoint-

ed with it, their health should be restored: And this shews the vanity of *Pope's* pretences to the sacrament of *extreme unction*, which they use for the remission of the sins of dying persons, that their souls may be saved in the world they are going to; whereas the apostles used it only as a signal of restoring the sick to health.

rodias's sake, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him, but she could not.

20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birth-day made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee:

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him; the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

23 And he swore unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

Herod's incestuous marriage with Herodias his own brother Philip's wife.

18 For John had plainly and freely told him, that it was absolutely unlawful for him to take away his brother's wife; and to make her his own, as he had done; Philip himself not being then dead, and having had children by her. (See the reference in *Mat. xiv. 4.*)

19 Herodias was so highly incensed against John for this, that she prevailed upon Herod so far to gratify his own and her resentments as to clap him up in prison, but could not get him to yield to her further desire and solicitations for putting him to death.

20 For how willing soever he might be to please her, and get rid of John, he durst not venture upon such a bold stroke, not only because it might too much incense the people, who universally admired John as an holy messenger from God; but likewise because his own conscience restrained him: For, from what he himself knew of John, he could not but look upon him, and have a secret veneration for him, as at least an honest, pious, good man; and at times he had heard him preach with a great deal of pleasure, and had been so far influenced by it as to comply with many duties which he inculcated, though, his heart not being effectually changed, he would by no means yield to his advice in a case that lay so directly contrary to his own lusts.

21 However, Herodias, keeping this point still in view, found at length a suitable opportunity to bring about her barbarous design in the following manner: Upon the return of Herod's birth-day, he, according to the ancient custom of eastern kings, celebrated it with feasting and public rejoicings; at which were present the nobility, the chief officers of the army, and the principal magistrates and counsellors of Galilee.

22 And, on this jovial occasion, the daughter of this same Herodias, whom she had by her husband Philip, came into the room, and danced in such a manner as was extremely diverting to the king and all his guests; and, being in a merry mood, he spoke to the young miss, saying, I am so exceedingly pleased with you, that I must have you ask some favour of me; and, whatever it be, I promise you, before all this company, it shall be granted.

23 And still further to encourage her, and to assure her that he was in earnest, he bound his promise with a rash oath to this effect, Whatsoever your request may be, I will certainly fulfil it, even to the value of one half of my dominions.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceedingly sorry: yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

24 Upon this, the young creature, not knowing what to say, went out of the company to her mother, and desired that she would please to tell her what she had best ask of the king; and her mother, finding she had now an opportunity to glut her cruel revenge, ordered her to beg the head of *John the Baptist*.

25 Accordingly the daughter immediately returned, and presented her petition to *Herod* the king, saying, Encouraged by your majesty's promise and oath, the favour I have to ask is, That you would graciously condescend now without delay, to present me with the head of *John the Baptist*, commanding it to be served up to me in a dish.

26 This was such a shocking request, especially at a birth-night feast, as the king little expected; and he was extremely troubled at hearing it: However, having so publicly sworn to grant any petition she should present, and being ashamed to appear before the whole court, either rash in making, or fickle and inconstant in not performing, his promise and oath, he would not revoke them by rejecting her; but rather chose to violate conscience, together with all principles of true honour, righteousness, and goodness, and even of humanity itself, than be exposed to the contempt of persons, whose applause was really a reproach.

27, 28. And therefore, under the power of the vilest passions, he, like a merciless, arbitrary tyrant, ordered an officer to go directly to the prison where *John* was confined, and to cut off his head and bring it away forthwith: The officer accordingly went, in obedience to his Lord's unjust and absolute will, and took off this holy man's head; and, bringing it in a dish, presented it to the young woman; and she immediately carried it to her mother, who triumphed in her barbarous spite, and feasted her eyes with the horrid spectacle.

29 And when *John's* disciples heard of this tragical death, they came and obtained leave to dispose of their master's body, which was left in prison without its head; and honourably buried it in a sepulchre, to testify their great respect to him, who had suffered such public injury and disgrace.

30 Now, to return from this digression; In a little time the twelve apostles, having executed their present commission, by publishing the gospel in the towns and cities of *Judea*, came back again to Jesus, and gave him a particular account, as every one must for himself at the great day, of all that they respectively had said and done in the several places where they had been, and

of what success they had met with in their preaching.

31 And, after they had made their report, he ordered them to retire with him, apart from other company, into a certain solitary place, that he might give them further instruction, and that they might rest and refresh themselves for a little time after their late fatigue; for such crowds of people resorted to him where he then was, that they could hardly get time enough to eat their necessary food.

32 Accordingly they got into a boat, which lay in the lake of *Gennesareth*; and, putting off, they landed in as private a manner as possible at a desert part of the country, near the city of *Bethsaida*, (Luke ix. 10.)

33 But when the people saw them making off, and observed which way they steered their course, many of them who knew Jesus, and guessed whither he was going, fetched a compass by land, and made such haste, that they got to the place to which the vessel was bound before he came ashore; and many others, having heard where he was, went out of adjacent towns and cities to meet him.

34 When Jesus therefore came out of the boat, he found a vast multitude waiting for his arrival: And tho' they thereby prevented his desirable retirement with the apostles; he, according to the greatness of his merey, as kindly received them as usual, and took compassion upon them, because he knew their ignorance, wants, and dangers, and that many of them were as sheep desirous of spiritual food and guidance, but had no faithful and able teachers among the *scribes* and *Pharisees* to instruct them; and therefore he set himself to acquaint them with many things relating to his kingdom of grace and glory, and healed such sick persons as were brought to him, (Luke ix. 11.)

35 And when he had taken up so much time in these kind offices that the evening drew on apace, the apostles came up to him, and taking notice that they were in a lonesome uninhabited part of the country, and that daylight would quickly be shut in,

36 They desired that he would be pleased to dismiss the multitude before it grew dark; and order them to go to the nearest towns and villages, to provide themselves victuals, as well as lodging, because they had no food to refresh them.

37 Our Lord replied, What need is there for that? and, for the trial of their faith, said, Give ye them something for their sustenance, that they may not faint by the way. But the disciples, instead of looking to

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran a-foot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far passed:

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered, and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they

they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred penny-worth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves, and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

him, and trusting in him, to enable them to do what he commanded, answered with surprise, How is it possible that we should supply such a prodigious multitude as this? Where should we get provision, or find money enough to buy it for them, which, to say the least, would cost two hundred pence †, if we were only to give every one of them a little.

38 Hereupon he said unto them, Go and see what quantity of food ye have among you: And, when they had made inquiry, according to his order, they returned and told him, that they had only five barley-loaves, and two small fishes; which were next to nothing for satisfying the hunger of so many. (*John vi. 9.*)

39 Then, having bid them bring these loaves and fishes to him, he, like the Master of the family, ordered his disciples to tell the whole multitude, that he would have them sit down on the green sward, in distinct rows, as might be most convenient for receiving the entertainment he was about to give them.

40 Accordingly the people, without going into the unbelieving question, How can he furnish a table in the wilderness; readily seated themselves in ranks ‡, which consisted of fifty persons one way, and an hundred the other.

41 And when they were thus placed, he took the five loaves and two fishes, and looking up to heaven with great solemnity, asked a blessing upon the food, giving thanks to his heavenly Father for it, according to his custom at ordinary meals. (*See the note on Mat. xiv. 19.*) Then he broke the bread, and delivered it together with the fish, his own creating power at the same time multiplying the store, to be distributed through the disciples hands among the several ranks; thereby procuring respect to them from the people; and intimating, that spiritual blessings should be ordinarily communicated, not in an immediate, but in a mediate way, by the ministrations of his servants:

42 And

N O T E S.

† This was a round sum, often, says Dr *Lightsfoot*, in the mouths of the Jews; and reckoning their penny at sevenpence-halfpenny of our money, it amounted to six pounds five shillings sterling.

‡ They seem to have been placed, not in separate companies of fifty or an hundred a-piece, as is more generally thought, but all in one company, ranged like soldiers, in rank and file, either an hundred in length and fifty in depth, or fifty in length and an hundred in depth, which made exactly five thousand. In this manner 'twas easy to place and number

them with expedition, and the food might be commodiously distributed among them, they at the same time having the fairest opportunity of hearing Christ, and seeing that there was no fraud in his management of the miracle in the front. And this plainly reconciles the account here given with that in *Luke ix. 14, 15.* where it is said, they all sat down by fifties in a company: For, according to this method, every one sat in a rank of fifty, as well as of an hundred, either in depth or breadth. See *Pierce's fifth dissertation*, annexed to the Hebrews.

41 And they did all eat, and were filled.

42 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

43 And they that did eat of the loaves, were about five thousand men.

44 And straightway, he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

45 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

46 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

47 And he saw them toiling in rowing; (for the wind was contrary unto them;) and about the fourth watch of the night, he came unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

41 And the apostles having observed their Lord's order in distributing the food among the people, just as they received it from him; every one of this vast multitude eat, till he was fully satisfied.

42 And, after all, there was so much to spare, that the disciples gathered together as many scraps of the broken bread and fish as filled twelve baskets, which were reserved for after-use, that nothing might be wasted: So wonderful was the power of Christ to increase this small pittance, the remainder of which was more than the first provision! (See the note on *Mat. xiv. 20.*)

43 And yet the number of those who had thus eat to the full, was about five thousand men, which were as many thousands as there were single loaves, besides the women and children that were present and partook with them. (*Mat. xiv. 21.*)

44 Then, as soon as all this was dispatched, our blessed Lord insisted that his disciples, though much against their own inclination, should go into the boat by themselves, and pass over the lake of *Gennesareth* toward *Bethsaida*, leaving him behind to dismiss the people before it should be quite dark, and thereby prevent their design, which the disciples themselves were but too likely to fall in with, of forcing him to assume the character of a temporal king. (See the note on *John vi. 15.*)

45 And when he had prevailed with the multitude to depart, he, according to his frequent custom, went up an hill, for better retirement, to spend some time in secret prayer.

46 In the mean while, the latter evening came on, which, according to the *Jewish* way of reckoning, is after sun-set, (see the note on *Mat. xxvi. 20.*); and the disciples in the boat were got to the midst of the lake, Jesus himself continuing still alone on the land.

47 Then the wind rising on a sudden, and blowing full in their teeth, caused the water to be exceeding rough and dangerous; and Jesus saw them tossed about with surging waves, and labouring hard to row against the strong gale. However, he suffered them, for the trial of their faith and patience, to remain in great extremity, till it began to be morning, (see the note on *Mat. xiv. 25.*); at which time he went toward them, walking as readily upon the surface of the rolling floods as if they had been dry ground, according to what is said of the great God, that he *treads upon the waves of the sea*, (*Job ix. 8.*): And, by the manner of his progress, it seemed to the disciples as if he intended to have gone by them.

42 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out.

50 (For they all saw him, and were troubled.) And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For they considered not the miracle of the loaves; for their heart was hardened.

53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55 And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment. And as many as touched him, were made whole.

49, 50. But their fears were greatly alarmed; when they discerned one in human shape walking upon the water, they imagining that it was an apparition; upon which they shrieked out in great surprise; for there was light enough for them to discern something of his form, and they were terribly frightened: But, as our extremity is God's opportunity, and when fears are highest deliverance is often nearest, the compassionate Saviour, who waited to be gracious, immediately spoke to them in his usual free and friendly manner, saying, It is I, your Lord and Master, who am come for your relief; take courage, rejoice in my presence and in my salvation; let no further fears distress you.

51 And, having thus laid the storm within their own minds, he went into the boat to them, and instantly the wind and waves sunk into a perfect calm; at all which they were exceedingly struck with awful wonder and astonishment, as if he had even outdone himself.

52 For though they had but the day before seen the amazing miracle by which he fed five thousand men, besides women and children, with so small a quantity of bread and fishes, (ver. 44.); yet they were so dull of understanding, and slow of heart to believe, that they did not reflect upon the plain demonstration which he then, as well as at several other times, had given of his eternal power and Godhead.

53 Jesus being now with the disciples in the boat, it soon arrived at the port it was bound for; where, having crossed over the lake, they went ashore, not far from *Capernaum*, (John vi. 17.) in the country of *Gennesareth*, which gave name to this lake.

54 And as soon as they were landed, the inhabitants of that neighbourhood knew him to be Jesus, whose fame was raised among them by what he had formerly done thereabouts, (*Mat. viii. 1, — 17.*)

55 Upon this, they ran from place to place, to spread notices in all those parts, that the great Physician of soul and body was come thither; so that multitudes continually flocked to him, bringing with them sick persons in their beds, that they might present them to him for healing, wherever they heard he might be met with.

56 And so great and universal was his reputation, that to whatsoever city, town, or country-village, he went, the people brought out their sick, and laid them before him in the streets as he passed along, intreating the favour of his permitting them to touch his clothes, tho' it were but the hem of his garment: And all that could get near enough only just to touch him with faith,

were

were perfectly cured, whatsoever their diseases had been.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Who could have thought that there should be so much perverseness and obstinacy in human nature against God, such contempt of the only Saviour, such savage cruelty toward the best of men, and such impetuous lusts and passions to break through all obligations and restraints, had not some of Christ's own countrymen, and a *Herod* and *Herodias*, been flaming instances of them, in their behaviour toward him and *John the Baptist*! And ah, how many may be astonished and affected at the word of God, who are not savingly changed by it, and whose unbelief shuts them out from its rich advantages! Yea, they may reverence the preacher, and hear him gladly; and yet continue wicked men and hypocrites. But ministers are to execute their Lord's commission, whether the people will hear or forbear: And as he who sends them on his errand, will furnish them for it, own them in it, and make it the duty and inclination of his people to honour and support them for their work's sake; so they, like the apostles, should commit their subsistence, and labours, and all their successes, to him, and not intangle themselves with the affairs of this life, nor fear the faces of men, but be faithful to Christ and souls, whatsoever may be the event. But how great is the peril of those that hear the gospel, if they reject it; since the heaviest judgments are denounced against them, and none can share in the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom but those that are brought to embrace him and to turn from sin to God thro' him! And how deplorable is their case who are under the conduct of blind and unfaithful guides! But Christ's compassion is toward them that want to be led in a right way; and they shall not seek after him in vain. His goodness and power are infinite, and unwearied, to instruct and heal them, and to supply all their wants of soul and body: He can feed them in a wilderness, and come over floods for their help: And though he may stand at a distance, and suffer his own people to be in great distress for a time; he observes it all, and will come in proper season for their relief, even when they least expect it; and his saying to the soul, *It is I, be not afraid*, is enough to silence every fear, and comfort under every trouble. But when once he shews his power and his glory, and speaks peace, let us not turn again to folly, or give way to unbelief.

C H A P. VII.

The Pharisees find fault with Christ's disciples for eating with unwashed hands, 1,—5. He reproves their hypocrisy, and states the true notion of what does and does not defile a man, 6,—23. He casts out an unclean spirit from the daughter of a Syrophenician woman, 24,—30. And heals a deaf and dumb man, 31,—37.

TEXT.

THEN came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashed) hands, they found fault.

PARAPHRASE.

WHILE our Lord was exercising his ministry and performing his miracles in the land of *Gennesareth*, several *Pharisees* and doctors of the law came thither from *Jerusalem*, and attended him, to observe his words and actions, that they might pick a quarrel with him.

2 And, soon after their coming into those parts, they took notice of some of his disciples who neglected to wash their hands immediately before they sat down to eat; this they superstitiously called eating with defiled or impure hands, and thereupon took occasion to charge them with irreligion and profaneness.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?

6 He answered, and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For, laying aside the commandment of God,

3 For all the Jews, and especially the Pharisees, by virtue of certain traditions handed down to them from their ancestors, were wont commonly to wash their hands just before they eat, thinking it unlawful to sit down to a meal without it.

4 And so exact were they in using this ceremony, that if they had been at market, or in any public company, they would eat nothing till they had first washed their hands, for fear that unawares they might have touched something which they accounted unclean. And many other such sort of rites they were as scrupulous in observing, and laid as much stress upon, as if they were things of necessary and eternal obligation, because they were delivered to them by tradition from some former heads of sects among them, tho' neither the law of Moses nor any other part of the word of God ever enjoined them: As for instance, They insisted on (βαπτισμῶν) some sort of washing of cups, and pots, and brass-vessels, and tables or (κλινῶν) beds on which they used to lie or sit at their meals, that they might cleanse them from an imaginary defilement.

5 On this account therefore the Pharisees and doctors of the law, who, of all the Jews, were the most superstitious, demanded of our Lord, How he, who made such high pretences to holiness, could excuse his disciples from observing the laws of ancient and authentic tradition, whilst, in direct contradiction thereunto, they were so wicked as to sit down to eat without first washing their hands?

6 Our Lord, who knew their hearts and all their evil designs, replied, God, by the prophet Esaias, (xxi. 3.) has given a just and exact description of such hypocrites as ye are, in words of the following import: This people make hypocritical pretences of honouring me with fair speeches and outward shews of purity and devotion; but their hearts do not go along with their words and professions, and it is the least of their concern to glorify me by a sincere regard to pleasing and exalting me.

7 But as their fairest appearances of religion are only lip and not heart service; and they observe, teach, and impose certain doctrines, upon the foot of human authority, in preference and contradiction to my express commands; all their devotions are of no account with me, nor of any avail to themselves.

8 This is an exact description of you, scribes and Pharisees: For whilst, in doctrine and practice, ye shamefully neglect the most important commands of God, relating to righteousness, mercy, faith, and truth,

God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect, thro' your tradition, which ye have delivered; and many such like things do ye.

14 And when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me, every one of you, and understand.

15 There is nothing from without a man, that, entering into him, can defile him:

ye are mighty zealous for, and lay the greatest stress upon, such vain and trifling traditions of men as relate to the necessity of washing pots, and cups, and hands just before eating, with several other such useless and superstitious ceremonies, in which there really can be no religion.

9 And, to bring the matter still closer to them, he added, Ye not only prefer the orders of men to those of God; but, (MARK.) in your plausible way, ye utterly subvert, and act in direct contradiction to, the plainest commands of God, whenever they stand in competition with the traditions of your elders, that ye may preserve and enforce these.

10 As for instance, *Moses*, or rather God by him, expressly commanded children to honour both their parents, (*Exod. xx. 12.*); and such stress is laid in the law upon this important duty, that whoever speaks or acts contemptuously and injuriously against either father or mother, he is sentenced to death, (*chap. xxi. 17.*)

11 But, in opposition to this holy law of God, the doctrine which ye teach, by human authority, is, That if any man devote the money to God and the service of the temple, which was necessary for the relief of his parents, and which ye call *corban*, or a gift consecrated to God; then he is discharged from all obligation of using it for their comfort or support, be they ever so indigent, sickly, or aged.

12 Yea, by this means, ye lay such a restraint upon him, as if it were a sin for him to apply any part of the devoted riches to the relief of the most necessitous father or mother, tho' shewing that sort of piety at home is evidently a principal part of the honour which by the law of God all are obliged to pay to their parents when need requires it:

13 And so by this device of the *Jewish* elders which ye impose upon your followers, and by other such like iniquitous traditions, ye explain away the true sense of God's own law, and evidently defeat its obligation, under hypocritical and specious pretences of the most sacred reverence of his name and of his sanctuary.

14 Then our blessed Lord, turning from the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, applied himself to the common people; and, ordering them all to draw nigh, said, Listen attentively to what I am about to deliver, and reflect seriously upon it, that ye may understand things which differ, and may approve of those which are most excellent.

15 Whatever occasions of sin may arise from external things, none of them make a man unclean, or less acceptable to God, any further than they have a bad in-

but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

15 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he said unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him;

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

fluence upon the soul itself: And therefore whatsoever is originally without the man, tho' it touch him, and be afterwards eaten or drank, and so received into the body; yet if it do not affect his mind and heart, it cannot render him morally polluted. But the unlawful dispositions, thoughts, and designs, which are found in his own corrupt heart, and vent themselves in the words and actions of his life, are the only things that can properly be said to make him filthy and abominable in God's sight.

16 Whoever is willing and desirous to know the truth for his own direction and advantage, let him seriously reflect on what I have been saying.

17 Christ, having finished his discourse to the multitude, retired into an house, taking only his disciples with him; and when he was with them alone, they intreated him, by *Peter* as their mouth, (*Mar. xv. 15.*) that he would please to give them a particular explanation of the foregoing parable.

18 He replied, with an air of surprise at their stupidity, Are ye, who have been so much and so long with me, and whom I have sent to preach to others, so ignorant and dull as not to take in the meaning of so plain a thing as this? Do not ye easily apprehend, that it is impossible for a man to be morally defiled or rendered unclean before God, by the nature or quality of any thing he eats or drinks without intemperance, which is a vice of the mind? The reason of this is so exceeding evident, that one would think ye could not miss of it.

19 For the meat or drink which a man swallows, being corporeal, can make no alteration for the better or worse in the soul, which is of a different nature from all bodies, and is the immediate source of all moral purity or defilement; but every thing that goes in at the mouth passes thro' the stomach and bowels, which performing their proper offices, in separating nourishment for the body, the remainder is discharged by the course of nature, without affecting the heart.

20 On the other hand, said he, the evils that are originally in and proceed from a man's own soul, are the things that really make him vile and unclean: Here is the fountain-head of all moral impurity and pollution whatsoever.

21, 22. For, to instance in a few particulars, all manner of sinful imaginations, designs, and desires, in opposition to God or fellow-creatures; all adulteries, fornication and unnatural pollutions, cruelties and murders, thefts and robberies, covetous over-reaching, oppression and frauds, effeminacy and unchastity in thought

22. These, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness :

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

24 And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know it ; but he could not be hid.

25 For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet :

26 (The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation :) and she besought him, that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled : for it is not meet to take the childrens bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.

28 And she answered, and said unto him, Yes, Lord : yet the dogs under the table, eat of the childrens crumbs.

thought, word or deed, envy and evil-speaking against God or man, haughtiness of spirit and behaviour ; and all sorts of intemperance, together with every foolish, irregular and exorbitant passion :

23 All these defiling abominations proceed from depraved and wicked hearts, as from their spring-head ; and these are the things that do indeed render a man most hatefully vile in himself, and in the eyes of God and all good people.

24 Our Saviour having ended these discourses, which he delivered in the country of *Gennesareth*, (chap. vi. 53.) departed from thence to that part of *Galilee* which borders upon *Tyre* and *Sidon* ; and there he went privately into an house for concealment, at least for a while, that he might avoid the throng of the *Gentiles*, and the envy of the *Jews* on their account : But the fame of his doctrine and miracles so closely followed him wherever he went, that it was next to impossible for him to arrive, even at so remote a place as this, without its being known, as the event shewed.

25, 26. For his coming thither soon reached the ears of a certain woman of *Phenicia*, bordering upon *Syria*, (see the notes on *Mat.* xv. 22.) ; and though she was a *Greek*, and so a stranger by birth to the commonwealth of *Israel* and to the covenants of promise, yet having heard of Jesus, and of the great power and mercy which he had shewn in working many miraculous cures, she came in an humble manner, and threw herself down at his feet, earnestly intreating him to cast out an evil spirit from a young daughter of hers who was possessed and grievously tormented by it.

27 But Jesus, for the trial of her faith, seemed to reject and disdain her, saying, Pray stay, let the children of God's family, his own peculiar people, be first satisfied with the blessings I am come to bestow : For as it would be thought very improper and unnatural, that a parent should take away his childrens food, before they have enough, and give it to the dogs ; so it is not fit that I should deal out my mercies to you, till the *Jews*, who are the household of God, are first served ; since you are without the pale of the covenant, and, for your *Gentile* abominations, deserve to be treated as a dog.

28 The woman replied, Lord, what thou sayest is indeed highly equitable, and I freely own myself to be utterly unworthy of the least of thy favours : Nevertheless, as the dogs themselves are suffered to catch the crumbs that fall from the childrens table, without any injury to them ; so I humbly plead, and hope, that this

one mercy may not be denied me, as the offal of the plentiful blessings which I hear thou hast vouchsafed to the Jews, and which thou mayest spare, if thou pleasest, to a poor wretched outcast, without lessening thy more liberal distributions among them.

29 And he said unto her, For this saying, go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

29 The compassionate Saviour being highly pleased with her humble importunity and unshaken faith, answered, O woman, I cannot tell how to deny your earnest believing petition; it is granted to your heart's content: Depart in peace; Satan is dispossessed, and your daughter is made whole.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid up on the bed.

30 Hereupon the woman returned to her house, rejoicing in a belief of a performance of the things that had been told her from the Lord; and when she got home, she found the evil spirit was cast out, and saw her daughter lying upon the bed with composure and in perfect health.

31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, thro' the midst of the masses of Decapolis.

31 After this, Jesus leaving the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon, and other Gentile towns and cities, went thro' the region of Decapolis, till he came near to the sea of Galilee. (Mat. xv. 29.)

32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

32 And, whilst he was in these parts, a deaf man, who had likewise much ado to speak, (*μωρανός*) was presented to him; and they that brought him earnestly intreated that our Lord would please to lay his hand upon him and heal him, as they knew he had done in other cases, and believed he could do in this.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue:

33 But to shew that he would not be tied down to any one particular method of procedure, especially when others might seem to prescribe to him, he rather chose to vary it; and stepping aside with the man to a small distance from the company, he put his fingers into his ears, and afterwards touched his tongue with a little spittle, using these applications, not as means or natural causes of the cure, but as visible emblems of his invisible healing power, and to shew that he could as easily open this man's ears, and set his tongue at liberty, as touch them.

34 And, looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha; that is, Be opened.

34 Then lifting his eyes up to heaven, to teach us from whence our help comes, and to intimate that his commission for this work was from above, he groined within himself as sympathising with this poor creature under his miseries, and said to him in the Chaldee dialect, with an air of independency, and with the majesty and authority of a God, Be opened †; I command that your di-

N O T E

† This was a word of sovereign authority, directed to the man, or to his distemper, and commanding the cure; and not an address to God for power to heal: Nor was there any need of such address; for Christ had a perpetual fund of power residing in himself,

to work all miracles whenever he pleased, even to the quickening of the dead, as he had asserted, *John* v. 26. And this shews, that his looking up to heaven was not in a way of application to his Father for assistance to do the work.

distemper be removed; receive your hearing and your speech.

35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, the more the more a great deal they published it.

37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

35 And immediately upon Christ's pronouncing these words, the man was fully restored to his hearing, and the impediment of his speech was entirely removed; so that he spake distinctly, and without any remaining difficulty.

36 Then Jesus, to avoid all appearances of vain-glory, and occasions of envy and rage in his enemies, his time being not yet come, ordered the man, and those that were eye-witnesses of the cure, not to divulge it: But they were so affected with his mercy and power, and so apprehensive as if over-modesty put him upon giving them this charge, that the more earnest he was in forbidding them to make the miracle public, the more pains they took in spreading it abroad.

37 And they were so exceedingly amazed, and overcome with joyful wonder, that they could not help saying, to his honour, That nothing came amiss to him; but that he was able and ready to do every thing that could be desired for the relief of miserable creatures; as appeared in his restoring the deaf, and (MARK) such as could not tell how to speak before, to their perfect hearing and speech.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a sink of wickedness is the heart of man; and how vain and trifling are its inventions for cleansing! Superstitious minds are more fond of external rites and ceremonies of human devising, than of heart-purity, and the most important duties of God's commanding: But all the devotion and service which has not God's warrant in his word, and is not offered with sincere and upright hearts to his glory, is unprofitable and vain.—When divine grace effectually works in them that believe, what a happy change does it make upon them! What high and honourable thoughts does it give them of Christ! How sympathizing and compassionate does it make them to their afflicted relations and friends; how importunate with the Lord for mercy on their behalf; and how humble and patient under seeming denials! But though he may sometimes try his people's faith with many difficulties and discouragements, he secretly upholds and animates it, till at length he owns and honours it by fulfilling the utmost of their wishes or hopes: And if we would be cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and would be delivered from the power of Satan, and the various miseries of this present world, we should look to him for direction and relief, and seek and take his favour, in his own way, without prescribing to him. He can unstop deaf ears, and teach the tongue of the stammerer to speak forth his praise: And our great concern should be to listen to his instructions with an obedient ear; and to ascribe to him, on all proper occasions, as he shall direct, the glory due to his great name, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working.

C H A P. VIII.

Jesus miraculously feeds four thousand with seven loaves, 1,—9. Refuses to give a sign from heaven to the Pharisees, 10,—13. Cautions his disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees, and of Herod, 14,—

21. *Restores sight to a blind man, 22,—26. Asks his disciples what they and others thought of him, and foretells his sufferings, 27,—33. And exhorts to an acknowledgment of him and his gospel under persecutions for his sake, 34,—38.*

TEXT.

IN those days, the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said unto them,

1 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat :

2 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way : for divers of them came from far.

3 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here in the wilderness ?

4 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye ? And they said, Seven.

5 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground : and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before them ; and they did so before the people.

6 And they had a few small fishes :

PARAPHRASE.

ABOUT this time, a great multitude being with Jesus and his apostles, in a desert place, to hear him preach, to behold his wonderful works, and to get their sick healed, and having continued with him till they were reduced to straits for want of food ; he, whose eye is ever upon the needy and distressed, called his apostles to him, and, merely from his own free motion, said,

2 My heart is moved with tenderness and concern for this great crowd of people, because of the pains they have taken, and the inconveniencies they have suffered, by following me, for three days running, in uninhabited places, where they could meet with little or no refreshment, and are now quite destitute of necessary supplies :

3 And should I withdraw from them, or order them to go home, before they have any victuals for their sustenance ; poor creatures ! many of them must certainly suffer great hardship by means of their hunger, if they do not utterly perish on the road : For he knew that some of them had a great way to go.

4 The disciples, not reflecting upon the signal miracle whereby, not long since, he had fed five thousand men in their presence, (chap. vi: 41,—44.) asked him, How it could be possible for any one, in such a barren desolate place as they were in, to get provision enough for the satisfying of so great a company ?

5 But (xai) he, without any emotion of spirit at the dishonour which their stupidity and unbelief reflected upon him, asked them how much bread they had with them ? To which they replied, That they had only seven loaves, which were next to nothing for feeding so great a number of people.

6 However, without more ado, he commanded the whole multitude to sit down, in convenient order for an entertainment, on the ground ; and then, having received the loaves, he, like the master of the family at meals, and according to his own constant custom on such occasions, recommended the people and the food to the blessing of God in thanksgiving and prayer : Then breaking the bread, and at the same time increasing it by his own divine power, he put it into the hands of his apostles, as his servants, to distribute it among the people ; and they accordingly did so.

7 The apostles had likewise a few small fishes, that were

fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to let them also before them.

8 So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten, were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

10 And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and said, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily,

were included in the provisions for which our Lord gave thanks †; and he, miraculously enlarging their quantity also, ordered the apostles to hand them round about among the company.

8 By means of this distribution of the bread and fish, the vast number of people then present had enough; and so amazing was the increase, by the creating power of this divine Master of the feast, that after they were all thoroughly satisfied, the apostles gathered together as many fragments as filled seven baskets for after-use.

9 And yet the number of the persons who were thus liberally fed was about four thousand men, besides women and children, (*Mat. xv. 38.*) and when they had been graciously instructed, and sufficiently refreshed for their journey home, our Lord dismissed them.

10 The multitude being gone, he embarked with his apostles; and, passing over the lake of *Gennesareth*, went ashore on the coast of *Dalmanutha*, not far from *Magdala*. (*Mat. xv. 39.*)

11 And there the *Pharisees* soon gathered together about him, in company with the *Sadducees*, (*Mat. xvi. 1.*) and began to enter into a dispute with him, under pretence that all the wonderful works he had wrought were not sufficient to satisfy them of his divine power and mission. They therefore demanded, that, to put the matter past doubt, he would not amuse them with surprising changes only on earthly things, in which tricks of art might possibly deceive the common people; but that he would give them some immediate and visible sign from heaven itself, in which there could be no collusion. (See the note on *Mat. xvi. 1.*) This they did, not from any real desire of receiving conviction, but in hopes of getting some advantage against him.

12 Our Lord therefore, knowing their hypocrisy, and their wicked design in this proposal, fetched a deep sigh, and said, What false pretenders to honest inquiry, and what a malicious set of people, am I cast amongst! After all my unquestionable miracles, which, having been

N O T E.

† As Christ's blessing the loaves and fishes related not to the miraculous multiplication of them, but to his customary acknowledgment of God as a bountiful benefactor, (see the note on *Matt. xiv. 19.*); so it seems that his blessing them did not consist of two prayers, distinctly made one after another over each; but only of one prayer, relating to the whole entertainment; for the loaves and fishes were doubtless eat together: And in all other places, where this, and the miracle of feeding five thousand, are spoken of, his blessing both the loaves and fishes is re-

presented as but one action. But the reason why, in the institution of the Lord's supper, there were distinct prayers, one before the bread, and the other afterwards, before the cup was received, might be, not only for the greater solemnity; but likewise because the eating was over before the drinking began, and because the two elements were therein set apart for sacred use, to signify and bring to remembrance two distinct parts of Christ's sufferings, one of his body, as intimated in its being broken; and the other of his soul, in the shedding of his blood.

Verily, I say unto you, There shall no sign be given to this generation.

wrought among them on earth; are capable of being tried and proved by the strictest examination, why should they insist upon it that they will not believe unless I gratify their unreasonable curiosity in giving them a visible sign immediately from heaven? I tell you plainly, that no sign of this sort shall be granted to so incorrigible a generation of men as ye are: Ye do not deserve it, nor would ye be convinced by it; and it is beneath my character to humour you in it.

12 And he left them, and entering into the ship again, departed to the other side.

13 Having given them this answer, he turned away from them, as one that would take no further pains to reclaim them; and, re-embarking in the vessel, he returned to the other side of the lake.

14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

14 Now by this time the disciples stock of bread was so far reduced, that they had but a single loaf aboard among them all, they having forgot to recruit while they were ashore.

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

15 And Christ knowing this, as also that they began to call to mind and to blame themselves for their neglect, took occasion, according to his custom of improving present occurrences, in temporal affairs, for spiritual uses, to warn them against the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians who were mostly Sadducees; meaning their corrupt doctrines, which were as apt to spread their malignant influence thro' mens minds and manners, and to infect others that converse with them, as leaven, put into a parcel of meal, is to diffuse itself through and sour the whole mass.

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread.

16 The apostles, upon hearing him speak of leaven just at the time when they were concerned about scarcity of bread, imagined that he thereby intended to reprove them for their carelessness in not providing so much as they might want for their present supply.

17 And when Jesus knew it, he said unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

17-But Jesus observing their gross mistake, expostulated with them in a way of friendly and yet sharp rebuke, saying, How is it that ye so strangely misconstrue my admonition, by fancying that I am so solicitous about food, as to upbraid you for your negligence in not furnishing yourselves with bread? Do not ye, after having been so long with me, yet understand my way of spiritualizing natural things? and, after the great miracles I have wrought in your presence, and that particularly to supply a defect of bread, have ye not yet learned to depend upon my power and goodness? Are ye still so stupid, and so slow of heart to believe, notwithstanding all that ye have seen and heard from me?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and ha-

18 Yea, after I have enlightened your minds, are ye still so apt to be confused, and carnal in your thoughts?
and,

having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember!

and, after I have opened your ears to instruction, are ye still so dull of apprehension, and so prone to misunderstand my words? What! do ye never reflect upon the great things which ye have seen me do?

19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

19 Pray look back, and consider: When I lately fed five thousand men, besides women and children, with five loaves, and they eat as long as they could, how many baskets-full did ye gather together of the remaining pieces that were to spare? They replied, Twelve.

20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.

20 And, said he, when the other day I satisfied to the full four thousand men, besides women and children, with seven loaves, how many baskets did ye fill with the remaining fragments then? They answered, Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

21 Then he added, How amazing is it, that ye should be capable of so perfectly remembering the vast increase which my power gave once and again to so small a quantity of food; and yet should be so unbelieving, and so weak and stupid, as to imagine that I was solicitous about your having no bread, when I cautioned you against the leaven of the Pharisees and others; and that ye should not rather apprehend me to mean the dangerous infection of their false doctrines, which insinuate themselves like leaven!

22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

22 Soon after our Lord had said this, he landed with his apostles at *Bethsaida*; and there some people presented to him a blind man, intreating that he would have pity on him and cure him, which they believed he could do by only laying his hands upon him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him, if he saw ought?

23 And as he was always ready to do good, and yet with as little noise and appearances of ostentation as possible; so he freely granted their request, tho' chusing to work this miracle in a private manner, because of the obstinate infidelity which reigned among the inhabitants of that place: And therefore, taking the blind man by the hand, he led him, like a guide, out of the town; where, putting spittle into his eyes, and laying his hands upon him, he asked him, Whether he had any sight?

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking.

24 The blind man, beginning to perceive some glimmering of light, lifted up his eyes, and told him, that he saw a little, but it was so obscurely, that he could hardly distinguish men from trees by any thing but their walking.

25 After that, he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

25 Then the divine Oculist touched his eyes a second time; and bidding him look up again, he found his sight so perfectly recovered, that he could easily and exactly distinguish every man that presented before him.

26 And he sent him away to his house,

26 And when our Lord had thus thoroughly restored his sight, he dismissed him, charging him to go directly

house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.

27 And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of *Cesarea Philippi*; and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth, and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30 And he charged them, that they should tell no man of him.

31 And he began to teach them; that the Son of man must suffer many

to his own home, without returning into *Bethsaida*, or acquainting any of its inhabitants what a wonderful cure he had wrought upon him: For Christ knew that it would be to little purpose for this man to go and report his cure to them, who were so infamous for their impenitence, perverseness, and contempt, in rejecting his gospel, and his numerous mighty works which they had been eye-witnesses of. (*Mat. xi. 21.*)

27 After this, Jesus removed with his apostles from that neighbourhood, and travelled thro' several towns in the country of *Cesarea Philippi*; and, while they were on their journey, he took an opportunity to introduce his design of gradually leading them into a view of his proper work and office as the Messiah, by asking them, What the opinion and talk of the common people were concerning him?

28 To which the apostles replied, It is the prevailing notion of some, that thou art *John the Baptist*, risen from the dead: Others think thee to be *Elijah the Tishbite*, come down from heaven, as the forerunner of the Messiah: And others say that thou art *Jeremiah*, or some other of the ancient prophets, appearing again among them. (*Mat. xvi. 14.*)

29 Then said our Lord, But, among these various opinions, what are your own thoughts about me, after all the intimate acquaintance ye have had with me, and with my manner of life, doctrine, and miracles? Peter answered, in the name of the rest, they signifying their consent, We are satisfied that thou art the true Messiah formerly promised in the Old Testament, and now looked for by those that are waiting for redemption in *Israel*: and we believe in thee as such.

30 Our Saviour thereupon expressed his high approbation of this noble confession of their faith, (*Mat. xvi. 17.*) and yet enjoined them not to be free in publishing this doctrine for the present, at least not in plain and express terms, that he might not encourage any attempts of the common people to set him up for a temporal king, nor put his inveterate enemies upon resolutions of dispatching him before his time, nor might forestall the brighter evidence which was to be given of his divine character after his resurrection, lest they, who would not receive the apostles declaration now, should be prejudiced against the higher testimony they were to give of him then.

31 And to let them into the reason of this prohibition, and at the same time into the great design of his coming into the world to perform the Messiah's office, he began to tell them very freely, which he afterwards often repeated,

many things, and and berejected of the elders, and of the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

peated, that, before he should appear in all the glory of his character, he must suffer many severe and opprobrious things from the hands of his enemies; must be denied, abused, and treated as an impostor, by the Jewish sanhedrim, till at length they would put him to a painful and ignominious death, three days after which he should certainly rise again. (See the note on *Mat.* xviii. 63.)

31 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

31 And now, while their faith was so strong, he thought proper to tell them of these important things (*εὐαγγέλιον*) in the plainest terms, without using any figure, that he might check their expectations of worldly grandeur from him, and might prepare them before-hand for the trial of his sufferings, and prevent their afterwards stumbling at them. But they did not know how to take in thoughts of this kind; and *Peter* particularly, upon hearing him speak of suffering and dying, was so full of amazement and concern, that he rashly took him aside, and in too free a manner chid him, saying, What do you mean by talking at this rate? far be it from thee, Lord, that any of these dismal things should ever come to pass. (*Mat.* xvi. 22.)

32 But when he had turned about, and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

32 But the meek and humble Jesus never discovered such resentment against a disciple as on this occasion; when, turning short upon *Peter*, and looking with a stern countenance, and with a glance of his eye toward the rest of the apostles that they might the more observe it, he severely took him to task in their hearing, and said to him with holy indignation, Away with all this false friendship: You herein act the part of the greatest enemy to the most important design of my commission: Satan himself could not suggest a more injurious thing to me; and you are really doing his work, and acting under his influence, to defeat the method by which his power is to be destroyed; (see the note on *Mat.* xvi. 23.): For you herein have no true discerning or taste of the spiritual nature of my kingdom, and of those things which God has ordained for his glory and the redemption of his people; but are only relishing and consulting what may be most likely to promote temporal grandeur and worldly advantages.

33 And when he had called the people unto him, with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me,

33 Then ordering the people to draw near, that they, together with his apostles, might bear what was necessary for them also to learn, he addressed himself to the whole company in the following manner: Whosoever among you desires to embrace my doctrine, and adhere to me, must be unbottomed from self, and be ready to give up his worldly honours, pleasures, and enjoyments,

me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

and to suffer all sorts of persecutions, even to death, for my sake †; and must cleave with full purpose of heart unto me, following my example, and observing all my commands.

35 For he, who, thro' unbelief and fear of sufferings, shall disown and forsake me and my cause in hopes of preserving his life for the present, shall certainly lose it by the worst of deaths for ever: But he, who, from a principle of faith in, and love to me, shall courageously hazard his life for my honour, and suffer death for his belief, esteem, and profession of my gospel, shall only exchange a temporal for an eternal life; and so, properly speaking, his life shall be rather perfected than lost, and he will be the greatest gainer in the end.

36, 37. For what will all the comforts and enjoyments of this uncertain, unsatisfying, and perishing world, avail any man, were he to have them in their utmost fullness, if at last his own precious and immortal soul should be lost for ever, in a deprivation of all happiness, and in being overwhelmed with eternal anguish and despair? What can compensate such a dreadful loss as this? What can retrieve it? Or what would not any man in his senses, especially when he begins to feel the terrors of this loss, give or suffer to prevent it?

38 The condition therefore of all those must be very sad indeed, who prefer any thing in this world to me; since whoever, upon any temporal consideration, shall be ashamed to profess and stand up for me and my cause, or shall be afraid to own me and my gospel, people, and ways, in a corrupt and degenerate age that opposes and reviles them; the true Messiah, who is indeed the Son of man, will disdain to own such for his disciples, when he shall appear in the brightest glory of his divine as well as office-characters, surrounded with an innumerable company of angels, to judge the world in righteousness at the last day. (See Luke ix. 26. and the note upon it.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How apt is unbelief to raise and stick at difficulties, as if they were too great for Christ to surmount; and how prone to misconstrue his dispensations, and to forget the years of the right hand of the Most High! and how unreasonably doth it reject the plainest and properest evidence which Christ has given, and want to be gratified in some extraordinary way of its own suggesting! But faith, and not fancy, is to be encouraged; and all this unbelief, whether in the total, or only in the partial degree, argues such hardness of heart, as calls for lamentation and severe reproof: And yet, alas! how great are its remainders in God's own people during their present state of infirmity! How doth an evil heaven work in them.

N O T E.

† Taking up the cross, is an allusion to a known custom among the Romans, who obliged those that were to be crucified to take their cross, or at least part of it, upon their shoulders, and carry it to the place of execution. See the note on Matt. xxiii. 34.

and attempt to insinuate itself into them! And what need have they to be warned, and to be continually watchful against it, and that with respect to corrupt doctrines as well as practices, because of the bad influence that principles have upon the heart and life! This works and prevails to the ruin of obstinate sinners; and if they persist in infidelity and impenitence, Christ will never gratify their curiosity or humour, to reclaim them; he will turn away from them in righteous indignation, and leave them to the heavy judgments which they deserve. But oh how ready is he to bear with his people's infirmities, and to help, and heal, and save them, who are sensible of their wants, and apply by faith to him for mercy! He sometimes relieves them in an instant, and at others in a more gradual way; sometimes in a public, and at others in a more private manner, as may be most for his glory and their good; and all his gracious discoveries to them are at the most seasonable times, when they are fittest to receive them, and most likely not to abuse them: But if Satan gets an advantage, and they, through his influence, and the carnal workings of their own hearts, make a wrong use of them, Christ will shew his displeasure, and sharply rebuke them, how much soever he loves them.—How low were his disciples notions about the nature of his kingdom, and how slow of understanding, believing, and consenting to, the plainest notices he gave them of his sufferings and death! But we must receive a humbled, as well as an exalted Saviour, if we would have him for our own; and must be ready to suffer with him, and not be ashamed to own him by a professed subjection to him, however we may be reproached for it, as ever we hope to be glorified with him, and to be owned by him, when he shall come in the illustrious pomp and grandeur of the last day. What are all the sufferings and shame of this present state, compared with the glory that shall be revealed then? And then what signifies it whether we be in the prosperous or afflicted circumstances of this dying life? The great concern is, what will become of our immortal souls, and what they shall be for ever.

C H A P. IX.

Christ's transfiguration, 1,—10. His discourse about the coming of Elias, 11,—13. He casts out an evil spirit, which his disciples could not do for want of faith, 14,—19. Foretels his death and resurrection, 30,—32. Exhorts his disciples to humility, 33,—37. Forbids to prevent their acting for him who were not against him, and cautions against offending any that believe in him, 38,—50.

TEXT.

AN D he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, at the close of the foregoing discourse, said †, I assuredly tell you, that the Messiah will soon give a specimen of his judicial power: For, some who are now living, and hearing me speak, shall not die, till they see a signal appearance of his power and kingdom, in the plentiful effusion of his spirit, in the utter destruction of the Jews for their aggravated unbelief, and in the amazing success of the gospel, and establishment of the New-Testament church thro' the world; and some shall very soon behold a lively emblem of all his glory, which shall hereafter be more fully revealed.

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(See

N O T E.

† Here is evidently a wrong division of the chapters, which was the work of later ages: For this verse belongs to the close of the preceding discourse, as appears from the other

evangelists; and therefore it ought to have concluded the former chapter, and not begun this, according to the division that is made in *Manuscripts* between chap. xvi. and xvii.

(See the note on *Mat. xvi. 28.*)

1 And after six days, Jesus tar-
geth with him,
Peter, and James,
and leadeth them
up unto an high
mountain apart
by themselves :
and he was trans-
figured before
them.

2 And his rai-
ment became shi-
ning, exceeding
white as snow ; so
as no fuller on
earth can white
them.

3 And there ap-
peared unto them
Elias, with Mo-
ses : and they
were talking with
Jesus.

4 And Peter
answered and said
to Jesus, Master,
it is good for us
to be here : and
let us make three
tabernacles ; one
for thee, and one
for Moses, and
one for Elias.

5 For he wist
not what to say ;
for they were sore
afraid.

6 And there
was a cloud that
overshadowed
them : and a voice
came out of the
cloud, saying,
This is my be-
loved Son ; hear
him.

2 And after six days were completely run out from this time, (*Luke ix. 28.*) Jesus singled out three of his apostles, *Peter, James, and John* ; and taking them along with him to the top of a remarkable high hill, (see the note on *Mat. xvii. 1.*) the form of his person was there suddenly changed into such dazzling lustre, as gave him the appearance of God incarnate, before their eyes. (See *Mat. xvii. 2.* and the note there.)

3 His face not only shone with rays of brightness like the meridian-sun in a clear sky ; but beams of divine glory seemed to dart thro' every pore of his body ; and, by means of these, all his clothes glittered, and appeared as perfectly white as snow, far surpassing the utmost power of the fulling-art to imitate.

4 And, as a further representation of his coming hereafter to be glorified in his saints, two eminent ser-
vants of God from heaven appeared with him, in shining robes, viz. *Moses* and *Elias* : And to shew that the law and the prophets, as well as the evangelists and apostles, bore witness to Christ, and that Old as well as New Testament believers should be glorified with him, these ancient chiefs of the former dispensation were admitted to commune with him.

5 Then *Peter*, full of ecstasy and amazement at this glorious and transporting sight, broke out into the fol-
lowing exclamation and request, Lord, what a heavenly interview is this ! What an honour and delight is it for us, thy poor disciples, to be favoured with such a pre-
sence ! Here let us all fix our abode ; and, in order thereunto, suffer us to erect three tents, one for thee, another for *Moses*, and the third for *Elias*, that what we now enjoy may be continued to us.

6 So powerfully did his warm affections bear down his judgment ; for he, as well as his two other brethren, was in a manner overcome with awful wonder and joy, so that he almost lost possession of his own mind, and hardly knew what he said.

7 And, at the same time, a supernatural cloud, which was a further emblem of the divine glory, descended upon the company, (see the note on *Mat. xvii. 5.*) ; and out of the cloud a voice from God the Father himself reached the ears of the apostles, saying, This is my be-
loved Son, who partakes of my nature, and fulfils my pleasure, and is the grand medium of all communion between me and my people, and who reveals my will as the last and standing rule of faith and obedience in all things : Reverence, adore, and believe in him, and hear-

hearken diligently to the voice of his word in whatsoever he shall say unto you.

8 And suddenly when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

8 And presently after this voice, the cloud was withdrawn, and *Moses* and *Elias* were gone; and the apostles, recovering themselves out of the rapturous consternation which had almost overset their mortal nature, and looking about, saw nobody with them but Jesus himself, who then appeared again with his usual garb and countenance,

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

9 Then Jesus came down with his apostles from the mount; and, before they got to any other company, strictly enjoined them to take no notice of what they had seen to any one, till after his resurrection, because that would be the properest and most seasonable time for fully manifesting and publishing his glory, and would procure more credit to their report of this transaction, than it would have found had they made it during his state of humiliation,

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

10 Accordingly, in obedience to his command, they kept the secret among themselves till after he was risen; but, in the mean time, they canvassed things over in a way of inquiry and debate one with another about the sense in which they were to understand his rising from the dead; whether it were to be taken literally, or in some metaphorical reference to a revival of his temporal dominion and glory which their heads were full of, but of which there were little visible hopes in the then present state of things.

11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that *Elias* must first come?

11 And as *Elias* had only shewn himself privately and transiently to themselves, and they were obliged to make it an absolute secret till after what Christ had called his own resurrection, they asked him, Why their doctors insisted upon it, that *Elias* must appear among the people before the Messiah, to make way for his coming to set up his kingdom.

12 And he answered and told them, *Elias* verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

12 In answer to this, our Lord told them, It was indeed necessary, according to the scripture, that *Elias* should first appear, to begin and lead the way to the great reformation which the Messiah was to make in the world, by directing the people to him: And he further informed them how the ancient prophets had likewise foretold, that the incarnate Son of God must undergo many sufferings from the hands of wicked men, and be contemned and rejected as an impostor, and even put to death, before the manifestation of his kingdom and glory.

13 But I say unto you, that *Elias* is indeed come, and

13 But, says he, I assure you, that the *Elias* intended in prophecy † has already appeared, and done his work: *John the Baptist* came in the spirit and power of that

f. 2.

N O T E.

† As it is written, relates to *Elias's* coming, and not to the scribes' treatment of him.

and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

14 And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him, saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

17 And one of the multitude answered, and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit:

18 And whosoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pincheth away: and I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out; and they could not.

19 He answered him, and said,

famous man, as the forerunner of the Messiah; and yet the scribes, being misled by false traditions to expect a personal appearance of *Elijah the Tishbite*, would not own *John* under that character; but shamefully despised him, and were willing that he should be destroyed.

14 The day after Christ's coming down with the three disciples from the mount of transfiguration, (*Luke ix. 37.*) he went to the place where the rest of the apostles were, and found a great company of people crowding about them, and the doctors of the law disputing with them, in hopes of being too hard for them while their Lord was not present to assist and take their part.

15 And immediately, upon his appearing, a universal surprise and pleasure spread through the multitude, who had before missed him, and knew not where he was gone, nor whether they should ever be able to find him again; they therefore, in all haste flocking to him, expressed their joy in respectful salutations, to bid him welcome.

16 Then he, who knew all that passed whilst he was absent, as well as when he was present, asked the *Jewish* doctors, what was the matter, or the reason of their dispute with the apostles, whom they had been contending with?

17 Upon which, they not caring to enter the lists with him, one of the company replied, Sir, it is occasioned by my bringing my only son to thee to see whether I could get any relief for him, who is sorely afflicted by an evil spirit, which has taken away his speech and hearing, (*ver. 25.*)

18 And his case is so deplorable, that when or where-soever this malicious spirit seizes him, he throws him into violent convulsions; so that, poor creature, he froths at the mouth, grates his teeth, and, being often seized and tormented, is almost reduced to a skeleton: I therefore, not finding thee, intreated some of thy disciples to dispossess this mischievous demon; but, alas! he is such a powerful, headstrong spirit, that they could not master him.

19 Now as, upon the apostles fruitless attempt, this man's unbelief put him upon taking part with the scribes in the foregoing dispute, our Lord's answer was in a way of reproof to him, which † included them, saying,

N O T E

† It is strange to me, that no expolitor whom I have consulted on this place takes any notice of its being expressly said, that our Lord directed this answer to the father of the child, which, with other reasons given in the note

on *Matt. xvii. 17.* seems clearly to determine, that the scribes, and the people who sided with them, together with this man, and not the apostles, were meant by the faithless generation whom Christ on this occasion re-

faith; O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him; and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child:

22 And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him; but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, with tears, Lord, I believe;

O perverse and unbelieving set of men, how long shall it be before the wonderful things I am daily performing will satisfy you of my unlimited power to work the greatest miracles, by what hand and whenever I please? and how long shall my patience be tried, and my soul grieved at the hardness of your hearts, before ye will believe? Bring the lad hither, that I may give you this further proof of my power and mercy in healing him.

20 They accordingly brought him to Jesus; and, as soon as the youth came within sight, the evil spirit, enraged at the thought of being dispossessed, flung the poor young creature into a terrible fit, tore him with violent convulsions as if he would presently rack him to death, and threw him furiously down upon the ground, where he lay tumbling and tossing about, and foaming at the mouth.

21 And whilst he lay in this distress before all the people, our Lord, to shew how incurable a case this was by any human means, asked the father, in their hearing, How long his son had been in this miserable condition? He replied, Alas! this is no new thing, he has been subject to it even from his childhood to this very day:

22 And in many of these terrible fits the devil has violently hurled him sometimes into the fire, and at others into the water, to the apparent hazard of his life. But now, Sir, I humbly offer him to your compassion; and beg, that if this case be not beyond the reach of your power, the calamitous circumstances of it may move your pity toward him and me, and engage your help.

23 Jesus answered, The only difficulty lies in your own unbelief: You put an *if* upon my ability, I return it upon your faith; *if* you are but as ready to believe in my power and mercy, as I am to exert them, all will be well, and nothing shall be found too difficult for me to do: What say you, then? Do you really believe that I am able to do this great thing for your son?

24 Upon this, the father of the poor afflicted youth, reflecting on the late workings of his unbelief, and finding a spirit of faith beginning to spring up within him, cried out aloud, with tears of intermingled grief and joy, Lord, I now do sincerely believe in thy all-sufficiency for my help, and am ashamed to think that there should be so much unbelief in my heart as thou hast seen there:

N O T E.

severely reproved: For it is natural to suppose, that, upon the apostles attempting in vain to relieve his son, his disappointment overcame his faith, and made him fall in with the scribes in their dispute against them, as unable to work so great a miracle as this even in

their Master's name; and his afterwards (ver 22, 23) speaking doubtfully of Christ's power, and Christ putting it to him whether he believed that he was able to cure his son, strengthens this thought. See also the note on Luke ix. 41.

lieve; help thou mine unbelief.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26 And the spirit cried; and rent him fore, and came out of him; and he was as one dead; inasmuch, that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting.

30 And they departed thence, and passed thro' Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and

there; O forgive it, and take away all the remainders of it, that I and my son may be thoroughly cured, I of my spiritual, and he of his corporal disease, at once.

25 As soon as he had uttered these words in the hearing of the multitude, they crowded up still nearer to see the event; which when Jesus observed, he, turning toward the distressed youth, spoke with awful majesty and power to the evil spirit, saying, Thou malicious and mischievous dæmon, who, besides other acts of violence, hast taken away the speech and the hearing of this person, tho' thou resistedst my apostles, I will now make thee feel my authority, and force thee to obey it: I therefore peremptorily command thee to depart from him, and never to trouble him more.

26 No sooner had Jesus spoken in this manner, but the evil spirit made a hideous roaring, and, flinging him into terrible convulsions, departed from him with the greatest signs of ill-nature and reluctance imaginable: And the young man on a sudden lay still, and, to all appearance, so entirely breathless on the ground, that many of the company verily thought him to be dead.

27 But Jesus taking hold of his hand, commanded him to rise; and he instantly got up, being perfectly well at once.

28 When all this was over, and our Lord and his disciples were retired into an house alone, they privately inquired of him, What might be the reason of their not being able to cast the devil out of this youth, as well as to perform other miracles which they had wrought in his name?

29 He told them it was because that sort of extraordinary faith of miracles, which was necessary in them to the casting out of devils, could not ordinarily go forth, or exert itself to produce its effect, without solemn prayer with fasting, which they had neglected. (See the note on *Mat. xvii. 21.*)

30 After this, our Lord, designing to go into Judea, (*chap. x. 1.*) travelled privately, with his apostles only, thro' Galilee, without the knowledge of the people, that he might not be hindered, by their flocking to him, from reaching Jerusalem at the time he proposed, and that he might have the better opportunity of instructing these his constant attendants by the way.

31 For he then insisted upon what he had told them before, (*chap. viii. 31.*) saying, It is already settled by the decree of my Father, and by the prophecies of the Old Testament, that I the Messiah shall, by divine permission, be perfidiously betrayed, and put into the power

and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

31 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

32 And became to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves, by the way?

34 But they held their peace; for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and said unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, re-

of wicked men; and they will deal cruelly with me, till they take me off by a violent death; and on the third day afterwards I shall rise again from the dead.

32 But still, tho' he spoke of these things in the most plain and express terms, they could not comprehend his meaning, the literal sense being so contrary to all their opinions about his secular dominion; and they were ashamed and afraid to desire him to explain himself any further upon those points, lest he should be displeased with them for their ignorance and stupidity.

33 Hereupon they entered into hot and carnal contentions among themselves on the road. And when Jesus arriving at Capernaum, went with them into the house of his usual residence there, he, whose knowledge was always privy to their most secret transactions, took an opportunity to ask them, What they had been disputing about in their journey?

34 But they, being conscious that the subject of their debate, together with the pride and warmth with which they had managed it, was unbecoming, and would be offensive to their Lord, made no reply, till they found that it was in vain to think of concealing it from him, (*Mat. xviii. 1.*) For the main point in eager dispute between them, while they were travelling together, was about which of them should have the precedence in his temporal kingdom, which they imagined from his expressions (*ver. 9.*) he would rise to with great glory, as soon as he should get through some shocking difficulties and troubles that would amount to their notion of a civil death.

35 Then, to put a check upon their fierce and ambitious temper and worldly views, Jesus sitting down, and calling all the apostles about him, told them, that the way for any one to be advanced to the highest honours and privileges of his kingdom, was, to have low thoughts of himself, and condescend to the humblest services for doing good; but that, if any one should be contentious, and proudly aspire after preferment and preeminence over others, he should be reckoned the meanest of all, and should be really abased, and fall under the greatest contempt.

36 And, to impress these sentiments by a visible emblem, he, calling a little child, placed him before them; and then, affectionately embracing him in his arms, addressed himself to them, saying,

37 The account I make of meek and humble souls, who, like this infant, have no ambitious views, is such, that I esteem them as partakers of my spirit and like-

ceiveth me: and whoſo ſhall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that ſent me.

38 And John answered him, ſaying, Maſter, we ſaw one caſting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, becauſe he followeth not us.

39 But Jeſus ſaid, Forbid him not: for there is no man which ſhall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly ſpeak evil of me.

40 For he that is not againſt us, is on our part.

41 For whoſoever ſhall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, becauſe ye belong to Chriſt, verily I ſay unto you, He ſhall not loſe his reward.

42 And whoſoever ſhall offend one of theſe little ones that believe in me, it is better for

nefs, and as ſtanding in the neareſt relation to me; and whoſoever ſhall heartily love and ſhew favour to any one of them, becauſe of his reſemblance of me, and relation to me, ſhall be eſteemed as having done it to myſelf; and not to me only; for this is the ſame thing as doing it to my heavenly Father, who ſent me, and is one with me.

38 This diſcourſe ſo affected the apoſtle *John*, that, reflecting on a late inſtance of his own and his brethrens behaviour, he wanted to know whether it were conſiſtent with that meek and humble ſpirit which his Lord had been recommending; and therefore ſaid to him, Maſter, we one day ſaw a man making uſe of thy name to caſt out devils, though he was neither one of the twelve nor of the ſeventy to whom thou gaveſt authority to preach and work miracles, nor had ever joined our company and attended on thee as one of thy profeſſed diſciples †; and therefore we charged him never to do ſo any more, leſt thy honour ſhould ſuffer by peoples taking upon them to act in thy name, without a commiſſion from thee.

39 But our Lord replied, It was wrong in you to go about to prevent or diſcourage him: For it can hardly be thought that any one who has ſo much faith in me as to make uſe of my name, and that againſt Satan, and is ſo far owned as to be enabled to perform ſuch a miraculous work, can readily ſay any thing diſhonourable of that very name by which he performed it.

40 For if any man be not an enemy, carrying on a contrary deſign to that which we are purſuing, it is to be preſumed that he is a friend; and he ought not to be diſcountenanced, but encouraged, even in the ſmalleſt and moſt diſtant expreſſions of his friendſhip and reſpect.

41 For whoever, from an heart well-affected toward me, ſhall perform the leaſt offices of kindneſs to any of you my friends and ſervants, for my name's ſake, becauſe ye are my diſciples, and are engaged in my ſervice, even though it were but giving you ſo inconfiderable a reſreſhment as a cup of cold water; I ſolemnly aſſure you, it ſhall be graciously accepted, and ſhall have its reward.

42 And, on the other hand, I declare, with reſpect to others as well as you, that whoſoever ſhall diſcourage, grieve or hinder any, tho' it were but the weakeſt and meaneſt believer in me, or ſervant of mine, it would have been much rather to be choſen, that he ſhould have

N O T E.

† It is not unlikely but that this was one of *John the Baptiſt's* diſciples, who believed in Chriſt, though he did not aſſociate with our Lord's diſciples in their attendances on him.

for him, that a million were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire:

have been cut off by a death as sudden and violent, as if, with a great stone fastened to his neck, he had been thrown into the sea, than that he should have been guilty of so injurious a crime, which draws after it a much heavier punishment.

43, 44. And if any corruption in either of your hearts, or any temptation or allurements of this world, should arise to prevent your compliance with this or any other duty, though that obstacle should be as dear to you as a right hand, and parting with it should be as painful as cutting off that member of the body; yet it is much more desirable to undergo this self-mortification, in order to your inheriting everlasting life, than to retain all the friends and comforts of this world, till you go into a state of endless and insupportable torment, which, for its perpetual restlessness and exquisite torture, is like a worm ever gnawing the tenderest vitals, and never dying or ceasing to corrode them; and like the constant burning of a man's flesh with a fierce fire that never will be extinguished.

45, 46. And, to illustrate this matter by your value for another member of the body, if any corruptions of the heart, or temptations of life, that would turn you aside from the way of duty, be thought as dear and advantageous to you as the legs you walk upon; it is much more for your interest, safety, and comfort, to submit to such severe acts of self-denial as are like cutting off one of these, that you may not be hindered in your way to everlasting perfection and blessedness, than to favour and indulge those darling enticements here, till they bring you to all the terrors and anguish of an everlasting hell, where a guilty conscience will be continually teasing, gnawing, and tearing the wounded soul with stinging remorse; and God's fiery indignation will flame out upon it, with almighty force, and unappeasable fury for ever.

47, 48. Yea, to add one illustration more, If any inordinate affections and intemperate appetites within, or any friends, possessions, or pleasures of this world without, have such an ascendancy over you, that it is like plucking out one of your eyes to part with them; it is nevertheless a much wiser and better choice to give up these for the spiritual blessings of grace and glory that are to be enjoyed in the gospel-kingdom, which begins on earth and is perfected in heaven, than to have your fill of those carnal and sensual things, and go to hell with them, where, instead of finding any relief from them, they will ever turn upon you, in your re-
men-

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be seasoned with salt.

50 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

membrance of them, with agonizing twitches, like the riggling and biting of a living worm upon the forest wound, and will pierce and torture you like the hottest flame, without cessation, abatement or end.

49 For as every burnt-offering under the law was salted with salt †, in order to its being consumed with the fire of the altar, which never went out; so every one, who has fitted himself for destruction, by indulging his irregular appetites, yielding to temptation, and apostatizing from me, and from my truths and ways, shall fall a sacrifice to vindictive justice, to be destroyed by the everlasting fire of God's unquenchable wrath, which will consume all his happiness, whilst it preserves him from a cessation of being: And, on the other hand, every one who goes into acts of self-denial, and freely offers himself as a living sacrifice to God, devoted to his service, shall be seasoned with grace, which, like salt, will make him savoury, and preserve him from destruction for ever.

50 Our Lord having on this occasion mentioned salt, improved the metaphor to further instruction, saying, As salt is good for preserving meats from putrefaction, and making them savoury; so it is good that ye, my disciples and servants, be seasoned with gospel-truth and grace, for the purifying of your hearts and lives, and the reforming of others, and for spreading the favour of my knowledge in your own souls, and wherever ye go: But as salt, if it loses its saltiness, is fit for nothing, but is cast away as irrecoverable to any good use; so if ye, whose hearts ought to be purified by faith, and filled with a divine favour, and who, like salt, ought to be instrumental in purifying and flavourizing others; if ye, I say, should prove to be destitute of evangelical truth and grace, what can ye be fit for but to be utterly destroyed? See to it therefore, that my doctrine, in its truth and power, abide with you; and that ye be united in heart and design, without either envying or despising one another, to propagate my gospel in the world.

RECollections.

How glorious is our Lord Jesus Christ; and how delightful are the manifestations of his glory! Some believers see more of it, and are admitted to draw nearer to him, than others; and they cannot but say, at such seasons, It is good for

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N O T E.

† As the sacrifices were salted with salt, both as a preparation for their being consumed by fire on the altar, and as an emblem of their purification from corruption, and of their favour and acceptableness to God; so it seems as if salting were here spoken of in

this double view: Accordingly some are said to be salted with fire, to denote their destruction; and others are spoken of under the notion of a sacrifice salted with salt, to denote their acceptance and preservation, as I have considered it in the paraphrase.

us to be here. But none of them must expect to be always favoured with such delights, till they get to heaven; in the mean while, let us hear him whom the Father owns for his beloved Son.—When Christ withdraws, we are troubled and dejected, and utterly insufficient for a due performance of any service; but his returns bring light, and strength, and joy: And oh how much do we lose, and what advantage does the devil get against us, from the weakness of our faith! Was this more in exercise, we should receive greater riches of mercy, and should be able to do all things through Christ's strengthenings. Wherever Satan has got possession, he will keep it as long as he can; and the sooner he gets it in the days of youth, the more loth he is to quit it, and the harder it goes with us at his parting: However, Christ, as sovereign Lord of all, can command him out at pleasure; and if he orders him to depart and return no more, he must obey. But after Jesus has wrought salvation for us, he observes all our secret thoughts and actions, our remaining unbelief and uncharitableness, pride and vanity, and our disputes by the way; he resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble; and the favour we shew to such for his sake, whether they follow with us or not, is graciously looked upon as done to himself, and shall not lose its reward. How careful should we be to guard against a selfish party-spirit, to lay no obstructions or discouragements in the way of the meanest of Christ's disciples and servants, to avoid all occasions of sin, to be sound in God's statutes, and to have our hearts seasoned with grace, and our lives will ordered as becomes the gospel! And how much better is it to go with self-denials to heaven, than to go with self-indulgencies to hell; into one of which states each of us in a little while must enter, and there abide in all possible happiness, or misery, for ever.

C H A P. X.

Christ's discourse about divorces, 1,—12. He blesses young children, and reproves those that would have prevented their being brought to him, 13,—16. Discourses with a rich young man about the way of obtaining eternal life, 17,—22. Cautions his disciples against the temptations of riches, 23,—27. Shews them the advantage of sufferings for the gospel's sake, 28,—31. Foretels his own death and resurrection, 32,—34. Reproves James and John for their ambition, 35,—45. And cures blind Bartimeus, 46,—52.

TEXT.

AND he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea, by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

3 And the Pharisees came to him and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, after the foregoing discourses, removed from Galilee, and travelled, his apostles attending him, into Judea, through that part of the country which lay near the banks of Jordan, on the other side of that river; where, upon his arrival, crowds of people flocked about him again: And, according to custom, he set about doing them good, not only by his merciful miracles, but likewise by preaching the gospel of his kingdom.

2 And here the Pharisees, as usual, coming to ensnare him, asked, Whether it were lawful for a man to divorce his wife or not? thinking with themselves, that if he should declare against it, they might charge him with contradicting Moses, who, in some cases, allowed of it; and if he should justify it, they might expose him for inconsistency with what he himself had taught some time before, (*Mat. v. 32.*) and for encouraging the li-

wife ? tempting him.

3 And he answered, and said unto them, What did Moses command you ?

4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart, he wrote you this precept.

6 But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female.

7 For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife ;

8 And they twain shall be one flesh : so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples

cautious practice of that age, in which men put away their wives for every humour on the most frivolous pretences imaginable.

3 But (A.) as he knew their invidious and captious design, he wisely turned the question upon them, saying, What doctrine did *Moses* deliver in the law, relating to this point ?

4 The Pharisees replied, That *Moses*, in several cases, left men at liberty to discharge themselves of their wives, and to marry others, provided they did but give the former a certificate of the divorce.

5 Our Lord answered, Whatsoever permission *Moses* granted, it was not by way of injunction, but only of condescension and compassion, to prevent greater evils, which otherwise would have been produced by the obstinacy of your tempers, and by your cruel usage of wives that do not suit your own fancies.

6 But in the first institution of marriage, immediately upon the creation of man, things were put upon a quite different foot ; God then creating but one male and one female, and joining them together, as husband and wife, by such bonds of nature and affection as could not take place between either of them and any other man or woman that might afterwards be in the world.

7, 8. Accordingly, in settling the law of marriage for their posterity, (*Gen. ii. 24.*) God declared, that, for the sake of this relation, a man shall quit the most endearing engagements he before was under to his other kindred, even to the nearest of them, such as father and mother, that he may come under the strictest ties to his wife, as nearer and dearer to him than any of them ; and further added, that both these shall be so inseparably united together, as to be counted but one body, which *Adam's* and *Eve's* really were before the substance of her flesh was formed out of his.

9 As therefore God, by his primitive ordinance, has joined together only one man and one woman to be husband and wife, in the ordinary course of things, for their lives ; let no man pretend, on slight or trivial occasions, to make a separation between them ; or imagine that *Moses's* permission, or rather connivance, in certain circumstances, under the legal dispensation, is to be pleaded for any divorce, without important reasons for it, in the times of reformation that are now coming on.

10 After his discourse with the *Pharisees*, which silenced them, and defeated all their hopes of getting any ad-

ples asked him again of the same matter.

11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

advantage against Christ; when he and his apostles were got together alone in an house, they desired him to explain this point still further to them.

12 Whereupon he told them, That the true state of the case, as he had declared to the *Pharisees*, (Mat. xiv. 9.) and had formerly said to themselves, (Mat. v. 32.) was in short this, That unless the man or woman had been guilty of criminal conversation with another person, which was in its own nature inconsistent with, and a dissolution of, the matrimonial bond; whatsoever husband should divorce his wife for any other cause, and marry another woman during her life, he would, in God's account, be an adulterer, to the injury of his divorced wife.

12 And whatsoever wife should quit her conjugal relation to her husband for any other cause, and, during his life, should marry another man, she would, in God's account, be guilty of the sin of adultery, to the injury of her forsaken husband.

13 About this time some persons, who believed in our Lord Jesus \dagger , presented their young children to him, desiring that he would lay his hands upon them, and bless them; at which the apostles opposed those that brought them, lest it should prove an occasion of too much trouble to their Lord, and of diverting him from his other work, by encouraging multitudes to crowd infants upon him.

14 But when Christ observed this repulse, he was so far from countenancing the apostles in it, that he discovered a holy resentment, and sharply reproved them for it, saying, Let the tender babes have free access to me, and by no means do any thing to prevent them; for the members of the gospel-kingdom, which I am come to set up in the world, consist of such as these, as well as of grown persons who in temper and disposition are like these.

15 As to grown persons, I assuredly tell you, who by your behaviour on this occasion plainly need the admonition, Whoever he be that does not embrace the gospel of the kingdom with humility and meekness, free from prevailing hypocrisy, wrath and malice, pride and am-

am-

N O T E.

\dagger That these persons believed in Christ, appears from the end for which they brought their children to him: Which was, not that he might cure them of any corporal disease; (for there is no hint of their having any; and if they had, the disciples would not have gone about to prevent them, any more than other people); but it was, that he might

bless them with the blessings of his kingdom, (ver. 16.) And his *touching* them is an expression of the same import with his *laying his hands* upon them, as it is often used in the evangelists, and is particularly to be understood in this very case, ver. 16. and Matt. xix. 13, 14, 15. See the prophetic and note there.

child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and knelt to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good, but one, that is God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered, and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

ambition, in resemblance of the temper of a little child, shall never be partakers of its great and glorious blessings.

16 And then, to shew that children themselves were likewise admitted to share in these privileges, he, taking the infants into his arms, affectionately embraced them, and, laying his hands upon them, authoritatively pronounced them blessed.

17 When Jesus went from this place, and was on the road to *Jerusalem*, (ver. 32.) a certain young gentleman, of considerable figure and authority among the *Jews*, (*Mat. xix. 22. and Luke xviii. 18.*) came with all speed and earnestness to him, and, falling down on his knees, saluted him with great respect, under the most honourable title that used to be given to their rabbies, saying, (see the note on *Luke xviii.*) Good Master, I believe that you are some extraordinary prophet, and can direct me in the most important of all concerns; and therefore I beg that you would tell me what is necessary for me to do, in order to my obtaining a right to everlasting life.

18 Our Lord replied, What means your calling me, by way of eminence, *good*, since you do not take me to be any thing more than a man? This title is too high and flattering to be applied so emphatically to any rabbi, or mere creature; for there is none absolutely and perfectly good, but God himself, who is the Author of every kind of goodness.

19 But, as to your important question, The only way for obtaining a right to eternal life by your own doings, is perfectly to obey all the commands of God, which you know are written in his law, and, with respect to duties of the second table, are such as these, *viz.* Thou shalt neither be guilty of idolatry, or any uncleanness in heart or life; nor of murder, or any tendencies toward it; nor of theft or cheating; nor of lying or false-accusing; nor of over-reaching, or any way depriving another of his right; and thou shalt behave with all decency, obedience, and reverence, toward your parents, and toward all such as God has placed in superior ranks and given authority over you. (See the note on *Luke xviii. 20.*)

20 The young man, supposing himself to have been guilty of no defect in any of these articles, according to his lax acceptation of their meaning, replied, Sir, I am confident that my obedience, in all these points, has been very exact, from my infancy to this very day; and I am ready to do any thing else that you can mention,

if it be further necessary to secure my title to eternal happiness.

20 Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

21 Then Jesus, looking earnestly upon him, was pleased with the virtuous dispositions that appeared in him; and yet, to shew him his ignorance, self-conceit, and vain confidence, told him, that much more than he imagined was contained in the requirements of the law. If, says he, you would indeed come up to its high demands, I will propose one thing for your trial, which you have not yet done: Go and sell your whole estate, and distribute it to the poor; and in case you yield a willing obedience only to this one demand, I assure you of much better treasure in heaven, than all your possessions on earth: When you have done this, come again to me, and follow my doctrine and example in your faith and obedience, freely submitting to whatsoever hardships or sufferings may befall you, in these evil days, for my sake; and I will effectually bring you to eternal life. (See the note on *Mat. xix. 17.*)

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

22 But (*sc.*) when the young man heard what acts of self-denial Christ called him to, he was sorely disappointed, and turned away from this good Master, with a sorrowful heart; for he had a very plentiful estate, and could on no account whatsoever think of parting with it, even tho' he should lose heaven itself by keeping it.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and said unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

23 Hereupon Jesus, casting his eyes upon his disciples, like one who would observe how they were affected with this discourse, and with its event as to this young man, took occasion to caution them against ambitious desires after the riches of this world, and against their foolish expectations of temporal prosperity under him, saying, How great are the temptations and dangers of the rich! and how extremely difficult is it for them to be so far weaned from the allurements of this world, as to seek and prefer the glorious blessings of my kingdom before them, and to be ready, when called to it, to resign their earthly enjoyments for me and heaven!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again, and said unto them, Children, how

24 The apostles, hearing him use such a pathetic, earnest exclamation, were exceedingly amazed; they rather imagining that riches were tokens of God's favour, and were among the benefits of the Messiah's kingdom. But, to set them right in their thoughts about these things, he further said, My dear children, who indeed shew yourselves to be but children in understanding, do not mistake me: My words are not to be understood of a bare possession, much less of a regular enjoyment and use, of riches; but of an inordinate disposition of mens hearts toward them, whereby they

how hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them, said, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

28 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered, and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's,

30 But he shall

place their chief happiness in them. How exceeding hard is it for persons of this character to obtain such a humble and self-denying, holy and heavenly temper of spirit, as is necessary for the subjects of my kingdom!

25 'This is so very difficult, that, in a proverbial way, it may be said, So bulky a creature as a camel may sooner thrust through so small a passage as the eye of a needle, than a rich man, who places his confidence in his riches, can, with all the evil affections of his heart toward this world, get thro' the strait gate and narrow way that leads to everlasting life. (See the note on *Mat.* xix. 24.)

26 At this the apostles were still more abundantly astonished than before, supposing that their Lord hereby made it an absolute impossibility for such a man ever to be saved, and saying one to another, At this rate, who that is rich, or that even desires to be so, as mankind generally do, can ever attain salvation?

27 But Jesus looking upon them with pity for the anxiety of mind which he saw they were in, said, This is indeed utterly impossible to every man by any power of his own; but is not so to the mercy and power of God, with whom nothing is too hard to do: He can make an effectual change upon the heart by regenerating grace, and enable it freely to surrender up all the affluence of this world, and every thing that is dearest to it here, when they stand in competition with me and the blessings of my kingdom, and when he demands a resignation of them for his glory.

28 Then *Peter*, recovering from his surprise, as if none could be saved, was ready to run into the contrary extreme, as if he and his brethren had done enough to secure their salvation, saying, Lord, behold how thoroughly we have complied with all this! 'Tho' we had no great possessions in the world; yet we have freely given up our all, such as it was, to be thy disciples and servants, and to adhere to thee.

29 Jesus replied, I assuredly tell you, that what ye have lost for me is not worth mentioning, in comparison with what ye shall gain by me: For no one, upon the whole, shall be a loser, who, from a principle of faith and love, is willing to quit his house and home, and nearest relations, such as brethren or sisters, a father or mother, a wife or children, or contentedly suffers his estate, be it more or less, to be taken from him, rather than not to be faithful in his profession of my name and gospel.

30 But, amidst all his losses and persecutions, he shall

receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions: and in the world to come, eternal life.

31 But many that are first, shall be last; and the last, first.

32 And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem: and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

33 Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem: and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles;

34 And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

shall have habitations, friends, and possessions, with such satisfaction and inward peace and joy, by the favour of God's providence, and the gracious influences and comforts of his Spirit, as will be an hundred times better for him, even in this world, than every thing that he parted with for them; and all shall be crowned with an eternal life of glory and blessedness in the world to come.

31 Nevertheless, to shew the freeness and sovereignty of divine grace in all this, many who, like the *Jews*, are first called, and stand nearest, in their own and others opinion, to the kingdom of heaven, shall be last in my account, and in their entrance into it; and, on the other hand, Many who, like the *Gentiles*, will be last called, and are thought by themselves and others to be furthest off from this kingdom, shall be first in my esteem, and in their admissions to it. (See the note on *Mat. xix. 30.*)

32 Whilst our Lord was thus instructing his apostles, they were in the road to *Jerusalem*, he leading the way and going before them: And, when they observed with what resolution he hastened thither, they were perfectly astonished, considering what he himself had suggested, and they had seen, of his enemies designs against him; and, while they followed him, it was with heavy hearts, under fearful apprehensions of the great danger which they were all likely to be exposed to there: And as he knew their thoughts, so the better to fore-arm them against being dismayed at what would befall him, he again, ordering the twelve apostles to come up to him, told them plainly of the terrible distresses that he must undergo.

33 Observe, says he, my words. We are now on our journey to *Jerusalem*: and the time draws very nigh, in which the things I have often mentioned before will be accomplished. Soon after I the Messiah get thither, I shall be betrayed into the hands of the great council, consisting mostly of the chief priests and *Jewish* doctors: And such is their enmity against me, that they will certainly censure me as an impostor who deserves to die; and will accuse and deliver me over, as a capital offender, to the *Roman* governor and his soldiers, for judgment and execution.

34 And these soldiers will abuse me with all manner of indignity, cruelty, and contempt; they will deride and insult me, scourge and buffet me, (see the note on *Mat. xxvii. 26.*) and shamefully spit upon me, and at length will put me to a barbarous and ignominious death;

after which, I shall surely rise again on the third day.

35 And James and John the sons of Zebedee come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

35 Hereupon, tho' the disciples knew not what to make of these repeated and express declarations of his sufferings and death, and of the resurrection which should follow; yet having some confused and general notions, that, after his going through some further troubles, he would raise up a kingdom of external pomp and grandeur with a high hand, which should be like a resurrection from the dead, *James* and *John*, the two sons of *Zebedee*, came to him with their mother, (*Mat. xx. 20.*) and, making use of her interest in him, begged that he would grant them a favour which they had to ask him.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

36 Then Jesus ordered them to open their minds to him, saying, What would you have me do for you? Let me hear it, that I may tell you whether your request shall be granted or not.

37 They said unto him; Grant unto us, that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

37 They answered, It is that thou wouldst please to give us the honour and dignity of being placed next to thyself, one of us at thy right hand, and the other at thy left, when thou shalt set up that glorious kingdom in the world, which we apprehend will soon appear.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

38 But Jesus replied, Alas for your pride and ignorance, and carnal notions about the nature of my office and kingdom! Ye aim at temporal preferments, little thinking that they do not lie within the compass of my design; and ye ask for honours in my presence, not knowing that the way for obtaining them lies through great hardships and sufferings, or what it would cost you to come at them: Let me ask you, Do ye think that ye are able to pledge me in the bitter cup of sorrows which I must drink, or to bear the baptism of sufferings which I must pass under.

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal, shall ye be baptized:

39 And they, without any manner of hesitancy, or due sense of their own weakness and need of divine grace, answered, Yes, we can bear or suffer the worst of injuries and indignities with thee. Well, said our Lord †, ye shall indeed have enough of these after my example: Waters of a full cup shall be wrung out to you; and as ye will therein suffer, ye shall hereafter be glorified with me.

40 But to sit on my right hand, and on my left hand,

40 But as to an advancement to the very highest seats of glory, and nearest to my person, at my right and left hand;

N O T E.

† The apostle *James* suffered martyrdom under *Herod*, *Acts xii. 1.*; and the apostle *John* met with various persecutions, and was banished to the isle of *Patmos*, for the sake of Christ, *Rev. i. 9.* But, as is generally believed, he only, of all the apostles, escaped

a violent death; and therefore I have limited this baptism to sufferings short of proper martyrdom. *Vid. Ensch. Recl. Hist. l. iii. cap. 1. & 31. Et, si non mala plet. Dorothei. l. iii. & non apostol.*

hand, is not mine to give: but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.

41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them to him, and said unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

hand; this is an honour which depends upon ancient settlements between the Father and me; and therefore is not mine to dispose of to any, (*καὶ οὐκ ἐστιν ἐμὸν*) but to those for whom it is prepared in his eternal counsels and decrees. (See the note on *Mat. xx. 23.*)

41 Now when the other ten apostles understood what petition James and John had presented, they began to stomach it, (*ὕψιστο ἀγροῦσι*), that those two brethren should go about to supplant the rest by an attempt to get the pre-eminence, which every one of them was ambitious of obtaining and hoped to get for himself.

42 But, to repress this envious and aspiring temper in them all, Jesus, calling them to him, said, Ye are acted by the very same spirit, and are taking just such measures as ambitious persons go into, in seeking after the powers and preferments of this world: Ye know indeed, that, in the several nations of the *Gentiles*, there is a mighty strife for dominion and authority, and they are counted the greatest men who get the government into their hands, and tyrannize over others by absolute will and pleasure.

43 But ye have a very wrong notion of the nature of my kingdom, if ye imagine that its honours are to be pursued and managed after this rate. No, no: Whoever he be among you that desires to be truly great and honourable under me; the only way of his rising, is to be meek and humble; and to act the part of a servant, rather than of a lord or master, in his way of doing all the good he can to others.

44 And whoever among you would excel all the rest, and shine with the highest lustre, must be more eminent than his brethren, for condescension, humility, and works of labour and love; and must be willing to stoop to the meanest services, for the benefit of all that he has to do with.

45 For even I the Messiah myself, who am indeed your Lord and Master, did not come into the world to set up for state and grandeur, or to behave in an assuming manner toward others; but my great design and business here is, to act the part of my Father's servant, to go about doing good to the souls and bodies of men whilst I live, and at last to give up my life itself, (*ἀντὶ πάντων τῶν ἁνθρώπων*), as a price of redemption for great multitudes, that I, dying in their room and stead, may satisfy God's law and justice on their behalf, and set them free from the dreadful slavery to which their sins had brought and exposed them: This is the way in which I am to rise to my throne of glory; and, if ye would fol-

low me thither, ye must learn of me, who am meek and lowly in heart, and walk so as I shall have left you an example.

46 Soon after this, our blessed Lord arrived with his disciples at *Jericho*, still pursuing his journey toward *Jerusalem*; and upon his departure from that town, together with his apostles, and a great multitude of people who followed him from thence, he came to a place where a noted blind beggar, viz. *Bartimeus* (which, in the *Syriac* language, signifies the son of *Timeus*) was sitting on one side of the road to ask the alms of travellers who came that way. (See the note on *Luke* xviii. 35.)

47 This man, hearing the noise of a great company near him, inquired what might be the occasion of that extraordinary concourse; and upon the people's telling him that the famous Prophet called *Jesus* of *Nazareth* was just then passing by, he immediately cried out aloud with great earnestness, saying, Lord *Jesus*, thou promised Messiah of the house of *David*, I have heard of thy fame, and believe in the greatness of thy power and mercy; oh that thou wouldest commiserate my deplorable case!

48 And yet such was the unnatural hard-heartedness of several in the company, that they were angry, and huffed him for making such a clamour, and did all they could to silence him: But the more they offered to restrain him, the more he raised his voice and importunity, saying, Oh thou Saviour of *Israel*, who art sprung from our father *David's* loins, I beseech thee cast an eye of pity upon me.

49 Then *Jesus*, making a full stop, ordered some of the company to lead this blind man to him: And they immediately went and spoke to him, saying, Come along with us, get up, and be of good courage; you need not fear finding favour, *Jesus* himself calls for you to come to him.

50 Hereupon the blind man sprung up in an ecstasy; and, for the greater speed and decency, throwing off an old upper covering in which he sat to screen himself from the inconveniences of the weather, hastened away to *Jesus*.

51 And the blessed Saviour, to encourage and try him, said, What is it you thus earnestly call upon me for? Is it for an alms, or for a cure? The blind man answered, Lord, my humble request is, for what none of this great company can do besides thee, that thou wouldest please to shew me the greatness of thy power and compassion in restoring my sight, and thereby enabling me to see thee in the light of this world, and get my

46 And they came to *Jericho*: and as he went out of *Jericho* with his disciples, and a great number of people, blind *Bartimeus*, the son of *Timeus*, sat by the highway-side, begging.

47 And when he heard that it was *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, he began to cry out, and say, *Jesus*, thou son of *David*, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of *David*, have mercy on me.

49 And *Jesus* stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort; rise: he calleth thee.

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to *Jesus*.

51 And *Jesus* answered, and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

my bread in an industrious way without being always obliged to go a-begging.

51 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

52 Then Jesus, taking pity upon him, said, Be of good comfort, and depart in peace; thy faith is answered, and thy request is granted; be it unto thee according to thy dependence upon me for this cure: And at that very instant, his eyesight was perfectly recovered; and he, full of joy and praise, joined the company, and went along with them after Jesus in his way toward Jerusalem.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a bright example of unwearied labour and patience, of wisdom, caution, and humbleness of mind, of condescension, tenderness and compassion to the miserable, has our blessed Lord set before us! and what an excellent dispensation of purity, light and grace, do we live under in gospel-days! The law of marriage is restored to its primitive institution, and settled, by the word of God, on such a foundation, as is admirably suited to prevent confusion in families, and to engage conjugal faithfulness and affection: The covenant privileges of the children of believers are established with advantage; Christ owns and favours them, and makes them emblems of such disciples as may expect the blessings of his kingdom, which are all spiritual, holy, and heavenly, incomparably better than the riches and honours of this world. Suffering and self-denial, with faith and patience, is the way to glory; but whatsoever we may lose or undergo for Christ, and in love to him, we shall never lose by him; he that willingly bears the cross here, shall wear the crown for ever: May we believe in a suffering, as well as risen Saviour! and did we but realize by faith his death and resurrection for us, we should think nothing too much to endure for him: But self confidence, ambition, and a worldly spirit, are the bane of religion and happiness; the more they are tried, the more they are found to be so; and nothing but the mighty power of God can effectually preserve or recover us from them. But oh how apt are the remainders of these iniquities to work even in the hearts of Christ's own disciples, and to offend him; though humility is itself our honour, and the first step to further advancement in his kingdom of grace and glory! This will keep us from despising any of our brethren, or desiring to prefer ourselves to them, or to exercise dominion over their faith; and this will dispose us to imitate our blessed Lord, in bearing with the infirmities, the ignorance, and the slowness, of all that we have to do with, and in shewing compassion to the poor and blind and miserable. And as wants and distresses of one kind or other will attend every one of us while we are here, we, like blind *Bartimeus*, should make them all known to the Lord, and cry mightily to him for his seasonable help, believing that he is able and willing to succour, supply, and save us: And when he takes pity upon us, it becomes us to follow him.

CHAPTER XI.

Christ rides in triumph to Jerusalem, 1,—11. Curses the barren fig-tree, 12,—14. Turns the traders out of the temple, 15,—18. Exhorts to faith, and a forgiving temper, as necessary to acceptable prayer, 19,—26. And silences the Jews by a question about John's baptism, 27,—33.

TEXT.

AND when they came nigh to Jerusalem,

PARAPHRASE.

NOW when Jesus, attended with his apostles, approached Jerusalem, and came to a place at the

lem, unto Bethphage, and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you; and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat: loose him, and bring him.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him thither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met: and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there, said unto them, What do ye loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way; and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed them in the way.

foot of mount *Olivet*, not far from the villages of *Bethphage* and *Bethany*; he, knowing that the appointed time for his last sufferings was just at hand, and designing to make a public entry into the city, ordered two of his disciples to go from this place into one of those villages which lay opposite to them; and told them, that, upon their entrance into it, they would certainly meet with a young ass, which never had been backed, standing tied in the street; and bade them untie and bring it away to him. (See the note on *Matt. xxi. 7.*)

3 And, said he, if any man should observe you, and ask what ye mean by leading away the ass's colt, tell him, that the Lord of all, the great Proprietor of heaven and earth, has a present occasion, in his state of humiliation, to make use of it; and, immediately upon your saying this, his heart shall be over-ruled to grant free leave for your bringing it to me.

4 Accordingly, the two disciples readily went into the village, in obedience to their Lord's command, without objecting or disputing against it, or doubting whether the event would answer his prediction; and, finding a young ass, just as he had told them, tied by a door at the corner of a street, they immediately went to loose him that they might lead him away.

5 And its owners (*Luke xix. 33.*) standing by, and taking notice that two strangers were untying and about to lead away the colt, asked them, what authority they had to meddle with another person's property?

6 The apostles replied, as Jesus had ordered them, that the great Lord of heaven and earth wanted to make use of it for a special purpose; and, upon hearing this, they said no more, but let the apostles lead it away without any further opposition.

7 Then they brought the young ass to the place where Jesus waited for it; and, to shew their respect to him, spread their clothes upon its back, and mounted him upon it, that he might ride to *Jerusalem* in a manner answerable to ancient prophecies of the Messiah. (*Isa. lxii. 11.* and *Zech. ix. 9.* See the note on *Matt. xxi. 4, 5.*)

8 And as he rode amidst a great crowd of attendants, many of them, to signify their joy, and the honour they desired to pay him, spread their clothes in the road, instead of tapestry, for him to ride over, (see the note on *Matt. xxi. 8.*) thereby representing the triumphal entry of a king; whilst others, to express the gladness of their hearts, as at the feast of tabernacles, cut off boughs from the trees, and strewed them in the road to adorn it.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

10 Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the evening-tide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry.

13 And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

15 And they come to Jerusalem:

9 And all this numerous retinue, both before and after him, made the air ring with loud acclamations, saying, May all prosperity attend the long expected Messiah, who comes from God to bring salvation to *Israel*!

10 May the throne of *David* our father be exalted, and flourish, and abide for ever, under the reign of this his Son, who is come with authority from our God? Save now, we beseech thee, O Lord: We offer thee our loftiest praises: Let the angels join our song; and let God himself power down all blessings from on high upon *Messiah* our king, upon his kingdom, and upon us. (See the notes on *Matt.* xxi. 9.)

11 In this manner Jesus made his public entry into *Jerusalem*; and, to shew that he did not aim at a temporal, but spiritual, rule and government, he went, not to the court, but to the temple to preach and set things to rights there: And, having taken an exact notice of the state of its affairs, he, in the evening, retired with the twelve apostles to *Bethany*, near two miles from the city.

12 And in the morning of the next day, as he was going back with them to *Jerusalem*, he found himself to be hungry.

13 And, casting his eye upon a fig-tree at some distance, which by its leaves was promising for fruit, he went up to it like a stranger, to see whether there were any thing upon it for him to eat: But, when he came to examine it, he found only leaves; for it was not a time of figs with that tree †, it having failed of bearing that year.

14 Jesus therefore took occasion from thence to give his disciples an emblem of the destruction of the *Jewish* nation, and of all hypocritical professors, for their unfruitfulness under the means of grace, notwithstanding their high pretences to religion; saying to this flourishing but barren fig-tree, Let no more fruit ever grow upon thee from this time forward; as thou art a faulty and deceitful tree, unprofitable and blasted thou shalt be for ever. And as he spoke to it after this manner in the hearing of his apostles, they observed the curse which he pronounced upon it.

15 Then they proceeded in their way to *Jerusalem*: And

N O T E.

† For another interpretation of these words, we may observe, that the word *yet* is not in the *Greek*, which only says *αγαρον και ο σμυρ*, for it was not the time, or season of figs: But as this may be meant of the time of gathering in of ripe figs, it may be understood that this season was not yet:

And so, enclosing the immediately foregoing words in a parenthesis, it may refer to the former part of the sentence, and be considered as the reason of Christ's going to see whether there were any figs on this tree; for the time of ingathering the fruit, and clearing the trees of it, was not yet come.

lean: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrow the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

And, upon their arrival thither, Jesus repaired directly to the temple; and, going into the court of the *Gentiles*, where proselytes used to meet for worship, he found several sorts of trades carrying on there. Then, being filled with holy indignation at the avarice of the priests, who had brought the market thither for their own profit; and at the horrible profanation of that sacred place, which, by God's own appointment, was solemnly dedicated to his service; he, in an awful and authoritative way, † cleared the court of all the buyers and sellers, and threw down the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sat to sell doves, sheep and oxen, with other things, to those that came thither to offer sacrifices.

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel thro' the temple.

16 And that he might thoroughly reform all abuses of this kind which had been introduced there, he proceeded to give charge, that no man should pervert the temple to secular uses, by carrying any goods or burdens, in a way of trade, through its courts.

17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.

17 And, to vindicate his conduct, he discoursed to the people on *Isa. lvi. 6, 7.* where God, speaking of the *sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord*, says, *Them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; for my house shall be called an house of prayer to all nations.* Now, says our Lord, Does it not appear from what is here written, that the court of the *Gentile*-proselytes, as well as the rest of the temple, is included in this house of God? But, instead of appropriating it to holy and religious uses, ye have turned it, not only into a place of common traffick, but even into a nest of thieves, who rob God of his honour, and carry on trades of oppression and fraud.

18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

18 The doctors and chief priests, having heard how he spake with authority, and condemned them, who hated to be reformed, and were afraid of his reputation's rising upon the ruins of their own, consulted by what means they might most artfully and effectually cut him off, without exposing themselves to popular odium and resentment: For they durst not venture to seize him by violence, lest it should raise a tumult, because they knew what an interest he had in the common peoples affections, who were full of admiration at the majesty, authority, and excellence of his preaching.

19 But

N O T E.

† As this is related, *Matt. xxi. 12, 13.* among the transactions of the preceding day, and before he cursed the fig-tree; it is probable that some of the people, at the invitation of the priests, ventured to return to their traffick here the next morning, which

occasioned Christ's acting the same part over again. But as the evangelists did not always observe the exact order of time in their narratives, when it was of no importance to the history; so, possibly, either *Matthew* or *Mark* did not tie himself down to it here.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

19 But Jesus, knowing the malicious designs of his enemies against him, would trust himself among them only in the day-time; and therefore, as night came on, he again retired out of the city with his disciples to *Bethany*.

20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots.

20 And, as they were returning back from thence to *Jerusalem* the following morning, the disciples observed that the fig-tree, which he, in their hearing, had cursed the day before was entirely withered down to the root.

21 And Peter calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

21 Upon which, they immediately recollecting how green and flourishing it was when Christ so lately passed sentence against it, were much surprised; and *Peter*, as the mouth of the rest, spoke to him about it, saying, Master, we are amazed to see how soon thy words have taken effect: Look how the fig-tree, which thou cursedst but yesterday, is already quite withered and dead.

22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

22 Jesus replied, Let this be an argument for your exercising (*exercere*) the faith which God requires, works, and approves of, rather than for your wonder: See what he can do; and depend upon his almighty power for the performance of every thing that he encourages you to expect from him.

23 For verily I say unto you, That whatsoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

23 For I assuredly tell you, that how great soever a work may be which ye shall attempt in my name agreeable to the will of God, even though it were as difficult and unlikely to be effected as by a mere word of command to root up this mount of *Olivet* and throw it into the sea, it shall be as certainly accomplished as my word has been upon this fig-tree; provided ye have but an entire, humble, an unshaken trust in the divine power and promises, and have no unbelieving doubts about the performance of it.

24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

24 Whatsoever therefore ye would ask of God at any time in prayer, which is fit for him to do, and ye have any warrant from his word to expect, I say unto you, Believe only, without doubting, that in his infinite wisdom, power, faithfulness and goodness, he will fulfil your petitions, and it certainly shall be so.

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive it ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

25 And as your own acceptance with God is necessary to your requests being heard and answered, I further add, Whenever ye appear before him in prayer, see that ye be ready to forgive those who have offended you, as ever ye would hope for remission of sins from your heavenly Father, who will shew this mercy to such as are of a forgiving spirit toward their fellow-creatures. (*Matt. vi. 14.*)

26 But if you do

26 But if ye cannot find in your hearts to pass by the offend-

do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

27 And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By what authority dost thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me.

31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John that he was a prophet indeed.

offences of others against you, ye may depend upon it, that, under the predominancy of such an unsuitable and provoking temper of mind, so unlike to God, and so contrary to the nature and design of his compassion, he will not forgive your iniquities, or hear your prayers for any thing that ye ask of him.

27 Then our Lord and his apostles, going forward, entered again into Jerusalem: And whilst he was walking in the temple, several of the chief priests, doctors of the law, and elders of the people, came about him, being vexed and filled with envy at his late public entry into the city, and at what he had done and said for rectifying the abuses of the sanctuary;

28 And hoping one way or other to get an advantage against him, they took upon them to call him to an account, and to ask him by what authority he pretended to talk and act at such a superior rate as he had done, especially for two or three days last past.

29 Jesus, knowing the evil design of their hearts in this demand, replied, I have likewise a question of great importance to put to you, the resolving of which will naturally make way for an answer to your own; and if ye will but be so free as to give me your thoughts upon my query, then I will directly and plainly answer yours, that ye may know by what commission I do these things.

30 The question I would propose is this: When John the Baptist appeared to preach the doctrine of repentance for the remission of sins because the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and to make proselytes by baptism; did he do all this by commission from God, or by the authority of men? Pray let me hear your sense of this matter.

31 Hereupon they found themselves cramped, and were utterly at a loss what answer to make; for such sort of reasonings as these arose in their minds, and ran through their private debates between themselves, (*ἑαυτοῖς*): If we should own that John did these things by divine commission, Jesus will reply upon us, Why then did ye not believe the testimony which he therein gave to me? and we shall be self-condemned, and exposed to contempt and reproach before all the multitude.

32 But if, on the contrary, we should say, that all John's preaching and baptizing were human inventions, without any authority from God; we have reason to fear that the common people will be so enraged, as even to stone us, or tear us to pieces: For they are all firm in the belief that John was really a prophet sent of God,

and have a high a veneration for his memory.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

33 And so, being apprehensive of dangerous consequences to themselves, whichever way they should answer; they, contrary to their own consciences, said to Christ, We cannot pretend to determine whether *John* had a commission from God or not: Upon which our Lord replied, I then do not think myself obliged to tell you by what commission I do and say the things that ye object against, since ye refuse to give your thoughts upon so plain a question, which, fairly answered, would have gone a good way to resolve your own to me.

RECollections.

What signal testimonies did Jesus give of his divine sovereignty and dominion, omniscience and omnipotence, as lord and governor of the spirits of men, and of all civil and religious concerns, even in his state of humiliation! How suitable was his meek and lowly triumph, to proclaim the humble and the glorious Saviour; and to shew that he has indeed a kingdom, but that it is not of this world! How high are the honours due to him, and with what pleasure should we pay them! Every one's property should be readily resigned at his demand, and all his orders obeyed without disputing or delay. And divine institutions, with the purity of sacred ordinances, must be maintained inviolably, whatever pretences there may be to break in upon them; it being the great design of Christ and of his gospel, to reform the worship of God, and the minds and manners of men. And oh with what majesty, authority, and power, does he act, when he takes this work in hand! What great things will he do for them, and by them, who ask in faith, and are moulded by his grace into an imitation of God's compassion and forgiveness in their own tempers and behaviour! and how many a prayer is lost for want of faith, and a charitable frame of spirit toward others! But alas for fruitless professors, under the means of salvation! They are in the nearest danger of falling under a curse, and of being utterly blasted to their endless perdition. The more our blessed Lord displays his glory, his holiness, and power, in his word and works; the more hypocrites and ungodly sinners set themselves against him: And oh what sad shifts are they often put to! How free do they make with conscience, and with truth itself, in their opposition to him and his kingdom in the world! But as no arts, evasions, or evil designs, can be concealed from him; so none of them shall prevail against him, who will prove too hard for all his enemies, whenever he contends with them.

C H A P. XII.

Christ foretels the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, in the parable of the vineyard let out to unfaithful husbandmen, 1,—12. Answers the Pharisees and Herodians about paying tribute to Cæsar, 13,—17.; and the Sadducees about the resurrection, 18,—27.; and the scribes about the chief command of the law, 28,—34. Confounds all the scribes with a question about his being David's Son and Lord, 35,—37. Warns his disciples against pride and hypocrisy, 38,—40. And commends the poor widow for her two mites, 41,—44.

TEXT.

AND he began to speak unto

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the foregoing debate in the temple, our Lord proceeded to discourse to the Jewish doctors, priests, and

unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the wine-fat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

and elders, by several comparisons, to intimate that they, and all of that nation who continued to act under their influence and side with them, should be rejected of God, and deprived of his gospel and of all its blessings, for their impenitence and unbelief; and that the *Gentiles* should be favoured with them, and taken into covenant in their stead. "A certain great man, (said he,) set apart a piece of ground for a vineyard; and, having planted it, did every thing needful for its security and improvement: And then committing it to the management of servants, whom he ordered to cultivate it and make the best of its fruits, he took a long journey into a distant country."—So God, many ages ago, formed the *Jewish* nation into a church; gave them his law, his ordinances, and his promises, for his glory and their advantage; and set the priests and rulers of the people to instruct and govern them, that they might bring forth fruits of righteousness, from time to time, in proportion to the great privileges he had bestowed upon them: And then he withdrew the visible tokens of his presence, till he should visit them again in the last days.

2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled.

5 And again, he sent another; and

2, 3. "And at the time when vines use to begin to bear and grapes to be ripe†, the master of the vineyard sent a servant to receive the profits from those to whom he had let it out: But, instead of answering his just demands, they fell upon his servant, beat him, and sent him back without one farthing of rent or profits."—So when God had continued his laws and ordinances in *Israel*, till it might be expected that they should bring forth fruits of holiness and obedience, they, on the contrary, were a stiff-necked and rebellious people; and their priests and great men themselves neglected their care of them, and even abused and rejected the extraordinary prophets which God raised up and sent to reclaim them.

4, 5. "Afterwards the owner of the vineyard sent another servant; and him the vine-dressers stoned, and miserably wounded, and sent back with ignominy and contempt: Then he sent another; whom they put to death: And, time after time, he dispatched more on the same errand; some of which they shamefully abused, and others outrageously killed."—So God, from age to age, raised up a succession of prophets, whom he sent to the *Jews*, and to their teachers, to warn and reclaim them: But they hardened their hearts against

N O T E.

† *Exodus*, the season, may relate either to the time when young vines first begin to grow fruitful, or to the time of vintage when the ripe grapes were gathered and pressed; and therefore the paraphrase takes in both.

and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

6 Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said amongst themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not

against his fear, and were provoked at his messengers, whom they persecuted; cruelly oppressing, reviling, and scourging some, and, in various way, murdering others of them.

6 When all these methods failed, the Lord of the vineyard sent his only and beloved Son and heir, as the last expedient for getting the fruit that was his due; supposing, that the dignity of his Son's character, and the interest he had in the vineyard, might have such an awe upon the husbandmen, as to restrain them from affronting him."---So, after all other means had proved ineffectual, God was graciously pleased to make one further trial of the *Jewish* church, and of their teachers and rulers, by sending to them his only-begotten dear Son, who was heir of all things, and had a peculiar claim to that people as visibly in covenant with him, to make the last overtures of mercy and peace to them, and to bring them back again to God; and whatsoever they had done before to his servants, it was reasonable to think that they would not dare to offer any indignity to his own Son.

7, 8. "But as soon as their Master's Son appeared, they contrived to destroy him, saying, Here comes the heir, who, if he lives, will turn us all out; let us but make away with him, and we shall keep possession from this time forward without controul: And therefore they seized and slew him, and threw him out of the vineyard."---So upon the Son of God's appearing, with manifest credentials, among the *Jews*, such is the obstinacy, perverseness, and ambition of the chief priests, *scribes*, and elders, that they reject and despise him, and are prejudiced against him as one that is come to take away their authority: And therefore they consult how they may get rid of him, to secure to themselves their secular interests, honour, and influence; and will not rest till they have filled up the measure of their iniquity in procuring his death.

9 What then, says Christ, is to be expected from the lord of the vineyard? He will certainly come and revenge all these abuses and affronts, and miserably destroy those perfidious, ungrateful, and provoking wretches, to whom he let it out; and will put it into other hands, who shall make better improvements, and return its fruits in due season, as ye yourselves cannot but own it is fit and right that he should. (See the paraphrase on *Mat. xxi. 41.*)

10, 11. Then Jesus, to bring the matter home to the chief priests and rulers, said, Have ye never taken notice

not read this scripture? The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner.

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

12 And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

13 And they sent unto him certain of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

tice of that prophecy of the Messiah, which refers to this very case? saying, (*Psal. cxviii. 22, 23.*) *The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* i. e. "He, whom the chief priests, scribes, and rulers of the *Jews* rejected, despised, and put to death, is made the foundation, strength, and glory of the church; and unites the *Gentiles* to it, as the chief corner-stone supports and beautifies an house, and knits and holds its two sides together. This is so apparently the work of God, in bringing good out of evil, by the powerful influence of his Spirit and of his over-ruling providence, in a way both of mercy and of judgment, for his own glory, the destruction of his obstinate enemies, and the salvation of true believers, that it is a matter of great and awful admiration, and will be adorned with wonder by all that duly observe it."

12 Then the chief priests and *Jewish* teachers, being assured that this cutting parable was directly pointed at them, were exceedingly enraged, and resolved to be revenged upon him as soon as ever they could: But, as they knew the common people, in general, had a great esteem and veneration for him, they were afraid to run the risk of provoking them by immediately and openly laying violent hands upon him; and so they turned away, and went to consult some safer method of getting him into their power.

13 And as the *Pharisees* contended that the *Jews* ought not to be subject to any foreign power; and the *Herodians*, on the other hand, stood up for the civil authority of the *Romans*; they prevailed upon some of both these opposite sects to go together, and propose such ensnaring questions to Jesus, as might give them an opportunity of making use of his answers, either to incense the populace or the government against him.

14 Accordingly, when these perfidious men came to him, they said, with an air of friendship and deference to his judgment and authority, Master, we are well assured that you, having a divine commission, are faithful and impartial in speaking your mind, whatever any man living may think of it; and that you freely declare the truth, just as God has authorised you to deliver it, without the least regard to parties, or being influenced by hopes or fears from them: We therefore beg that you would please to decide a point in dispute between our two sects; which is, Whether the *Jews*, who are God's peculiar covenant-people, ought to pay tribute to the *Roman* emperor, he being a heathen, or not?

15 When

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny that I may see it.

16 And they brought it: and he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cesar's.

17 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

18 Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall

15 What is fit and right for us to do in this case? Is it best to comply with his demand of tribute, or to refuse it? But as all their secret intrigues were fully known to him, and he saw thro' their malicious designs, he replied, Ye hypocritical sowers, why do ye pretend, under a shew of friendship, to propose such an ensnaring question to me? Let me see one of the *Roman* pence which is demanded of you for tribute.

16 And, they bringing a piece of this coin to him, he asked, Whose head and inscription is this which I see upon it? They replied, It is the *Roman* emperor's.

17 Then, said he, behave as good subjects of civil government, by paying to that monarch whatsoever is due to him for your privileges and protection under him, the currency of whose coin among you is an evidence of your subjection to him; and, at the same time, behave with all fidelity to God in religious concerns, by paying universal obedience to his commands, who is the only sovereign Lord of conscience: And they, finding that his answer was so wisely and justly framed as utterly to defeat all their hopes of stirring up either the people or the *Roman* government against him, went away confounded, and full of amazement at his matchless prudence and foresight.

18 When these were thus baffled in their attempt, some of the sect of the *Sadducees*, who denied the resurrection, and even the immortality of the soul, came to try whether they could not puzzle him, and thereby expose him to contempt; and therefore they put a question to him, saying,

19 Master, we beg your opinion upon the following difficulty: *Moses* ordered in the law, (*Deut. xxv. 5.*) that if a man die and leave his widow without any children by him, the eldest surviving brother shall marry her, to keep up his family and his name in *Israel*.

20 Now there has been a very uncommon instance of this sort amongst us, relating to seven brethren: The eldest of these married; and, when he died, left his wife without any child.

21, 22. Hereupon the next brother, according to *Moses's* injunction, took her for his wife; and he dying childless, the third married the same woman; and so on, till she came to be married, in succession, to every one of the seven brothers, without having a child by either them: And, at last, the woman herself died without issue.

23 The question therefore upon the case, is this: Supposing the doctrine of the resurrection, and of a future state after this present life, were true; which of

shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

these brethren shall be her husband in that other world, since she was equally married to every one, and had no child by either of them, in this life?

24 In answer hereunto, Jesus said, This is a very poor objection to that doctrine: It proceeds upon a gross mistake, and betrays the most stupid ignorance of the spiritual nature of that future world of happiness which the scripture maintains, and of the law which ye refer to as if it affected that state; yea, and of the divine power itself, as if the great God, who created all things out of nothing, could not raise the dead bodies of men and women to life, and make them happy, without continuing the particular relations which they contracted here.

25 For as to the kind of life to which the dead shall be raised in another world, it is very different from that which they lead in this: How necessary soever marriage is to keep up a succession of men and women, and to relieve one another's burdens in a world which lies under a law of mortality and miseries; yet, at the resurrection of the just, there will be no occasion for husbands and wives, to propagate children, or to be comforts to one another under various exercises; for there will be no deaths or sorrows to make desolation, or cause grief; but the inhabitants of that blessed world will be as immortal, perfectly satisfied and glorious, as the holy angels themselves.

26 And as to the resurrection of the dead, in connection with a state of happiness hereafter; even the law of Moses itself, which ye Sadducees own to be of divine authority, sufficiently assures you of it: (See the note on *Mat.* xii. 31.) Have ye never read in those sacred writings, how God, appearing to Moses in the fiery bush, styled himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, several ages after they were dead and gone? (*Exod.* iii. 6.)

27 Now since the character of his being the God of any persons, manifestly intimates a relation to them, not under the notion of their being dead, but living; and since he cannot properly be said to be at present their God at all, if they are utterly dead; nor to be the God of human persons, such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, consisting of souls and bodies, if their bodies were to abide in everlasting death; there must needs be a future state of blessedness, and a resurrection of the body to share with the soul in it: And therefore your opposition to this doctrine is an exceeding great error. (See the note on *Mat.* xii. 32.)

28 One of the Jewish doctors, who was of the sect of

28 And one of the

the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord;

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

31 And the second is like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he.

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art
not

of the *Pharisees*, (Mat. xxii. 35.) directly opposite to that of the *Sadducees*, having heard the dispute between Christ and them, and judging that he had thoroughly confuted them out of the writings of *Moses*, had a mind in his turn to try whether he could not put a more difficult question than theirs; and therefore said to our Lord, Master, since you have spoke so honourably of the law, I would ask you, Which of all its commandments is the principal, and most necessary to be observed?

29, 30. Jesus answered, 'The chief commandment in the law, *relating to God*, is that which requires *Israel* to believe and own their God to be the one only living and true God; and to love, worship, and serve him, with the united powers of the soul, with the understanding, will and affections; and that supremely, above all things else: This is so important and essential a command, and of such perpetual and indispensable obligation, that, in a manner, it includes all the rest; and without observing this, no true obedience can be yielded to any of them.

31 And the other, of a like comprehensive nature, *relating to fellow-creatures*, is that which obliges men to love them in as sincere and benevolent a manner as themselves, and to treat them with as much humanity, justice and mercy, as one would desire or expect in like circumstances for himself. These two are the principal, and indeed the summary, of all the other commandments; and there is none among the moral, much less among the ceremonial precepts, that exceeds these.

32, 33. 'The *Jewish* doctor being convinced by this answer that he was no match for Christ, and having now a better opinion of him than when he put this question tempting him, (Mat. xxii. 35.) replied, Master, It is with admirable wisdom and propriety that you have determined this point; and what you say is undoubtedly right: For there certainly is but one only living and true God; and to love, worship, and serve him, with all the united powers of the soul in their utmost vigour, and to maintain the same equitable and charitable temper and behaviour towards all we have to do with, as we in like circumstances would wish for from them towards ourselves, is a more necessary and important duty, than offering ever so many sacrifices, or complying with all the positive institutions of the law of *Moses*.

34 And when Jesus observed with what good humour and judgment the *scribe* received his answer and replied to it, he expressed his approbation, saying, 'These sentiments and dispositions are near approaches to a real change of heart; they are a good step toward your em-

not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

35 And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?

36 For David himself said by the holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

37 David therefore himself call-eth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the market-places,

39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

bracing my gospel, and bid fair for your being made partaker of the blessings of my kingdom.—Our Lord having thus surprisngly overcome the various sects that offered to entangle him with their questions, all his enemies were so confounded, that none of them from that time forward durst enter into any further disputes with him.

35 Then Jesus turned the tables; and, whilst he continued preaching in the temple, where some of the *Pharisees* were present, proposed this question for any of them to answer, Why do your doctors, the interpreters of the law, teach, that the Messiah is to be a descendent from David? (See the note on *Luke* xx. 41.) How can they reconcile this with another account, which the scripture gives of him?

36 For David himself, speaking of the Messiah, as ye all own he did under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said, (Psal. cx. 1.) *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.* Ye see David, tho' a king, here speaks of the Messiah in high terms of majesty and power, and as superior in honour and dominion to himself.

37 Since therefore David calls the Messiah his Lord, How do ye understand that he is descended from him? Is one and the same person both superior and inferior, Lord and son, to his own royal father? How can ye reconcile these things? The *Pharisees* not understanding that Christ was a complex person, who, in his original nature, was God, and so superior to David; and, in his assumed nature, was man, and so inferior to his father according to the flesh; could make no answer: And the common people observing how far Jesus surpassed all their teachers, were extremely pleased, and listened to his discourse with great attention.

38, 39. Then our Lord, turning to his disciples and the rest of the people, said, Take heed that ye be not imposed upon, influenced and injured by, nor drawn into an imitation of, the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, who are exceeding ambitious, and fond of walking abroad in long robes, to distinguish and gain reverence to themselves; they are likewise shamefully desirous of being openly saluted with high tokens of respect, as great rabbies, in the streets or markets, or any places of common resort; and whenever they go, either to public worship, or to any feasts, they have a mighty aim at getting into the very highest seats, and taking the upper hand of all the company, that they may be looked upon as the most worthy among them.

40 And their hypocrisy and covetousness are as great

40 Which devour

your widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers : these shall receive greater damnation.

as their ambition : For they make high professions of extraordinary sanctity and devotion, drawing out their prayers to an uncommon length, that they may be the less suspected of oppression or fraud in their various methods of enriching themselves at the expence, and even to the ruin, of widows and their fatherless children : But God will inflict the heaviest punishment upon them, in proportion to the greatness of their crimes, and of the worldly advantages they unrighteously gained under a cloak of religion.

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury : and many that were rich cast in much.

41 After this, as Jesus was sitting in a court of the temple near the treasury, and was observing what gifts and offerings the people put into the common chest for religious uses, he saw that many wealthy persons gave a great deal of money in a way of free-will offerings.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

42 And he took particular notice of a certain poor widow, who, amidst the plentiful contributions of others, put in two small pieces of money, amounting to the value of only one farthing. (See the note on *Mat. x. 29.*)

43 And he called unto him his disciples, and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury :

43 Hereupon our Saviour, calling his apostles to him, said, Observe that poor widow ; she, honest-hearted pious creature, has come and put her two mites into the treasury : How small soever this present be in itself, and how lightly soever others may account of it, I assuredly tell you, that it is more in proportion to her indigent circumstances, and discovers greater zeal and sincerity of affection, and is of higher account with God, than all the large sums of money which the wealthy people have offered.

44 For all they did cast in of their abundance ; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

44 For what they have given bears but little proportion to their affluent circumstances, and was what they could very well spare and not feel it : But this poor widow has cheerfully put in (*ὅλον τὸν σίτην*) her whole stock of provision, and must pinch for want of it afterwards ; and as she has nevertheless done this with so free and willing a mind, it is accepted according to what she had, and not according to what she had not.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How surprising is the long-suffering and patience of God toward obstinate and rebellious sinners, amidst all their wickedness against him and his messengers, his gospel and his Christ, and that under a profession of being themselves his people and servants ! How many affronts does he put up, before he executes his wrath upon them ! And how affecting are the riches of his grace, in sending his own Son to seek and save such as these ! If they receive him with faith and love, salvation is theirs ; but if they reject him, they must unavoidably perish. How much soever his enemies are at variance with one another, they can readily agree in a common opposition to him : But how vain and fruitless is all their united craft and malice to overthrow his gospel and his kingdom in the world ! While some reject and despise him, he will find out others to embrace him, and to bring forth fruit to God, in some measure answerable to the light and advantages they re-

ceive from him. And oh how happy is it to be under his gracious guidance and influence! With what evidence and justness of thought has he sciled the true bounds of civil and religious liberty, confirmed the doctrine of a resurrection to eternal life, and cleared up the spiritual nature and perfection of heavenly blessedness! What a judicious and comprehensive view has he given us of the moral law, as an eternal rule of righteousness; and of its two grand principles, love to God and one another, that the duties of the first and second table may be ever looked upon as inseparable, and may be performed with pleasure! How plainly has he intimated, that the wonderful constitution of his person, God-man, is the only way of accounting for the different representations which the scripture makes of him, as *the root and offspring of David*, as his Lord and son: And how critically does he observe, and determine about, all our acts of piety and charity, according to their principles and circumstances, and not according to outward appearances! And yet how many advocates are there for the most monstrous errors, in opposition to the plainest and most important truths; and in how many things do we all offend!—Christ's doctrines may be heard with pleasure, without any saving benefit; but when they are entertained with judgment and affection, they set us at the very door of entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Oh how ought we to be concerned, lest any of us should be only almost Christians, near to the kingdom of God, and never enter into it, nor bear a part in the resurrection of the just! And how dreadful will be the case of all false pretenders to religion! The greater their hypocrisy and iniquities are, the more terrible will their condemnation be.

C H A P. XIII.

Christ foretells the destruction of the temple, together with Jerusalem, as a figure of the final judgment, warning all men to be watchful, lest they be surprised unawares to their utter ruin, by judgments relating to this world and that which is to come, 1,—37.

TEXT.

AND as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings are here!

2 And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter and James

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN our blessed Lord had staid as long as he designed in the temple, and was going out of it, the apostles, and more particularly one of them, desired him to turn back and view it, saying, Master, be pleased to survey the stateliness and grandeur of this glorious fabrick; observe its huge and beautiful stones, and the fineness of its architecture and decorations. What an admirable and magnificent building is this! Surely it cannot easily be demolished; and if it could, it is pity that ever it should.

2 Jesus replied, 'Tho' you look upon this house with admiration, desire, and pleasure, and now see it in all its strength and glory; alas! I tell you, it will not be long before it shall be so thoroughly raised to the very ground, as to leave none of its remains; no, not so much as to shew that there ever was such a noble edifice in this place. (See the note on *Mat. xxiv. 2.*)

3 Then going on to the mount of Olives, and setting himself down on that side of the hill which directly faced the temple and gave him a full prospect of it together with Jerusalem itself, some of his apostles, Peter and

James,

and John and Andrew asked him privately,

4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus answering them, began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you:

6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars, he ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places: and there shall be famines, and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.

James, John and Andrew, by name, came and privately said to him,

4 Be pleased to acquaint us with the time when the dreadful desolation shall be made upon this stately building, and the other great revolutions shall be brought to pass, relating to the establishment of thy kingdom and the end of the world, which we apprehend thou hast lately spoken of once and again: And, by what tokens may we know the time that shall immediately go before the accomplishment of † all these strange things?

5 Jesus knowing how much they were governed by curiosity in these questions, and what confused and carnal notions they had about the nature of his kingdom, began his answer with saying, See to it, that ye be not imposed upon by any seducers in what relates to the great alterations that shall be made in the earth.

6 For, before these changes and desolations shall be made, several impostors will appear, each of them taking to himself the character of the Messiah, and pretending to be sent of God to set up his throne with power among the *Jews*, and to deliver them out of the hands of the *Romans*, and give them dominion over all nations round about them; and, by their artful management, they will prevail upon many to believe and follow them to their utter ruin.

7 When therefore ye shall hear from one quarter and another, and shall have frequent reports of civil and foreign wars and commotions; do not be dejected or dismayed at them, like unbelievers: For these calamities must of necessity come to pass, as signs and fore-runners of the destruction of the temple, city, and nation of the *Jews*, and as means of ushering it in; tho' that will not be the utmost of all their troubles, much less will it issue in the end of the world.

8 For of the several kingdoms and provinces into which the land of *Israel* is divided, one will rise up in arms against another, and *Jews* against *Gentiles*; and, together with intestine and foreign wars, there will be, in one place and another, earthquakes, famines, and other terrible frights and dangers; all which are but the leading steps and specimens of the still much greater distresses that shall attend the destruction of *Jerusalem*: And such like events will appear again in after-ages, as signs and presages of the dissolution of this world, when it shall be drawing near at the last day.

9 But

N O T E.

† All these things (*ταῦτα πάντα*) seem to refer to some things more than barely the destruction of the temple: And though our evangelist has not expressed them, *Matth. w. har. chap. xxiv. 3.* (see the note there;) and therefore I put them into the paraphrase.

9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils: and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought before-hand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the holy Ghost.

12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

13 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's

9 But as, besides these public calamities, ye, my disciples, will meet with many personal trials for my name's sake; see that ye be not so scared or discouraged by them, as to do any thing unworthy of your profession and hopes: For many will be such enemies to you, merely on account of your relation to me, that they will hurry you to ecclesiastical and civil courts of judicature; and ye shall not only be tried before *Jewish* councils, and publicly chastised in their synagogues; but shall likewise be brought before the tribunals of heathen princes and judges, for your Christianity, that ye may have opportunities of preaching my gospel, and of shewing the power of it upon your own spirits, in their presence, for the vindication of its divine authority, and confutation of them that oppose it.

10 And God in his providence will certainly overrule this as a means of spreading the glad tidings of salvation, not only thro' *Judea*, but thro' all provinces of the *Roman* empire also, before the destruction of the temple; and this gospel, by like means, shall be spread thro' all nations of the earth, before the judgment of the great day.

11 Whenever therefore your adversaries, in the heat of their fury against you for my sake, shall hale you, like criminals, before magistrates of what character soever; do not give way to the least discouragement, as if ye should be confounded, and not know what to say for yourselves; nor let any solicitude about the event put you upon so much as studying before-hand how to plead the glorious cause ye are engaged in with human art and eloquence; but, depending upon higher wisdom and power than your own, make your defence just in that way and manner which shall be suggested to you from above at the very time when ye shall be called to speak: For as the cause is God's, so the arguments by which ye are to maintain it shall not be the product of your own abilities, but of the immediate inspiration of his Spirit as speaking in and by you.

12 But (3.) the malignant prejudices and severe persecutions that shall arise against you for the gospel's sake, will work in such an unnatural and cruel manner, that even the nearest and dearest relations will break through all the ties of friendship and blood; in so much that brothers, fathers, and children, will treacherously accuse and deliver up one another, even to death, for their religion.

13 And indeed this wicked spirit will so infect the generality of mankind, that they will unite in a common enmity and opposition to you, because ye profess my

name:

name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

name and preach my gospel: But notwithstanding all this, be not discouraged, considering what assistances I have promised you, and that whoever shall hold on thro' all these tribulations, and hold out to the end, he shall be under the peculiar care of Providence, and shall certainly at last obtain the salvation which is in me, with eternal glory.

14 But when ye shall see the abomination spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth, understand;) then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains:

14 But to return. As to the immediately preceding tokens of the destruction of the *Jewish* state and temple, when once ye come to see the land invaded, that ought to have been sacred to God, and not profaned by the idolatrous armies and ensigns of the *Romans*; and see the holy city besieged by them who are the desolating abomination spoken of in *Daniel*, (chap. xi. 31.); then let him who reads this prophecy, and lives to see this event, understand that the final destruction of *Jerusalem* is just at hand; and then every one that is in *Judea*, and would provide for his own safety, must immediately get away from the seat of war, and hide himself in the mountainous countries.

15 And let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house.

15 And since the ravage made by the *Roman* armies will be exceeding swift, your flight must be so too, as ever ye would escape them: If therefore any one happens to be on the top of his house when he first hears tidings of their invasion, let him not stay so long as to go into it to pack up his goods and carry them away with him. (See the note on *Mat.* xxiv. 17.)

16 And let him that is in the field, not turn back again for to take up his garment.

16 And if any one should hear of it whilst he may be walking abroad or busy in the fields, let him not once think of returning home to secure any of his affairs there, or so much as to take another suit of clothes with him; but let every one fly for his life, as *Lot* did out of *Sodom*.

17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

17 But alas! the case of those women will be very distressed and perilous, who at that time may be big with child, or encumbered with sucking infants at their breasts, or may be in any circumstances of incapacity for speedy flight, since it will be exceeding difficult for them to escape the fury of the *Roman* army, and the miseries of intestine broils.

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

18 And, for the same reason, beg that a kind Providence may so far order these days of adversity in your favour, as not to come upon you in the winter season or in bad weather, which would render your necessary speed much more difficult and uncomfortable than if the roads were good and the weather fair.

19 For in those days shall be affliction, such as was

19 For what with the cruelty of the *Roman* soldiers, the tumults and confusions of the *Jews* among themselves, the perpetual alarms and horrors of every one's own

was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, unto this time; neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

21 And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or lo, he is there; believe him not.

22 For false christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.

23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

25 And the stars of heaven shall

own mind, and the sore famine and other troubles that will concur in those days, they will be the most calamitous and formidable that ever were known upon earth, or ever shall come upon any particular nation afterwards as long as the world endures.

20 Yea, so extremely great and so multiplied will these distresses be, that if they were not to be limited and restrained in due season by the merciful providence of God, no human creature in the land of Judea could possibly outlive them: But for the sake of his elect, whom he has chosen for himself, he will graciously put a stop, sooner than he otherwise would, to the destruction of those days; that such of them as will be then living in their sins, and those of them who are to descend from the loins of some of that age, may be brought to faith and repentance; and that they, together with the already converted, may be preserved for the propagation of his kingdom in the world.

21 And if, at this or any other time of great commotion and danger, it should be suggested, that the true Messiah appears in one place, or another, to destroy your enemies, and bring salvation to yourselves; I charge you to give no manner of heed to them.

22 For God will certainly suffer seducers to arise, for the trial of his people's faith, and for the righteous punishment of obstinate unbelieving sinners: Some of these will falsely pretend to be great prophets sent of God, and others to be the very Christ; and they will manage their surprising deceits and lying wonders with such a plausible air of miracles, as will impose upon many to their inevitable perdition; and would have the same dreadful effect upon God's own elect themselves, whom he has chosen to salvation thro' sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth, were it possible for them to be carried off from the only Saviour to an impostor.

23 But as secret things belong to the Lord, and revealed things to you, and none are to think themselves safe by any decree of God, without the use of proper means; watch and pray, that ye may not be deluded by such deceivers: Remember I have forewarned you of them, that ye might be fore-armed against them.

24, 25. But whatever the event may be as to particular persons, these signs and troubles, which will appear within a few years, will certainly issue in a speedy and entire subversion of the civil and religious state of the Jews; so that, according to the figurative language of prophecy, (Joel iii. 15, 16.) *The sun and moon shall be darkened, and the stars withdraw their light, and the*

shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree. When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near :

29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, That this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away ; but my words shall not pass away.

heavens shall shake : And this may be considered as a lively emblem of what shall literally come to pass toward the end of the world, when the like signs and troubles shall return, and be followed with such an universal conflagration of the whole frame of nature as will destroy the present influences of the heavenly bodies on this earth. (2 Pet. iii. 10, 11, 12.)

26 And then those very *Jews* who now obstinately reject the Messiah, shall, in the destruction of *Jerusalem*, find to their cost, that he is exalted in awful majesty, and comes with all conquering power to avenge himself upon them, like the great God who makes the clouds his chariot, (*Psal. civ. 3.*) : And, at the consummation of all things, he will visibly appear in the clouds of heaven, with all authority and grandeur, to judge the whole world ; and every eye shall see him to their confusion, or their joy.

27 Then also, upon his appearing to destroy the *Jewish* church and state, he will actually send the ministers of the gospel to execute his commission in all nations ; and, by means of their ministry, will effectually call his sheep, whom he must bring into his fold, from among the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, wherever they may be scattered in the remotest parts of the earth : And upon his coming to judgment at the last day, he will dispatch the holy angels, who are his servants, to make a general collection, far and wide, from the east and west, and north and south, of all who were ordained to eternal life, that they may escape the everlasting destruction which will befall his obstinate enemies.

28, 29. Now, to illustrate what I have been saying in a familiar manner, observe the following similitude, taken from the fig-tree, with its application : Ye know that when this tree begins to bud and open its leaves, the summer is coming on : In like manner, whenever ye shall see the presaging tokens but now mentioned, ye may depend upon it that the great events I have been pointing to will certainly have a very speedy accomplishment.

30 As to what respects the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the signs that are to precede and give notice of it, I solemnly assure you, that they shall all be fulfilled in the present age, before the whole set of people shall die who are now living upon earth.

31 And, as to the last general conflagration, I assure you, that an entire end shall be put to the present frame of the heavens and of the earth, which shall be melted into confusion : But all that I have been saying shall be irreversible, and every word of it shall certainly be performed

formed to a tittle.

32 But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven; neither the Son, but the Father.

32 But as to the exact time † in which the Messiah will come to judge the world and dissolve its present frame, it will not be in this present age; nor indeed is the day and hour which are appointed for it known to any man living, nor to any angel in heaven; no, nor to the Messiah himself, in his human nature, or by virtue of his unction, as any part of the mysteries of the divine will which he is to reveal; but this is still a secret, which God ‡ has reserved in his own mind.

33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

33 Since therefore this time, and even the day of your own death, which will bring every one of you to judgment, is so uncertain, that none knows when it will overtake him; see that ye be ready for it, whenever it may come, whether sooner or later: Be constantly watchful over your own hearts and ways, and be earnest in daily prayer, *that ye may find mercy of the Lord in that day.* (2 Tim. i. 18.)

34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who lent his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

34 For the Messiah's appearing in these awful dispensations, and especially at the final judgment, to call his servants to an account, may fitly be illustrated by this similitude. As, when a great man is taking a long journey into a far country, he commits the care of all his affairs to his servants, ordering every one his particular business, and, among the rest, charging the watchmen to give special heed that none break open the house or steal his goods, and that he be ready to receive his lord whenever he shall return: So the Messiah, being about to leave this world and go to the Father, appoints the duties and services that are to be performed by all the subjects of his kingdom, according to their different stations[†], whether they be ministers or private Christians, charging them to be diligent and faithful, watching unto duty with all perseverance, and waiting for his appearing again.

35 Watch ye therefore, (for ye know

35 Be ye therefore, like faithful servants, very circumspect and diligent in the discharge of the trusts com-

N O T E S.

† *Hence* *was*, *that* *day*, seems to be here opposed to *within* *years*, *all* *these* *things*, viz. the desolations on the temple and city then before their eyes, which were to be fulfilled in that generation, (ver. 30.): and they are opposed one to the other, just in the same manner, *Matt.* xxiv. 34, 36. (*Ubi* *vid.* *Græ.*) The antithesis is beautiful: And it appears more natural to understand this of the day of judgment, than of the destruction of Jerusalem; because Christ had so exactly described the time of that destruction, in the foregoing verses, as to be accomplished in the

then present age; but the day of judgment was a far more distant thing, and the time for it was utterly unknown to any but God. See the notes on *Matt.* xxiv. 35. and *Luke* xxi. 32.

‡ The terms *Father* and *Son* may be considered, in this verse, as used economically for God, and for the Mediator or the Man Jesus.

§ This seems principally to respect ministers, and the day of judgment; but may likewise be applied to private persons, as in ver. 37. and to the time of death.

know not when the master of the house cometh; at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning:)

committed to you, that ye may be always ready to give up your accounts with joy, whenever your Lord shall come to demand them, at death and judgment: For none of you know how soon, or how suddenly, it may be; whether in any of the earlier, or of the middle, or of the latter parts of life, any more than the servants of their absent lord can tell whether he will return early or late, in the evening or in the morning, or at midnight.

36 Left coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

36 Take heed that ye be not remiss and careless; lest, while ye are giving way to sloth and indolence, your lord should come on a sudden, and surprise you unawares, to your terror and confusion.

37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

37 And what I herein say unto you my disciples, I speak to all others, as a matter of common concern to them as well as yourselves; not only to those who are living in the present age, but to all that shall hear my gospel, and profess to be my disciples in future generations, till I come the second time without sin to salvation: My charge to all and every one is, Be upon your watch, that ye may be always in expectation of, and in a state and frame ready for, death and judgment, whenever the awful summons may be sent to you.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How little are the external privileges of religion to be depended upon! They are so far from being a security against the vengeance of God, that, if they are abused, they aggravate our guilt and condemnation: And oh how often do despisers of gospel-grace bring the sorest tribulations upon themselves in this world, which are but the beginning of sorrows, and will be followed with still greater at death and judgment! And none knows how soon any, or all, of these dreadful calamities may overtake him to his utter destruction. But how faithfully has Christ forewarned his disciples of their several dangers; how kindly doth he shew them the way of escaping them; and how effectually secure his own elect from falling by them! Whatever troubles they may endure for his name's sake in the way; he will give them wisdom and counsel how to behave themselves, and will save them with an everlasting salvation at last. But watching and prayer are the appointed means of his accomplishing his gracious designs toward them, and of their being prepared for every event; and all that either preach or hear the gospel, are concerned in these duties, as ever they would be found faithful, and give up their accounts with joy and not with grief.

C H A P. XIV.

The conspiracy of the chief priests and scribes against Christ, 1, 2. A woman anoints his head before his death, 3,—9. Judas's contract to betray him, 10, 11. He eats the passover, and institutes the Lord's supper, 12,—25. Foretells Peter's denying him, 26,—31. Christ's agony in the garden, 32,—42. He is betrayed and apprehended, 43,—52. Is tried, condemned, and abused, 53,—65. Peter denies him, and repents, 66,—72.

TEXT.

AFTER two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests, and the scribes, sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

2 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar of the people.

3 And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6 And Jesus said,

PARAPHRASE.

TWO days after the foregoing discourse, came on the the annual feast of the passover, which was always celebrated with unleavened bread: And, in the mean while, the chief priests and Jewish doctors, with other members of the great council, having resolved upon putting Christ to death, consulted together to apprehend him by stratagem rather than force, that their design might not be defeated by an opposition from the people, who had an high esteem of him. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 3.)

2 But some among them objected against attempting it, even in the most private and artful manner that could be proposed, at so public a time as the passover, lest as soon as the great multitude, who were gathering together on that occasion, should see him in their hands, they should make a riot, and rise for his rescue: However, God in his providence suffered the opinion of others to prevail for apprehending him without delay, the time appointed of the Father being then come for Christ our Passover to be sacrificed for us.

3 Now, while Jesus was at *Bethany*, whither he came six days before the passover, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 6.) as he sat at supper in the house of *Simon* †, who was called the leper, a certain woman (*Mary* the sister of *Lazarus*) came behind him, and opening a pot of rich and sweet-smelling ointment made of spikenard, she poured it, some upon his head, and some upon his feet, (*John* xii. 3.) in token of her great affection to him, and of her faith in him as God's Anointed.

4, 5. Hereupon some of the disciples so far followed *Judas's* example, (*John* xii. 4, 5.) as to be very uneasy in their own minds, saying, in private talk one with another, What a needless waste is this of so much costly ointment, which our Lord would never desire to be so profusely spent upon himself, and might have been disposed of in a much more useful manner? For, had it been sold, it would have fetched a great sum of money †, which might have been given for the relief of the poor. And they chid her.

6 But (3.) Jesus, knowing all the secret murmurings of their hearts, and private whisperings among themselves under a pretence of charity, expressed his displeasure

NOTES.

† It is uncertain whether he were styled *the leper* on account of his having descended from a leprous family, or been himself formerly leprous and healed by Jesus. See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 6.

† Three hundred pence amounted to above nine pounds sterling, reckoning the *Roman* penny at seven-pence half-penny of our money.

aid, Let her trouble ye? why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforeshand to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her.

10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

11 And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

12 Add the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the

sure against them, and his approbation of her, saying, Why do ye want to check and disturb this good woman in the respect she is shewing to me? It is a commendable instance of honour, duty, faith, and love, which I take very kindly at her hands.

7 For as to the poor, who ye pretend might have been better relieved by this expence, they are, and ever will be, in the world, as standing objects of your charity, and ye may have opportunities of supplying their wants as often as ye please: But I shall soon be taken from you, and none of you ought to think much of the charge which this friendly woman has been at in paying so signal a testimony of her respect to me.

8 She has herein done me the most seasonable honour she was capable of shewing in my present circumstances, who shall shortly be slain and buried; and therefore in reality she has only anticipated an anointing of my body for the burial a little before my death, providence so ordering it because she will have no opportunity for it afterwards.

9 I assuredly tell you, This is so remarkable an instance of her faith and love, that, wherever the doctrine of my sufferings and resurrection shall be preached, this pious act of her's shall be divulged, for her honour, and for the encouragement of them that believe in me.

10 Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve apostles and the chief malecontent, was so far from being pacified by this answer, that he was filled with the greater vexation at it; and, under the power of covetousness, anger, and revenge, which Satan stirred up in his heart, (*Luke xxii. 3.*) he soon afterwards went to the sanhedrim, while they were consulting about methods of apprehending Jesus, and made proposals of delivering him privately into their hands.

11 This was a very welcome surprise to their malicious minds; they were overjoyed to hear of such a motion from one of Christ's own apostles and intimates; and immediately agreed to give him thirty shekels of silver, the price of a slave, as a reward for that service. (*Mat. xxvi. 15.* see the note there.) And from that time forward he watched for the most convenient opportunity of performing his wicked bargain, by treacherously putting his Lord into the power of his cruel and implacable enemies, as the *scribes* and *Pharisees* were known to be.

12 Now on the first day on which the *Jesus* began to eat unleavened bread, and were obliged by the law to kill the paschal lamb, it being the day before that on which

the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And whosoever he shall go in, say ye to the good-man of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

15 And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

19 And they be-

which they eat the passover, Christ's disciples, knowing how exact he was in observing all ordinances of divine appointment, desired him to tell them at what house he would have them make the necessary provisions for their eating it, none of them having any house of their own at *Jerusalem*. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 17.)

13 Upon which he ordered two of his apostles, viz. *Peter* and *John*, (*Luke* xxii. 8.) to go to *Jerusalem*; and that he might give a specimen of his infallible knowledge and influence upon the minds of men, he directed them, saying, At your entrance into the city, ye shall meet with a man in the street, carrying a pitcher of water; observe where he goes, and follow him. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 18.)

14 And whatsoever house he shall enter into, go ye after him; and applying to the good householder, tell him that your Lord and Master sent you to ask, What room have you to spare, that is ready furnished for guests, where I and my disciples may celebrate the passover together?

15 And immediately, upon your putting this question to him in my name, his heart will be inclined to give you a friendly reception, and to lead you into a large chamber well fitted for my purpose; there get every thing ready for me and you and the rest of my apostles, to eat the paschal lamb.

16 Accordingly those two disciples went, in obedience to his order, into the city, without disputing or doubting the success; and, finding that every thing exactly answered what he had foretold them, they did all that was requisite, in a way of preparation, for eating the passover.

17 And after sun-set, the time appointed in the law for eating the paschal lamb being then come, our Lord went into an upper room, with his twelve apostles, to celebrate the passover there. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 20.)

18 And whilst, according to the *Jewish* custom, they were sitting at table and feeding together, Jesus, who perfectly knew the secret treachery of *Judas's* heart, addressed himself, in an alarming manner, to the apostles without distinction, saying, I assuredly tell you, that, tho' now we sit like friends together, one of this very company, who is eating the passover with me, will most perfidiously betray me into the hands of my barbarous enemies. (See the note on *Luke* xxii. 21.)

19 At the hearing of this, they all, except *Judas*, who alone could be conscious of any evil design against Christ,

began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I?

20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.

21 The Son of man indeed goeth as it is written of him: but wo to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

Christ, were surprised and grieved at heart; and each of them one after another, instead of suspecting his brother, cried out with great concern and godly jealousy over himself, Lord, is it I whom thou pointest at as the wicked traitor that will dare to commit so black, so ungrateful and shocking a crime? I dread the thought of ever doing any thing like it: O let me never be guilty of such villany, nor lie under the least suspicion of it.

20 But (he) our Lord replied, I shall at present only tell you, that one of my twelve apostles, whose hand is now dipping † in the same dish with mine, is the man who will certainly act this treacherous part against me.

21 I, who am the true Messiah, must indeed go as a lamb to the slaughter, according to ancient prophecy concerning me: But tho' the instruments of my death will be therein over-ruled, by infinite wisdom, to subserve the most important designs of God's glory, in the redemption of *Israel*; yet that is no excuse for their wilful and premeditated wickedness, who mean nothing but evil against me; and therefore dreadful will be the condition of that base and unworthy creature, who, under a profession of friendship, shall deliver me into their hands: It would have been better for him never to have been born, than live to contract such horrid guilt, and bring upon himself the heavy vengeance that will be righteously executed upon him for it.

22 And at the close of the paschal supper, which, in its typical view, was fulfilled at the death of Christ, he, to institute another commemorative ordinance in its stead, took bread, and, when he had set it apart for the designed purpose by solemn thanksgiving and prayer, he broke it into several pieces, and distributed it among the disciples, saying, Take, and eat it ‡; this is what I appoint to be henceforward done, in perpetual remembrance of my body's being broken for your redemption from sin and wrath, as the passover has hitherto been of *Israel's* deliverance from *Egyptian* miseries and bondage.

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23 In

† It is probable that at this very instant our Lord and *Judas*, with some other of the disciples, were dipping the bitter herbs, that were to be eaten with the paschal lamb, in a vessel of vinegar, or other sauce then in use, which stood on the table for that purpose, that so they might make a nearer guess whom he meant. See the note on *Luke* xxii. 21.

‡ As Christ ordered them to take, and eat, and drink, immediately after a full meal upon the paschal Lamb, he evidently designed this

institution, not for bodily refreshment, but only for spiritual purposes; which were sufficiently answered by eating and drinking ever so small a quantity, with an exercise of such applying graces as were directed to by those actions in their reference to the memorials of a crucified Saviour. See the notes on *Luke* xxii. 19. And this naturally leads one to think, that a large quantity of water is no more necessary to baptism, than a full measure of bread and wine is to the Lord's Supper.

22 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink anew in the kingdom of God.

26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

23 In like manner, taking a cup of wine into his hand, he solemnly appropriated it to the same religious use, by another address to God; upon which he gave it to be handed round, ordering them all to drink: And every one of them drank of the wine, as they had before eat of the bread. (See the notes on *Luke* xii. 20.)

24 And, together with his delivering the cup, he said to them, This is what I appoint to be a perpetual sign and memorial of my blood, as shed for establishing the new covenant, that all its gracious promises may be everlastingly ratified and sure, and for purchasing all its blessings, that as many as shall believe in me may receive remission of sins. (*Mat.* xvi. 28. see the note there.)

25 I assuredly tell you, that after this time I will no more drink of the passover-cup, nor have that commemorative and typical ordinance continue in my church any longer than till it be superseded and fulfilled (*Luke* xii. 16.) by the great salvation which I shall bring into the gospel-kingdom upon my resurrection from the dead, and which is to be afterwards commemorated by a new use of wine in the supper I have now instituted: Nor will I so familiarly commune with you again, as I now do in this New-Testament ordinance, till we shall have the most intimate fellowship together in the more excellent entertainments of the heavenly state, which, for their superior and always fresh delight, may, in the language of a festival, be called new wine. (See the note on *Mat.* xvi. 29.)

26 And, at the conclusion of the Lord's supper, Jesus and his disciples sung a proper psalm or song of praise together, as had been customary at the close of the passover; and then he set out for the mount of *Olives*, chusing to retire thither, that he might prevent a riot in *Jerusalem* on account of his being apprehended by his enemies, the time of which he knew was then at hand.

27 While Jesus and his disciples were travelling toward that mountain, before they got to *Gethsemane*, (ver. 32.) he said unto them, Every one of you will this very night be in a dreadful consternation, and so exceedingly discouraged as to run away from me, and to be in great doubt about my being the Messiah by reason of the seizure that will be made upon me: For the time is now come, when I must fall a sacrifice to divine justice; with regard to which God has said, (*Zech.* xiii. 7.) *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the man who is my fellow: Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.*

28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.

30 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this day, even in this night before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34 And saith unto-

28 But, that ye may not utterly despair, I now tell you beforehand, I shall rise from the dead for your justification, (*Rom. iv. 25.*); and, soon after that, ye shall see me to your great joy in *Galilee*, where I have often conversed with you, and whither I will go to gather you all together again.

29 Hereupon *Peter*, being too self-confident, replied with earnestness and resentment, as if he were ashamed to be suspected of coolness or cowardice, Lord, though every one of thy disciples should be stumbled at what may befall thee, and like *Judas*, who has already left us †, should forsake thee; yet I am resolved, at all events, never to think amiss of thee, or to run away from thee.

30 Then Jesus said to him, Alas, *Peter*! notwithstanding all this vain boast, I assuredly tell you, that this very day ‡ which we are just now entered upon, even so early as before the second cock-crowing in the morning, you will shamefully thrice deny that you ever so much as knew me.

31 But *Peter*, instead of being more humble and modest at this rebuke, grew more warm and peremptory, protesting, with an uncommon assurance, No, so far shall I be from doing any thing like this, that come life, come death, come what will, I am resolved no terrors shall ever prevail upon me to disown thee: And the rest of the disciples hearing *Peter* talk so bravely as they thought, and being ashamed to be silent, declared that their resolution was the same with his.

32 By this time they arrived at *Gethsemane*, which lay at the foot of the mount of *Olives*; where, leaving eight of the disciples that were then with him, he ordered them to tarry there till his return, whilst he should retire a little further for prayer in an adjacent garden.

33 Then taking only *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, with him, who had been eye-witnesses of his glorious transfiguration, that they might likewise be so of his terrible agonies; he, as they were going along, began to fall into an amazing, tho' senseless horror, and to be heavily oppressed in his spirit, by reason of the terrors of God which set themselves in array against him.

34 And, that the three disciples might take the more

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N O T E 8:

† It seems that by this time *Judas* had slipped away from the disciples, to answer his vile contract with the sanhedrim; and *Peter* missing him, vaunted, that though all his fellow-apostles should follow *Judas's* example, he would stand by his Lord.

‡ The Jews, in reckoning their days, be-

gan with the evening, according to the *Mosaic* computation, which called the evening and the morning the first day, &c. *Gen. i. 5, &c.*; and to that which, after sun-set, was called this night, might also be called this day. See likewise the notes on *Matt. xvi. 34.* and *Luke xii. 34.*

unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed, That, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest thou not watch one hour?

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

39 And again he went away, and pray-

notice of it, he said to them, My soul is (*στεφανος*) surrounded and pressed on every side with unutterable sorrows; the distress of my spirit is like the agonies of death, and will certainly issue in it: Stay ye here, and watch with me and for yourselves in this hour of great temptation, whilst I go a little further.

35 Then he removed to a small distance from them; and falling humbly prostrate on the ground, in the agony of his spirit, prayed with great earnestness, That if it might be consistent with his Father's will, and with the great designs of his glory and the salvation of his people, the terrible sufferings and death which lay before him might be waved, saying,

36 O my heavenly Father, thou art able to do whatsoever thou knowest is fit to be done: If therefore it seems meet to thine infinite wisdom to take any other way of glorifying thyself in the salvation of the church, without my undergoing the dreadful sufferings and death which I now begin to feel in all their terrors, my human nature cannot but wish to escape them; nevertheless, I freely and absolutely submit all its natural reluctances to thy holy determination, which, considering it as thy will, it is my greatest pleasure to comply with.

37 Then returning to the three disciples, and finding them all dropped asleep, it being late in the night, and their spirits being overwhelmed and stupified with sorrow, (*Luke xxii. 45.*) he gently reproveth them, and particularly Peter, saying, What, Simon, are you asleep, who but just now talked at so high a rate of laying down your life for me, rather than not stand by me? Is this your kindness to your friend? Is all your zeal and resolution so soon come to this? Could you not keep awake for one hour only, in obedience to my command, and to see what would become of me while you knew what an agony I was in? (*ver. 34.*)

38 This is a time for every one of you to be watching and praying, that ye may not be overcome by the trying providences and dangers which now lie before you: I know indeed that your hearts are sincerely desirous to shew your love and duty to me; but, alas! your natural and sinful infirmities disable you from doing what ye would, unless special strength be given from above, which ye therefore should be earnestly praying for, and watching to improve.

39 Our Lord having thus cautioned and counselled his disciples, retired a second time, repeating his humble

prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy;) neither will they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him, had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

45 And as soon he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and kissed him.

46 And they laid

ble address in words of the same purport, with like fervour, and entire resignation to his Father's will, as before.

40 And upon coming soon after to the disciples again, he found them all as fast asleep as at first; for they were exceeding drowsy: And he renewing his rebuke, they, like persons between sleep and awake, could hardly tell what he said to them, much less what excuse to make for themselves.

41 He once more left them a little while, to pour out his heart in prayer after the same manner; and when he returned the third time, and found them still asleep, he said, My previous conflict is now over; and ye may sleep on, if ye will, for me, who have no further occasion for your watchings: I have given you sufficient warnings of your danger, and there is now no time for any more: For the great sufferings I foretold are just at hand; and ye shall immediately see the Messiah treacherously delivered into the power of wicked men, of *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, who are coming to take away my life.

42 Get up, let us go and meet the approaching enemy, from whom I must no longer think to make my escape; behold, the perfidious wretch, who marches before them to shew them their way, and to give them an opportunity of apprehending me, is this moment coming up to me.

43 And the words were scarcely out of his mouth, before *Judas*, one of the twelve apostles, appeared as the leader of a great number of officers and soldiers, who were armed with swords and other weapons, and came by order of the sanhedrim to apprehend him, and to bring him before them.

44 Now it being night, and the company being strangers to Jesus, *Judas* had told them before-hand how they might certainly distinguish him from any other that should be with him, saying, Observe the person whom I shall advance to and salute with a kiss; he is the man whom ye are to apprehend; seize him without fear of being mistaken, and take care that he by no means make his escape.

45 Accordingly, as soon as *Judas* had brought them to the place where Christ was with some of his disciples, he made up directly to him, and addressing him with an air of usual friendship and respect, under the style of Master, he saluted him with a kiss. (See the note on *Mat. xxvi. 49.*)

46 Hereupon the officers executed their commission from

And their hands on him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by, drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me?

49 I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled.

50 And they all forsook him, and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him:

52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

from the council, in seizing upon him and binding him, (*John* xvi. 12.); and his time being then fully come, he made no attempts to rescue himself out of their hands.

47 However, one of the disciples that were with him, *Peter* by name, a rash hot-headed man, having a sword, (*Luke* xii. 38.) immediately drew it, in the midst of surprise, rage, and zeal; and, striking at the head of one of the high priest's servants, wounded him so far as to cut off his right ear. (*John* xviii. 10.)

48 Then, after Jesus had mercifully and miraculously cured the wound, and reproved *Peter* for his intemperate beat in offering such an act of violence and attempting to maintain his cause by the power of the sword, (*Mat.* xxvi. 52. and *Luke* xii. 51.) he gently and calmly expostulated with those that came to apprehend him, saying, What is the reason of your coming out in the night, armed against me, as if I were some resolute villain, or public robber, who must be overpowered by main force?

49 Ye well enough know that I never shunned to appear openly, as there were occasions, among you: I frequently resorted to the temple, and continued preaching there every day for some time past; and yet none of you took me up, as ye easily might whenever ye would, if ye had any thing to lay to my charge: Why then should ye now come out in this private, and yet hostile manner, to apprehend me? But the time appointed of God, and foretold by the ancient prophets, for my sufferings and death, is now come; and therefore, that his council may stand, he has permitted you to take this extraordinary course against me.

50 Then all the disciples, who but a little before had protested that they would sooner die with him than forsake him, left him in the power of his enemies; and every one ran away to shift as well as he could for himself.

51, 52. And, as our Lord passed along with the company, a certain young man† ran to see what was the matter, tho' he had only a linen cloth upon him to cover his body: And some of the soldiers, suspecting him to be one of Christ's disciples, caught hold of the cloth to secure him; but (as) he, leaving the garment in their hands, slipped away from them, and made his escape naked.

53 Now

N O T E.

† It does not appear that he was one of Christ's disciples; but it seems by his covering, as if he were either going, or got to bed, and that out of curiosity he ran in his shirt to see what was the meaning of a band of soldiers passing by at that time of night.

53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest; and with him were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders, and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55 And the chief priests, and all the counsel, sought for witnesses against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest

53 Now Jesus being in custody of the soldiers, they carried him bound, and under guard, first to *Anas*, (John xviii. 12, 13.) and afterwards to the house of *Caiaphas*, who was high priest for that year; and there, tho' it was so late in the night, the council, consisting of the chief priests and elders, and doctors of the law, were all assembled together, waiting for his being brought before them; that they might proceed immediately upon his trial.

54 And *Peter*, recovering a little from his surprise, ventured to follow him at a considerable distance, that he might not be observed; and getting into the high priest's house, he thrust in, like a stranger, among the servants, to warm himself at the fire, hoping to stay there undiscovered till he should see what became of his Lord.

55 Then the chief priests, and the rest of the council, having Jesus before them as their prisoner, and being resolved to take away his life, used all possible methods to get such depositions against him as might give a colour of justice to their proceedings in putting him to death; but they could find none to answer their purpose.

56 For tho' they prevailed with several to bring in false accusations; yet they either were inconsistent with each other, or what they said did not amount to the charge of a capital crime †, that might afford a fair pretence for these unrighteous judges themselves to pass sentence of death upon him.

57, 58. At length others were procured, who, from a notorious misconstruction of some words which he had dropped relating to his own death and resurrection, (*John* ii. 21.) immediately affirmed that they had heard him say he would, and was able to destroy their famous and sacred temple at *Jerusalem*, which was built by the hands of men, and within three days would build another without the help of any hands. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 61.)

59 But false and forced as this interpretation of his words was, these witnesses either did not agree as to the precise meaning of them, or all that they deposed on this head did not come up to the charge of a crime ‡ for which they could lawfully conclude that he deserved to die.

60 Then, Jesus continuing silent under all these false and frivolous accusations, the high priest rose up in a heat, and, with scorn and fury, said to him, What!

have

N O T E S.

† *Idem* *ux* *novus*, They were not equal to the charge of a capital crime.

‡ *Quæ* *vis* *non* *est*, Neither so was it equal to the charge of a capital crime.

est thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and

have you nothing to say on your own behalf? Or do you cast contempt upon the court by refusing to plead? What answer is it possible for you to make to the things that these men witness against you? Can you either deny or justify them?

61 But Jesus knowing the malicious design of the high priest and counsel, and that they wanted only to provoke him to say something which might give them a handle against him, still continued to make no reply: Then the high priest urged him again with greater vehemence, and with an air of religious solemnity, (*Mat. xxvi. 63.*) saying, Tell us plainly, as in the presence of God, Art thou the Messiah of *Israel*, even the Son of the blessed and only Potentate?

62 When a question of this importance was put with such solemnity to our Lord, he thought himself called to witness a good confession; and therefore roundly affirmed, I am the true Messiah, and the Son of the Blessed, (*see the note on Luke xxii. 70.*); and how much soever ye, my present judges, disbelieve it through the hardness of your hearts, a time is coming when ye shall have convincing demonstrations of it, to your own confusion, by the terrible vengeance which I will ere long execute upon this city and nation for their unbelief, by the powerful and amazing spread of my gospel through all the nations whom ye despise, and at last by my appearing on a throne of glory to judge you and all the world.

63 At the high priest's hearing this, he, according to the custom of the *Jews*, rent his clothes, as a token of the utmost indignation; and, turning to the council, said, What occasion have we to give ourselves any further trouble to call or hear any other evidence.

64 Every one of you yourselves have now been ear-witnesses of the horrid downright blasphemy that has proceeded from his own lips: What say ye? Is not here sufficient cause to condemn him to death? And they impiously agreed, as with one consent, that his so plainly taking to himself these characters was a blasphemous claim, for which he deserved to die. (*See the note on Mat. xxvi. 66.*)

65 And no sooner had they thus passed sentence against him, but many began to treat him with all manner of rudeness, insolence and contempt, (*see the note on Mat. xxvi. 67.*): Some spit in his face; and others, blindfolding, and then striking him, said with a taunt and jeer, Now, thou high pretender to prophecy, tell us, Who was it that struck you at this time, and who at that?

and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest :

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch ; and the cock crew.

69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them.

70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them ; for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crew twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

that? And the very servants themselves were so bold and abusive as to slap him in the face.

66, 67. In the mean while, as *Peter* was sitting among the servants at the lower end of the high priest's hall, to observe the issue of this affair, and as he was there warming himself at the fire, one of the high priest's servant-maids came up to the company, and, looking hard at him, thought that he was one of Christ's disciples; whereupon she taxed him with it, saying, I am well satisfied that you was one of the followers of this Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But *Peter*, struck with fear, replied on a sudden, It is false, I know nothing of the matter; and cannot imagine why you should suspect me; and thereupon, withdrawing into the porch, he heard a cock crow for the first time, it being then about midnight.

69 Some time after, another maid-servant took notice of him again; and, turning to some of the by-standers, said, I am confident this fellow was one of the disciples of Jesus.

70 But *Peter* as rashly and absolutely denied it as before. -- And soon after that, others in the company pressed him further a third time, and, warmly insisting upon it, said, Without doubt you are one of the followers of this Jesus, it is in vain to think of denying it: For as he is of *Galilee*; so it appears plainly, by the dialect you speak, that you are a *Galilean*.

71 *Peter* being now confounded to the last degree, for fear of being after all discovered, hardly knew what he said; but, resolving to brave it out in the most likely manner he could, he fell into a violent passion, and denied it a third time, with such imprecations and oaths, as no disciple of Christ's could easily be supposed to use, saying, with daring assurance, I am so far from being a follower of the man you talk of, that I never so much as saw his face till now.

72 And immediately after this third and most shocking denial of his Lord, a cock crew, it being then about three o'clock in the morning, which, by way of eminence, was called the time of cock-crowing: (See the note on *Mat. xxvi. 34.*) And *Peter* immediately, upon hearing it, recollected the solemn warning which Christ had given him but a few hours ago, when he said, Before the second cock-crowing, you will thrice deny me: And in his reflections on this, and on his own vain confidence then, and on his wicked and shameful conduct since, his heart was ready to burst with grief; and he poured out floods of penitential tears, in the bitter-

RECOLLECTIONS.

What different treatment did the suffering Saviour meet with from the same, and from different persons! His dear disciples professed to stand by him to the last extremity; and yet, soon after, they all forsook him, and the most forward of them shamefully denied him. One of his friends would spare no cost to testify an affectionate respect to him; but others, misjudging the action, were displeased with it; and, at the same time, both secret and open enemies were conspiring against his life, and uniting treachery, falsehood, and force, to destroy it. But the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, while the memory of the wicked shall rot. Christ loves and honours them that love and honour him: He put an end to the passover, by being sacrificed for them; and instituted his last supper, as a feast upon the sacrifice, and as a perpetual memorial of his dying love to them. He communes with them as his friends, pities and bears with their infirmities, warns them faithfully of their danger, reproves them tenderly for their weaknesses, concerns himself for their safety, and recovers them from their falls. But ah! how often do their fears overcome their faith, and presumptuous confidences betray them into sin! and how does one iniquity lead on to another! O the dreadful power of passion and tumultuous fear! But all make work for bitter repentance; and which of their hearts would not relent and melt, in reflection upon their sin against him, whose love to them was so great, that for their sakes he suffered to the utmost extremity in soul and body with entire resignation to his Father's will, despised all the malicious charges of his enemies, and patiently endured their insolent affronts! And yet, to leave us an example, he boldly witnessed a good confession, when his own and his Father's glory lay at stake. But woe to his false friends, who, *Judas-like*, betray him! and to his inveterate enemies, who, like the council and their servants, deride and degrade him, and turn every thing against him! He abhors their treachery and wickedness; and will one day give them dreadful conviction of his own divine authority, and of their obstinate infidelity: Then they, and not he, will stand under the charge of blasphemy; and it had been better for them, and especially for perfidious apostates, never to have been born.

C H A P. XV.

Christ is brought before Pilate, 1,—14. Is delivered to be crucified, and is thereupon mocked and abused by the soldiers, 15,—21. Is crucified and derided by the Jews, 22,—32. Several prodigies attend his death, 33,—38. The centurion and others are witnesses of it, 39,—41. And Joseph of Arimathea gives him an honourable burial, 42,—47.

TEXT.

AND straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes, and the whole counsel, bound Jesus, and carried him

PARAPHRASE.

NOW the Jewish sanhedrim having sat up the greatest part of the night to examine Jesus, and agreed among themselves that he deserved to die; they, after a short recess, (see the note on *Mat. xxvii. 1.*) came together in full assembly, early in the morning; when the chief priests, being most zealous and active in Satan's cause, consulted with the other members of that great council about the best method for cutting him off: And their authority in matters of life and death having been very much sunk of late by their subjection to the Romans, (see the note on *John xviii. 31.*) they sent him bound

himway, and delivered him to Pilate.

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things; but he answered nothing.

4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

6 Now at that feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude crying aloud, began to desire him to do as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that

bound like a criminal, to Pontius Pilate the governor of Judea, and resolved to accuse him as a seditious person who set himself up for king against Caesar, (Luke xxiii. 2.)

2 And when they brought him before Pilate under this charge, he put the plain question to him, saying, Do you profess to be king of the Jews? Art thou guilty, or not guilty? To which Jesus replied, Though my kingdom is not of this world, (John xviii. 36.) as you may easily judge by the meanness of my appearance; yet there is a sense in which I own the charge: I really am a king, as the nature of your question supposes that I affirm myself to be.

3 In the mean while the chief priests, and others under their influence, were exceeding vehement and clamorous in the many invidious accusations they brought against him: But he, knowing it was to no purpose to reply to the malicious and improbable suggestions of a set of people who had before-hand resolved to have his blood, abode by his first answer, and declined giving any other.

4 Then Pilate spoke to him again, saying, What! have you nothing to plead in your own defence against your accusers? Observe how many heinous crimes they lay to your charge.

5 But still Jesus continued silent, that he might not needlessly exasperate the Jews, since there was no appeasing them. This appeared to Pilate an unaccountable piece of conduct on such an occasion; so that he was perfectly amazed at it, not knowing what our Lord meant by it.

6 Now it was a customary thing for the Roman governor, at every paschal-feast, to discharge one prisoner, whom the Jews should appoint, in honour of that great memorial of their own deliverance from Egyptian bondage.

7 And at this very time there was a most notorious criminal in custody; one Barabbas, who was committed to jail for spiriting up the mob, and heading them in a seditious riot, in which they had been guilty of murder, robbery, and other outrages.

8, 9. While therefore the common people were importuning the governor to gratify them with the discharge of a prisoner, as he had always done at that great feast ever since he came to the regency of Judea: Pilate, supposing that they could hardly think of having so detestable a wretch as Barabbas spared, made a motion for the release of Jesus in preference to him, saying,

Will

that I release unto you the king of the Jews?

10 (For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.)

11 But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the king of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 And Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Prætorium: and

Will ye agree that, in honour of the passover, I shall discharge this man, whom ye say calls himself the king of the Jews.

10 This the governor himself was very desirous of, if it might possibly be obtained; for by the whole course of the evidence against Jesus, and of his behaviour under it, *Pilate* was fully satisfied in his own mind, that it was an envious, unreasonable, and malicious prosecution.

11 But no sooner was this proposal made, than the chief priests urged and prevailed upon the people to insist, as with one voice, upon the discharge of *Barabbas* himself, in opposition to Jesus.

12 At this *Pilate*, being extremely troubled and surprised, replied, Why is all this rage and clamour against a poor inconsiderable man, who is to be pitied and despised, rather than feared, on account of his pretences to be your king, for which ye have brought him before me? What would ye have me to do with him, if I must not release him?

13 They answered with still greater outrage, at the instigation of the chief priests and rulers, We demand that he be crucified; nothing short of his being put to that ignominious death will satisfy us.

14 The governor being still desirous, if possible, to soften their temper and bring him off, expostulated with them in a rational way, saying, Why will nothing short of this man's blood content you? What crime have ye proved upon him, that by the *Roman* law deserves death, especially such a cruel and shameful death? But (4) instead of being pacified, they were more furious than ever, and cried out with bitter rage and impatience, We will hear of no favour being shewn him; let him, without more ado, be crucified.

15 Then *Pilate* finding it was to no purpose to attempt any thing further to quiet them, and being inclined rather to humour them, and prevent the seditious tumult which he was afraid of, than to follow his own convictions of Christ's innocency, released the infamous *Barabbas* to them; and having before ordered Jesus to be scourged to move their compassion, but in vain, he at length delivered him up to be crucified. (See the notes on *Mat.* xxvii. 26.)

16 And, among other barbarities, some of the soldiers seized him; and, carrying him into another large room †, called *Prætorium*, they summoned the rest

N O T E.

† The *Prætorium* was an inner hall, so called from the *Prætor*'s (a *Roman* magistrate) using to give judgment there.

and they call together the whole band.

of their company to insult, abuse, and ridicule him, in mockery of his claiming kingly power, as if it were only to be laughed at. (See the notes on *Mat.* xxvii. 16, 17.)

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head;

17 And this they did in the following scornful manner: They put upon him a † garment of such a colour as resembled that of royal robes; and having made a crown of thorns, they clapped it upon his head, putting also a reed or hollow cane into his hand for a sham sceptre, (*Mat.* xxvii. 19.)

18 And began to salute him, Hail, king of the Jews!

18 And when they had thus disguised him with the ridiculous mimicry of a prince, they, to make further sport, accosted him with a jeer, saying, All happiness attend the king of the Jews.

19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees, worshipped him.

19-Then taking the cane out of his hand, they barbarously smote him with it upon the head; and scornfully spit at him, of whom it was prophesied, that *he hid not his face from spitting*, (*Isa.* l. 6.); and, in a ludicrous way, they dropped down on their knees before him, as if they were paying homage to him.

20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

20 And when they had treated him with all this contempt, they plucked off the mock robe, and put upon him his own clothes again; and, after all this, they guarded him to the place of execution, to which he went, carrying his cross on his shoulder, in order to his being crucified. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 31.)

21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

21 And, as they were passing along, a certain man came in their way from the country, whose name was *Simon of Cyrene*, and who was the father of *Alexander* and *Rufus*, two men well known in those parts; and as there was danger of Jesus's fainting under the burden of the cross, they forced this man to take it up and carry it. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 32.)

22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull.

22 In this manner they conducted him to the place of execution, a little way without the gates of *Jerusalem*, where they used to put criminals to death, and therefore called it *Golgotha*, the meaning of which word is, *The place of a skull*. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 33.)

23 And they gave him to drink, wine mingled with myrrh: but he

23 And as soon as they arrived thither, they, like enemies that would use him with all possible indignity and inhumanity, offered him a draught of sour wine mixed with a bitter ingredient †, instead of the stupifying

NOTES.

† As royal robes were usually purple and scarlet, the colour of this garment, which was probably one of the soldiers', is here and in *John* xix. 2. expressed by the full, and in

Matth. xxvii. 18. by the last; and we are told, that the *Tyrian* purple was not very different from *scarlet*.

† Dr Clarke thinks that *myrrh* was used.

he received it not.

ing potion which used to be given to persons just before they were crucified that they might be the less sensible of their pain; but Jesus tasting it, refused to drink it.

24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

24 And when they were about to crucify him, (*συνεζωγῆσαν αὐτὸν*) they stripped him of his clothes; some of which the soldiers, who were his immediate executioners and claimed them as their fee, divided into four parts, that each of them might have one, (*John xix. 23.*): And they cast lots to determine who should have a particular garment, being loth to divide it because was all of one piece without any seam; God also herein over-ruling their minds to fulfil that remarkable prophecy of the Messiah, saying, (*Psal. xxii. 18.*) *They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

25 And it was the third hour; and they crucified him.

25 Now the time of day at which they nailed his hands and feet to the cross was within the compass of what the Jews call the third hour †.

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over,
THE KING OF THE JEWS.

26 And, according to the Roman custom, they, by Pilate's order, fixed a writing over Christ's head, in large capital letters, which, contrary to their design of reproach, declared him to be, what he really was in a high and glorious sense, *The king of the Jews.*

27 And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

27 They likewise, to put the greater odium upon him, crucified him in company with two robbers; placing all three in a row, one on each side, and Jesus in the middle, as if he had been a more notorious criminal than either of the other sufferers.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, 'And he was numbered with the transgressors.'

28 And so they were over-ruled, by the providence of God, to fulfil another ancient prophecy of the Messiah's *being numbered with transgressors*, (*Isa. liii. 12.*); which intimated, that though he was perfectly innocent in himself, yet he stood in the eye of the law as an offender whilst he bore his people's sins.

29 And they that passed by, railed on him, wag-

29 Moreover, the very passengers on the road, contrary to all rules of humanity and decency, insulted and reviled him in a blasphemous manner, (*βλασφημῶν,*) and

N O T E S.

ω is here used to signify the potion given Jesus in contempt, instead of the real *συνεζωγῆσαν*. Dr Lightfoot, on *Matt. xxvii. 34.* was also of the same opinion; adding, that these words seem to relate to the custom of the nation, and those of *Matthew* to the thing as it was really acted. Other methods of reconciling the two evangelists, as *χολή*, the word used *Matt. xxvii. 34.* signifies worm-wood, or any kind of bitter poisonous mixture, as well as *gall*, may be seen in *Hammond* and *Hibby* on that place.

† The third hour is to be understood, according to the Jewish computation, for our nine o'clock, and onwards to twelve; but the sixth hour, at which it is said (*John xix. 14.*) Pilate passed sentence against Christ, is to be taken, according to the Roman way of reckoning, for our six o'clock in the morning, that gospel being written after the destruction of Jerusalem. And so there is an exact agreement between these two accounts of Christ's condemnation and crucifixion.

wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days;

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the chief priests, mocking, said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others, himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the king of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him, reviled him.

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land, until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

and shaking their heads, with an air of scornful triumph, cried out, Aha, so we would have it: What are all your high pretences come to at last! You, who once talked big, as if you could even demolish our magnificent temple, and rebuild it within the space of three days, what say you now?

30 Come, let us see what you can do in the time of your own extremity; deliver yourself from tortures and death, quit the cross, and come hither, if ye can.

31 After the same manner the chief priests, the doctors of the law, and the elders themselves, (*Mat. xxvii. 41.*) those ecclesiastical senators, notwithstanding their age and gravity, impiously derided him, saying one to another, We have him safe enough now: He set up for a saviour of others; but alas, poor wretch! it is plain that he is a vile impostor, utterly unable to save himself from his own approaching death.

32 Let him make good his pretences of being *Israel's Messiah*, if he can; let him now give us a proof of his boasted power, by quitting the cross and coming down to us, that we may see cause to believe in him: (See the notes on *Matth. xxvii. 41.* and *Luke xxiii. 35.*) Yea, so general and violent was the run upon him, that even one of the crucified thieves themselves threw out the most spiteful and reproachful words against him. (See the note on *Matt. xxvii. 44.*)

33 Now after Jesus had hung on the cross about three hours, there began to be at noon, or the sixth hour of the day, according to the *Jews* way of reckoning, such a miraculous darkness as deprived the earth of the light of the sun, and continued till three in the afternoon, which, in their computation, is the ninth hour. (See the note on *Matt. xxvii. 45.*)

34 And about three o'clock, Jesus, in the midst of terrible agony and distress, cried out, with a strong and mournful voice, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?* the meaning of which, in the mixed language then commonly spoken and well understood, is, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* He thereby claiming God as his God; and yet lamenting his Father's withdrawing all tokens of his love, and dealing with him as if he were an enemy, whilst he was bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, (*1 Pet. ii. 23.*)

35 As soon as he had uttered these words, some of the standers-by who heard them, but either did not distinguish them from other words of a like sound, or wilfully perverted them, said, See how he is put to it; he cries out for *Elias* to appear and deliver him.

36 And one ran, and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink; laying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.

39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

40 There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Josce, and Salome;

41 Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him; and ministered unto him; and

36 And immediately one of them dipping a sponge in vinegar, fastened it upon the top of a reed long enough to reach up to his mouth; and offered that, instead of a comfortable cordial, for him to suck it, (see the note on *John* xix. 29.): Whilst others said, Be quiet; let him take his own course: Ye hear he calls for *Elias*, and he may call long enough before that prophet comes to help him; let us see what interest he has in heaven, and whether *Elias* will appear to save him from death, or not.

37 Then Jesus commended his spirit into his Father's hand, not with a languid tone like dying persons in whom nature is spent, but with a loud voice; and, whilst he was yet speaking, he breathed out his holy soul, as one who freely laid down his life of himself. (See the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 50.)

38 And at this very instant the vail, which hung between the court of the priests and the holy of holies, was miraculously torn asunder from top to bottom; intimating, that God would no longer dwell in that holy place; that the ceremonial law was then abolished; that all its mysteries were laid open, and its types fulfilled; and that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* might have free access into the holiest of all, even heaven itself, by the blood of Jesus: And several other surprising wonders attended this, as supernatural and awful attestations to the dying Saviour. (*Mat.* xxvii. 51, 52.)

39 So that the *Roman* captain of the band that were ordered to see to the execution, was struck with astonishment, when he observed, among other things, the uncommon manner of Christ's expressing himself with his expiring breath; and could not help saying, Undoubtedly this was no other than the Son of God, notwithstanding all the cruelty and reproach he has undergone for asserting it: And the soldiers, falling under the like conviction, said the same concerning him. (*Mat.* xxvii. 54.)

40 There were likewise several women standing at a distance within sight of the cross to observe all that passed; some of which were *Mary Magdalene*, with another *Mary* who was the mother of *James the less* (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 56.) and of *Josce*, and a third woman named *Salome*.

41 These, though of the timorous sex, were his fast friends to the last; who had also accompanied him before, and supplied him with necessaries at their own expence, in his journeyings thro' *Galilee*: And, together with

and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

41 And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

42 Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

43 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

44 And, when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

45 And he bought linens, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

46 And Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of Jesus, beheld where he was laid.

with these, there were many other women, who, having attended him when he went up to Jerusalem, followed him to the place of execution, and were spectators of the tragical scene.

42, 43. Now, after all these things, the evening came on: And then, because the next day was the sabbath, in which no work could be lawfully done, Joseph of Arimathea, a man of great reputation, riches, and honour, who believed in Christ, and expected that his kingdom would soon appear in its glory, hastened away to Pilate: and begged the liberty of taking down the body of Jesus, that he might give it an honourable burial, instead of its being interred in an ignominious manner with the bodies of the other malefactors. (See note on Luke xxiii. 50, 51.)

44 Pilate, hearing this request, was amazed to think that our Lord should expire so soon, and could not tell how to believe it: But, sending for the captain of the soldiers that were set to guard the cross, he inquired of him, Whether Jesus were really dead, and how long he had been so.

45 And the centurion having assured him, to his full satisfaction, that they had certain proof of his being dead, (John xix. 33, 34.) the governor granted Joseph's petition, and gave order that Christ's body should be delivered to him.

46 Then Joseph went and bought some fine linen fit for his purpose, and, returning to Golgotha, took down the body from the cross; and winding the linen about it, according to the custom of the Jews, he buried it in a new sepulchre, which was a cave cut in a rock, and prepared for himself to lie in; and having deposited Christ's body there, he placed a great stone at the mouth of the sepulchre to inclose it, and prevent any farther inhuman usage of the precious remains.

47 And Mary Magdalene, with the other Mary the mother of Jesus, like true mourners, followed the corpse to its interment, and took particular notice of the sepulchre in which it was laid, and of the state of things there.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How shocking is it to think, that there should ever be such perverseness, obstinacy, and inhumanity, in the heart of man, as were found among the high-priests, populace, and soldiers, against so innocent, meek, and divine a person, as our blessed Lord! Strange, that loud *Hesanthas* should be so soon changed into *Crucify him, crucify him*; and that Pilate could dare to act so directly contrary to the convictions of his own conscience in condemning him! And O how multiplied and distressing were the sufferings of our dear Saviour! After he had been harassed about and abused all night, how was he hurried away to the judgment-hall, and made a public spectacle early in the morning! With what rancour did the barbarous crew run out against him! How was the vilest of malefactors pre-

ferred before him! What an infamous and unrighteous sentence was it that passed upon him! With what contempt and cruelty was he treated, before he came to his cross, and all the while he was hanging upon it! And who knows the distress that he underwent in his body, and the still greater anguish of soul that he felt under the forsakings of his Father and his God! Oh the astonishing patience and love of the dying Redeemer, that he would silently and willingly undergo all this in the room and stead of sinners, and be contented to be numbered with transgressors! With what holy bravery did he own his true character, whatsoever it might cost him! How calm was he under all injurious accusations and affronts! and how was he led, as a sheep to the slaughter! What clear accomplishments were there in him of ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah in his suffering character! And what honourable testimonies were given to him, amidst all his disgrace, by the prodigies that appeared at his death; by *Pilate*, who bore witness to him as an innocent person and as the king of the *Jews*; by the centurion, who was forced to own him to be the Son of God; by *Joseph of Arimathea*, who gave him a reputable burial; and by the good women, whose love carried them above their fears of danger, that they might be eye-witnesses of all that passed; and testify affectionate respect to him in a designed embalment! And how can we sufficiently love and honour him, who thus amazingly loved us, and gave himself for us!

C H A P. XVI.

An angel tells three women of the resurrection of Christ, 1,—8. Jesus himself appears to Mary Magdalene, 9,—11.; to two of his disciples, 12, 13.; and then to the apostles all together, 14. He sends them forth to preach the gospel, 15,—18.; and ascends into heaven, 19, 20.

TEXT.

AND when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

1 And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre, at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 (And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away:)

PARAPHRASE.

NOW after the sabbath was past, in the dawn of the morning, (*Mat. xxviii. 1.*) which was the entrance on the first day of the week, *Mary Magdalene*, and the other *Mary* who was the mother of *James the less* and of *Joses*, and *Salome* the mother of *Zebeder's* children, hastened away to the sepulchre; which they reached by sun-rising: And, having bought proper ingredients, they came with a design of testifying their respect, by embalming the body of *Jesus*; their faith failing with regard to his resurrection, which he had once and again foretold whilst he was yet with them.

3, 4. And, as they were going, they were perplexed in their minds about getting the great stone removed, which they observed (*chap. xv, 46, 47.*) *Joseph of Arimathea* had laid at the opening of the sepulchre to stop it up; for the stone was so large, that they feared they should not be able of themselves to stir it †: But upon coming to the place, they found, to their great amazement, that the stone was by some means or other already removed; so that the passage was quite clear.

N O T E.

† It seems they knew nothing of the watch that was set to guard the sepulchre, or of rolling the stone, which were done on the

sabbath-day, *Matth. xxvii. 62,—66.*; and therefore they had no apprehensions of difficulty from thence.

5 And

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples, and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled, and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man: for they were afraid.

9 Now when Jesus was risen early, the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

5 And, † going into the sepulchre, they saw one angel, and afterwards another with him, (*Luke xxiv. 4.*) in the likeness of a young man, clothed with a long garment, which was exceeding bright and shining: and they were struck with great confusion and fear at this unexpected and surprising sight, not knowing what might be the meaning of it.

6 Then the angel spoke kindly to them, saying, Do not be discouraged, or apprehend that any evil has befallen your Lord, or shall come to you: I know that, in the sincerity and fervour of your affection, ye are come to seek after the Saviour, who was commonly known by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and was the other day crucified: I tell you, for your comfort, he is risen, and is no longer to be found among the dead; observe the place where his body was laid, and do not give way to any further fears.

7 But go to his apostles; and particularly to *Peter*, who most of all needs a word of comfort under his bitter anguish of spirit on account of his late denial of his Lord: Let him, with the rest of them, know what ye yourselves have now seen and heard; and tell them for their further satisfaction, that, before they can get into *Galilee*, Jesus will be there, ready to shew himself alive to them, according to what he promised a little before his death. (*Chap. xiv. 28.*)

8 Hereupon the good woman hurried away immediately from the sepulchre, full of discomposure and surprise, and ran with all speed to deliver the angel's message to the disciples; and so great was their consternation, and their fear of the *Jews*, that they took no notice of these things to any whom they met with in the way.

9 Now the resurrection of Christ was a point of such vast importance, that he would not leave the evidence of it merely to the testimony of angels; but on that very day, the first day of the week, in the morning of which he rose very early from the dead, Jesus himself met with *Mary Magdalene*, whom he had before delivered from the possession of seven devils; and, to shew his amazing condescension and grace, he first of all made himself known, in a plain and familiar manner, to her. (See the note on *John xviii. 2.*)

Z 2

10 And

N O T E.

† It may be uncertain whether they entered into the sepulchre in which Christ's body was laid; or only into what some call the outward sepulchre, meaning a space before it inclosed with a fence or wall. But if, according to the note on *John xx. 2.* this account

and that in *Luke xxiv. 2.* were not the same with those recorded in *Math. xxviii. 5, 6.* and *John xx. 11, 12.* all the toil of criticism may be spared, which has been employed for reconciling the history in the two first evangelists with that of the two last.

10 And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

10 And having now seen him with her own eyes, and been fully satisfied by his discourse with her that it was really he, (*Joh. xx. 14, 17.*) she went to the apostles, who used constantly to attend him, and were at this instant bewailing, with tears and sorrow of heart, the loss of their Lord, and their own late unworthy behaviour toward him; and she gave them a full account of her interview with him.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

11 But (xvi.) notwithstanding all that she told them of her own having seen Jesus alive, and talked with him herself, they were too full of fears and prejudices to believe that he was really risen from the dead.

12 After that, he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked and went into the country.

12 Afterwards, on the same day, as two of his disciples were walking in the country toward *Emmaus*, our Lord appeared to them; and, by a supernatural influence, hindered their discerning him for some time in his own proper shape and features, till at last he so plainly discovered himself that they certainly knew him. (*Luke xxiv. 16, 31.*)

13 And they went and told it unto the residue, neither believed they them.

13 Then they likewise hastened away to the rest of the disciples, and told them how Jesus had appeared to them; but still they were so very diffident, and slow of heart to believe, that † neither would this further positive evidence, from two other unexceptionable witnesses, fully satisfy them.

14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

14 After this Jesus appeared again, on the same day, and that was to ‡ all the eleven apostles, except *Thomas*, while they were eating together; and he chid them for persisting in their unbelief, and for being so strangely stupid as not to be convinced by the several plain accounts which they had received from eye-witnesses of his resurrection, in confirmation of what he had often told them before-hand about his rising again on the third day.

15 And he said

15 And having, after this, during his abode on earth, frequently shewn himself to his apostles, for the greater confirmation of their faith, and further instruction about the glorious things of his kingdom, (*Acts i. 3.*) he,

N O T E S.

† Though in *Luke xxiv. 34.* it is said, that, at the return of the two disciples, they heard the eleven saying, *The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon*; yet that may be understood rather of their declaring what *Peter* had said, than of their own firmly believing it; for when Jesus himself afterwards appeared to them, doubtful thoughts arose in their hearts, and they at first believed not, *Luke xxiv. 38, 41.* And *Dr Lightfoot* conjectures, that *Peter* was one of the two who saw Christ at *Emmaus*; and that the rest of the eleven, seeing him return so suddenly and unexpectedly to them, cried out, *Certainly the Lord has*

appeared to Simon, else he would never have back so soon. See *Hor. Hebr.* on *Luke xxiv. 34.*

‡ We are told, *Johu xx. 24.* that *Thomas* was not then present; but Christ's appearing to all the apostles except him, is called his appearing to the eleven, because it was at an assembly of the apostles, which then consisted only of eleven, and was therefore denominated from their number, though *Thomas* was absent; as, in *John xx. 24.* and *1 Cor. xv. 5.* they are called the twelve, though *Judas* was dead, because that had been their number, which was to be filled up again.

unto them, Go ye
into all the world,
and preach the
gospel to every
creature.

he, a little before his ascension, gave them their final and standing commission, saying, Go ye forth in my name into all the nations of the earth, and preach my gospel; as ye have opportunity, to all mankind, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, without exception †.

16 And he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

16: Whoever shall believe in me, by means of and according to the word which I order you to preach, and shall solemnly profess his faith in me, and claim the privileges and yield himself up to the obligations of the gospel-covenant, by being baptized, he shall obtain eternal salvation. (See the note on *Matt.* xxviii. 19.) But whoever shall finally reject me, through unbelief, shall suffer the damnation of an everlasting hell.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

17, 18 And that my gospel, and my saving character according to it, may be unexceptionably confirmed, and gloriously propagated with great success; and unbelievers may have no excuse for their sin; they who believe in me, and depend upon my power to assist and own them in my work, shall be enabled to do the following and such like wonders; as signs of spiritual benefits which they shall be the means of conveying to the souls of others: They, by calling on my name, shall cast out evil spirits from those that were corporally possessed; shall readily speak various languages, which they never learnt by human teaching; shall handle the most venomous vipers, without suffering any injury by them; yea, if at any time they take a poisonous draught, it shall not operate to the destroying of their lives or health; and whatsoever diseases others may be afflicted with, they, by laying their hands upon them in my name, shall heal them.

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

19 When our Lord had delivered many instructions, commands, and promises to his apostles, in frequent converse with them for forty days together after his resurrection, he visibly ascended before their eyes from the mount of *Olives*, till a cloud intercepted their sight, (*Acts* i. 2, 3, 9, 12.); and he was received with all acceptance and joy into the highest heaven, where he, as Mediator, took his place with majesty and grandeur, being seated on a throne of glory with God the Father, that he might rule with all authority and honour, for the good of his people, and confusion of his implacable enemies.

20 And they went

20 And, soon after this, the apostles, being filled with the Holy Ghost from their exalted Head and Saviour,

N O T E

† This was the plain import of Christ's commission; though the apostles themselves were so dull of apprehension, through their prejudices against the *Gentiles*, that they did not understand it in that sense for some years

afterwards; and so confined their ministrations to the *Jews*, till *Peter* was more fully instructed by a vision, and sent to preach the gospel to *Cornelius* and his family, *Acts* x.

went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

viour, (*Acts ii.*) proceeded to execute their commission, beginning at *Jerusalem*: And, travelling from thence to different parts of the world, first among the *Jews*, and afterwards among the *Gentiles*, they preached the gospel, wherever they went, with amazing success; the Lord Jesus making their words effectual, by the power of his Spirit, on the hearts of innumerable multitudes, and sealing their doctrine with many undeniable miracles. All this is certainly true. May the word of the Lord run and be glorified! Let every one say, Amen.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Blessed be God for a risen and ascended Saviour, that he, who was dead, is now alive, and lives for evermore, with all mercy in his heart, and all power in his hand! And oh how affecting and encouraging were his condescension and grace, in making his resurrection known so soon to a disconsolate *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had cast seven devils; and to a set of ungrateful disciples, who had so lately disowned and deserted him; and particularly to *Peter*, who had done enough to have been for ever afterwards discarded by him! And what abundant care did our blessed Lord take to confirm this important fact, that neither their faith and hope, nor ours, might be groundless or in vain! He introduced the discovery of it by strong circumstances, and employed two angels to attest it; and then he himself appeared to one and another, and to all his apostles again and again, yea, at last, to *above five hundred brethren at once*, (*1 Cor. xv. 6.*) till he had thoroughly conquered their perverse and unreasonable diffidence, and fully satisfied them that he was indeed their risen Lord and Saviour. And since all the evidences which gained such signal conquests over their unbelieving hearts are now transferred in a sure and miraculously confirmed gospel to us; May we look upon ourselves as concerned in it, and be no more faithless but believing! and may we in that way be healed of all the soul-sicknesses and deadly wounds which otherwise will prove our ruin! For salvation or damnation themselves depend upon our receiving or rejecting the once crucified, and now exalted, Saviour: How awful is the thought! But whilst any of us have a godly jealousy over ourselves, lest we should reject him to our own perdition; may our trust and hope be in his grace, who works with his gospel, that it shall be the power of God to our salvation! And may we experimentally find it to be so! Amen.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.

THE
PRACTICAL EXPOSITOR.
IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOLUME the SECOND:

Containing the EVANGELISTS

LUKE AND JOHN,
PARAPHRASED, &c.

THE
Practical Expofitor

OR, AN
EXPOSITION
OF THE
NEW TESTAMENT,

In the FORM of a
PARAPHRASE;
WITH
OCCASIONAL NOTES
In their proper places for further EXPLICATION,
AND SERIOUS
RECOLLECTIONS
At the Clofe of every CHAPTER.

TO WHICH IS ADDED, AN
ALPHABETICAL TABLE
OF
The principal things contained in the PARAPHRASE,
efpecially in the NOTES.

For the Ufe of the FAMILY and CLOSET.

BY JOHN GUYSE, D. D.

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A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE

Evangelist L U K E,

In the form of a PARAPHRASE.

C H A P. I.

The preface to this gospel, 1,—4. The conception and office of John the Baptist, 5,—25.; and of Christ, 26,—38. The interview between the virgin and Elisabeth, 39,—45. The virgin's song of praise, 46,—56. The birth and circumcision of John the Baptist, 57,—66. Zacharias's song of praise, 67,—79. John's infancy, 80.

TEXT.

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word;

3 It seemed good to me also, ha-

PARAPHRASE.

WHEREAS † several persons have, either from a principle of piety, or from curiosity, undertaken to draw up narratives of the birth, life, doctrines and death, resurrection and ascension, of our Lord Jesus Christ, which are firmly believed by his disciples upon the fullest evidence;

2 And as these are points of the utmost consequence, which have been mostly written, and are generally believed, according to the faithful and well-attested reports that have been made by those who were from first to last the constant attendants of his ministry; and so were ear-witnesses of his doctrine and eye-witnesses of the miracles which confirmed it; and were sent forth by Jesus himself, as his apostles, to preach the gospel:

3 I also, most noble † *Theophilus* ‖, having sought after,

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† A

after,

N O T E S.

† As *Matthew* wrote from his own knowledge, and *John* wrote after *Luke*; the many here spoken of seem plainly to refer to some histories that were drawn up by honest, tho' uninspired men, according to the best informations they could get, but are long since lost.

‡ *Theophilus* signifies a lover of God: And that this was not a term, importing merely any of that character; but that it was the real name of a certain person to whom the evangelist wrote, appears from its being used in the singular number here and in *Acts* i. 1. and thence with the title of most noble, or most excellent, just in the same manner as it is ap-

plied to *Felix* and *Festus*, *Acts* xxiv. 3. & xxvi. 25.

‖ *Παραλαβὴν*. The word here used, is to follow after, and to attain: And, when it is applied to the mind, it signifies (*ἐννοεῖν*,) to perceive and understand, or to follow a speaker with attention and understanding; and thus it seems to be taken in 1 *Tim.* iv. 6. and 2 *Tim.* iii. 10. Our evangelist therefore might use this word to intimate, that he sought after and attained divine guidance (*αὐθιγὰν*) from above, and then followed it with exact attention and care in composing his history.

having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

5 **T**HE next was in the days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.

after, and obtained an exact knowledge of all these things, from their very beginning, not only by tradition, but likewise by such a divine influence from above † as preserves me from mistakes about them, thought proper to write (κατέγραψα) a connected and particular account of them, to rectify the errors of those who have proceeded upon hearsay.

4 This I have done, that you may have such an information as is certainly to be depended upon of the true state of those important affairs into which (καταρχήσῃς) you have already been initiated as catechumens use to be, in order to your being still better acquainted with them, and confirmed in them.

TO begin then with a short account of *John the Baptist*, the forerunner of our Lord, which will naturally lead us on to the history of Christ himself: There was in the reign of *Herod the Great*, who held the kingdom of *Judea* by deputation from the Roman emperor, a certain priest, *Zacharias* by name, who, being of the family of *Abia*, was one of those that were to officiate in the eighth of the twenty-four courses, into which the family of *Aaron* was divided in *David's* time, (1 Chron. xxiv. 7,—19.); and then came of his wife was *Elisabeth*, who was likewise a descendent from *Aaron*.

6 As to the character and circumstances of these two persons, both of them were eminent for religion, not in appearance only, but in a sincere conscientious regard to God, as sensible of their being always under his eye; and in the account of God himself, who accepted them as righteous in his sight: And this was clearly manifested by the tenor of their lives, they being strict observers of all natural duties of piety and morality, and of all positive institutions, in their behaviour toward God and man; so that they allowed themselves in no known sin, and none could charge them with any remarkable defects.

7 And

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As this adverb (ἀνωθεν) properly signifies *from above*, and is often used in that sense in the New Testament, and is a different word from ἀναρχος, which is justly rendered (ver. 2.) *from the beginning*; and as some well-meaning persons had made historical collections of Christ's discourses, as well as of his works, and of other facts, barely from their memories, as they had heard them from eye and ear witnesses; why may we not suppose, that our evangelist, to recommend his account in *Theophilus* as what might certainly be depended upon, al-

ledged that he was under divine influence to secure him from mistakes in his narrative of things which he himself had not seen or heard immediately from Christ himself? This seems to be of no small weight to assure one of (ταῦς ἀρχαῖς) the *certainty* of his account, since otherwise he might be liable to mistakes in it, as well as other uninspired men whose writings he had taken notice of ver. 1. But I have likewise brought into the paraphrase another interpretation of the word *anarchos*, as signifying *from the beginning*, that the reader may chide for himself.

7 And they had no child, because that *Elisabeth* was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

7 And though they were persons of such excellent characters, they had been denied the blessing of children: For *Elisabeth* had been barren, like *Sarah* the wife of *Abraham*, all the days of her youth; and now both the husband and wife were so far advanced in years, as to be past hope of having any child in the common course of nature.

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God, in the order of his course,

8, 9. But (*καὶ*) to shew how good God is to them that wait upon him, and to awaken a peculiar attention to one extraordinary birth, which was designed to lead the way to another still more miraculous; while *Zacharias*, according to the course of his family, was discharging the priestly office in the sanctuary, that part of the service which fell to his share in the usual way of determining it by lot was to burn incense in the holy place:

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 And all the people at the same time stood without †, silently offering up their prayers, that they might ascend with the smoke of the incense, which was typical of the intercession of Christ.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without, at the time of incense.

11 At this very time he saw an angel of God, appearing in an illustrious form, and in a standing posture, on the north-side of the altar of incense, which was called the right side of the house, (*Ezek. x. 3.*) and was on the priest's right hand, as he stood ministering with his face toward the west †, where was the holy of holies.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 And as soon as *Zacharias* had this glorious sight, the extraordinary appearance, and the weakness of human nature, together with a consciousness of his own guilt and unworthiness, struck him at first with terror, as such visions are apt to do the holiest men upon earth while they know not what may be their meaning:

12 And when *Zacharias* saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel accosted him in a friendly manner, to compose his mind, and encourage his attention and his hope, saying, *Zacharias*, let no fears distract or distress your heart, as if I were come to hurt you, or to be a messenger of evil tidings, while you are ministering before the Lord, and I appear in his house. My errand is of the joyful kind: For God has accepted and answered your prayers, for all *Israel*, relating to the coming of the Messiah, who will quickly appear; and he has heard the petitions which you have often put up for yourself, in so much that *Elisabeth* your wife shall conceive and bring forth a son to you, who shall call his

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, *Zacharias*: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife *Elisabeth* shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

A 2

name

N O T E S.

† There seems to be an allusion to this custom in *Rev. viii. 1-4.*

† The entrance into the temple was at the east end; and they who went in to officiate and pray toward the holy oracle, had their faces toward the west. On the contrary, i-

dolatrous worshippers were represented, as standing between the porch and the altar, with their backs toward the temple, and their faces toward the east, and worshipping the sun toward the east, *Ezek. viii. 16.* Vid. *Seld. de Synedr. lib. iii. cap. xvi. § 1.*

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall return to the Lord their God.

17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and

name John.

14 And the birth of this child shall be matter of great joy to you and yours, not barely because he is given in your old age, beyond all expectation, after you had been so many years childless; but principally on account of his extraordinary qualifications, work, and character; and this shall be the cause of great gladness to many others, who shall reap its happy consequences.

15 For though he will not be great in the world's account, with respect to parentage, titles of honour, external appearances, or manner of life; yet he shall be a truly great man, and highly honoured of God; great in his contempt of this world, in his office and endowments, and in his faithfulness, usefulness, and labours: And, like a *Nazarite*, entirely devoted to the Lord and to his service, he shall drink no spirituous liquors, but lead an abstemious life; yea, he shall be early filled with such influences from the Holy Ghost, that an extraordinary impression shall cause him to leap, even in his mother's womb, at the tidings of the Saviour, (ver. 41.—44.); and, from his childhood up, holiness and purity of life, and remarkable gifts and graces of the Spirit, shall appear in him.

16 He shall likewise, by his doctrine and example, be an happy instrument, in the hand of the Spirit, for turning many from their iniquities, and from their false opinions and dependences, to the Messiah, that they may believe in him who is the Lord their God.

17 And in order hereunto, he shall be † the Messiah's forerunner; appearing just like *Elijah the Tishbite*, in his office-qualifications; in his garb and severity of manners; in his living much in the wilderness, and having heaven opened to him near *Jordan*; in his authority and faithfulness, zeal, fervour, and success; in the persecutions that he shall suffer for his integrity; and

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¶ *John* signifies the grace or gift of God. And as significative names were usually given to children, the angel's ordering this to be put upon the child might intimate, that he was given as a gracious answer of prayer; and that his character should correspond to his name, as he should be highly in favour with God, and endued with an abundance of grace; and as he should open the way to the most glorious dispensation of grace in the Messiah's kingdom: And so *Zacharias's* former prayers for a child, and the prayer which he as the representative of the people was probably putting up at this very time in the temple for the appearing of the Messiah, would be remarkably answered in this birth

of his forerunner.

† The only antecedent to the relative *him*, is, *the Lord their God*. And who was the Lord God of Israel, before whom *John* went, but the Lord Christ? He was the forerunner, not of God the Father, but of Christ, of whom *John* said, *He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me; and I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord*, John i. 15, 13. *He was sent to prepare Christ's way before him, and was that Elias who should go before the Messiah*, as our Lord himself has explained it, *Mat. xi. 13, 14. & xvii. 10, 13.* See the note on *Mat. xi. 10.*

and power of *Elijah*, to turn the hearts of the *Fathers* to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

and in his being filled with a divine spirit and power, as *Elijah* was in the worst of times, to bring about a reconciliation of young and old \dagger , and of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to one another, and to the Lord; so that the most stubborn and rebellious shall be made wise to salvation, which is the truest wisdom, and is found in those only that are righteous before God. In a word, he shall be instrumental in making a people ready to receive the Lord, the Messiah; for whom they have been prepared in eternal counsels; and for whose coming *John's* ministry shall have prepared them, by convincing them of sin and of their need of such a Saviour, by removing their prejudices against him, by raising their expectations of him, and at last by shewing him to *Israel*.

18 And *Zacharias* said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

18 Then *Zacharias*, in the unbelieving workings of his own heart, asked the angel, By what token shall I be satisfied that the great and unlikely thing you speak of shall certainly come to pass? For it appears altogether incredible to me, because my wife has not only been barren all her days hitherto; but both she and I are now so very old, that, according to the course of nature, it is impossible for us to have a child.

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am *Gabriel*, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

19 The angel replied, Do you question the truth of this, and want a sign to prove it? My appearing to you in this manner, and in this holy place, is sufficient to confirm it: For I am *Gabriel*, a chief among the holy angels, who stand continually in the presence of God to receive and execute his orders; as I was dispatched with a gracious message to *Daniel*, concerning the Messiah, *about the time of the evening oblation*, (*Dan. ix. 21.*) so I am now sent, by God's special command, to bring these joyful tidings to you.

20 And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because

20 And since you require a further sign to assure you of the truth of what I say, you shall have a very awful one, which shall be a just punishment of your present unbelief, and a presage of God's silencing the Levitical priesthood, as well as a merciful support and confirmation of your future faith: Behold, you shall instantly be struck dumb, and from this time forward not be able to open your mouth more, till the child I speak of shall be born;

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\dagger *Επιστροφας καρδιαν πατρων εις τα υια*, may be rendered, to turn the hearts of the fathers with the children: And Dr *Lightfoot* observes, that, in the writings of the prophets, the church of the *Gentiles* are spoken of as children to the *Jewish* church, particularly in *Isa. liv. 5, 6, 13.* & *lx. 4; 5, 9.* & *liii. 5.* & *lvi. 12.* Accordingly *Gentile* publicans and soldiers, as well as *Jews*,

came to *John's* baptism, chap. iii. 12, 14.— And as *κατεσκευασμεν*, prepared, is a participle of the preter tense, it may at least as well refer to what God had done, as to what *John* should do in preparing a people for Christ; and, taking *Κυρια* for the ablative case, the sense will be, a people prepared by the Lord. I have therefore included all these senses in the paraphrase.

cruse than believe not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

26 And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth,

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose

born; because you distrusted the power and goodness of God, as if he could not, or would not, perform this his promise by me, which in due time shall certainly be accomplished.

21 While these things detained Zacharias longer than ordinary, the people continued waiting at the door for his return to dismiss them with the blessing, as usual, in the name of the Lord; and they were surprised to find that he spent so much time in the temple.

22 At length he came out; and they perceiving that he was not able to pronounce the blessing upon them, thought something extraordinary had happened, and soon understood that he had seen a vision whilst he was in the holy place; for he intimated this by making some awful signs, he continuing to be both deaf and dumb †.

23 Now when he had staid out the days of his ministration for offering incense (which, notwithstanding his being deaf and dumb, he could easily go on with) according to the order of his course, he returned to his own family in the country.

24, 25. And soon afterwards his wife Elisabeth conceived, according to the promise; who, finding herself to be with child, retired from company for five months, that she might avoid the danger of contracting ceremonial uncleanness while she was breeding a Nazarite, (ver. 15.); and that she might not seem to boast of the high honour God had done her, nor be troubled with the discourse and remarks of people about it; but principally that she might have the better opportunity for daily rejoicing in her own soul, and blessing God for his wonderful favour, in looking with such unexpected mercy upon her, to take away the reproach of barrenness even in her old age, and to give her such an extraordinary son as should be the forerunner of the Messiah himself.

26, 27. Then in the sixth month after she had conceived, the angel Gabriel, who had appeared and carried good tidings to Zacharias in the temple, (ver. 19.) was again sent from God to a city of the Lower Galilee ‡ called Nazareth, to a certain pure virgin there, whose name was Mary, and who was contracted § to one Joseph

NOTES.

† *Kozē* signifies deaf, as well as dumb: And it seems plain that he was as unable to hear, as he was to speak; for his friends were forced to make signs to him, that he might understand them, ver. 62.

‡ The Pharisees pretended that no prophet arose out of Galilee, John vii. 52. But Dr Lightfoot observes, that the prophet Jonah was of Galilee, and that the prophets

Eliah and Elissa were very conversant there.

§ It was customary among the Jews, for persons that married, to enter into mutual contract in the presence of witnesses, some time before they came together; and as Christ was to be born of a pure virgin, so the wisdom of God ordered it to be of one espoused, that, for the honour of marriage, and preventing reproach, he might have a

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36 And behold, thy cousin *Elisabeth*, she hath also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

36 And, for the further confirmation of your faith herein; observe what a wonderful thing God has already done upon one of our own relations: Your kinswoman on your mother's side, † *Elisabeth* by name, has miraculously and unexpectedly conceived a son in her old age, a son who is to go before the Lord in the spirit and power of *Elias*, (ver. 17.); and, though she never bore a child before, she is now six months gone with this, so that the signs of her pregnancy are by this time visible: The same power therefore will cause you also, though continuing a virgin, to conceive and bring forth a son.

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

37 For this is as possible to God as that: It is the power of the Highest that I told you shall come upon you for this purpose, and nothing can be too hard for God to do; he, having undertaken and promised, will perform it.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

38 Then *Mary*, with great humility, faith, and reverence, replied, Behold, here am I before the Lord as his servant; let him do with me what seems good in his sight; I am amazed that all this grace should be shewn to me, who am unworthy of the least of his mercies; but since God is pleased to condescend so far as to distinguish me by such a signal act of favour, I thankfully accept it, rejoice in it, and humbly depend || upon his power, faithfulness, and goodness, to perform it, according to the word which thou hast told me from the Lord. Hereupon the angel, having dispatched his message, returned back to heaven.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Judæa;

39 Soon after this, the virgin took a long journey of some scores of miles, with all convenient speed, to a certain city †, which lay in the mountainous parts of *Judæa*, where *Zacharias* and *Elisabeth* dwelt, that she might further satisfy herself concerning the truth of what the angel had told her about *Elisabeth's* being with child, and might have the opportunity of comparing notes and rejoicing with her, and of improving the advantages of retirement for devotion in the family of such

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as assigning the reason, not why Christ, considered merely as God, but why his entire Person, or why his human nature as in personal union with the divine, should be called the Son of God.

† Though *Elisabeth* was of the house of *Aaron*, and *Mary* of the house of *David*, by their father's side, they might be related by their mothers; for the law (*Numb. xxxvi. 8, 9.*) only forbade heiresses marrying into another tribe; and as the families of *David* and of *Levi* often intermarried, Providence ordered that the mother of our Lord should

be a-kin to *Aaron's* family, that royalty and priesthood might unite in him.

|| It seems by no means improbable but that this time of the virgin's humble faith, content, approbation, and expectation, might be the very time of the Holy Ghost's coming upon her, and of her conceiving by his power.

† It is very likely that this was *Hebron*, because that city was situated in the hill-country of *Judæa*, and was given to the house of *Aaron* for an inheritance. *Jos. xxi. 12, 11.*

a religious priest.

39 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

40 And coming into Zacharias's house, who was deaf and dumb, she, applying to *Elisabeth*, congratulated her being with child though so far advanced in years; telling her at the same time of the vision which she herself had seen, and of what the angel had said to her.

41 And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb: and Elisabeth was filled with the holy Ghost.

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

41 No sooner did *Elisabeth* hear this salutation of *Mary*, but the child, by a divine impress upon it, made an uncommon, lively, springing motion within her, like one that leaped for joy; and *Elisabeth* herself was, at the same instant, filled with a prophetic afflatus of the Spirit of God.

42 And she, turning to *Mary*, lifted up her voice, saying, in a transport of joy, O happy, thrice happy creature! what an honour has God put upon you! I have indeed been highly favoured beyond my desert; but never was any woman upon earth blessed like you, whom God, in the riches of his mercy, has singled out to be the mother of the great and glorious Messiah, in whom all nations shall be blessed, and who shall be blessed in himself, and be exalted in blessings and praises for evermore.

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

43 And how can I sufficiently prize and admire the honour done to me, that I should have a visit from the mother of the Messiah, who is my Lord, and the great Lord of all! Why is this further crowning favour added to that which has lately been shewn to so unworthy an handmaid as I am? It fills me with wonder and transport to think of it:

44 For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

44 For, surprising as it may seem to hear me say it, the very child I am big with was so affected with your salutation, that, as soon as you began to speak, I perfectly felt it leap within me, as if it really knew that the Saviour's birth would soon succeed its own, and that I had then the honour of a visit from the happy woman who should bear and bring him forth.

45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

45 And as for you, who, like a true daughter of *Abraham*, staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, you are blessed indeed, and a happy instrument of the greatest blessedness to others; for he is faithful who has promised, and the wonderful things which you have been assured of from the Lord shall certainly come to pass, according to his word, and according to your faith.

46 And Mary said,

46 *Mary*, being greatly encouraged and confirmed by the things she now heard, was likewise filled with holy ecstasy; and, the Spirit of God coming upon her as well as *Elisabeth*, she broke out into this praising song:

said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden; for he-bold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things: and holy is his name.

50 And his mercy is on them that fear him, from generation to generation.

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

song: All the powers of my soul are united in exalting and adoring the greatness and the goodness of the Lord, which he has manifested to me;

47 And my heart exults and triumphs in Jesus, the Son of the Highest, in whom I believe † as my own God and Saviour, who will bring redemption to his unworthy handmaid, together with those that are looking for it in *Israel*.

48 For (*ὡς ἡ δούλη καὶ ὡς ἡ ταπεινή*) he has stooped so low as to look with amazing compassion on his poor contemptible servant, whose person and family were sunk into the utmost obscurity and contempt. Instead of his taking birth from some great and noble parentage, he, in his mere good pleasure and matchless grace, has chosen to confer this singular honour upon me: For many in the present, and thro' all succeeding ages to the end of the world, shall rise up, and count me happy in myself, thro' faith in him for my own salvation; and an highly favoured instrument of blessings to them, by being the mother of whom their Saviour was born.

49 For the God, whose power is infinite, has done wonderful things, beyond expectation and expression, and beyond all thought; he has magnified his sovereign and almighty grace to me, for his own glory, whose name is holy and reverend in itself, in this and all his manifestations, ways and works, and in the eyes of saints and angels: As such let it be solemnly adored and praised for ever.

50 And this is but a just acknowledgement of him, the riches of whose free and tender mercy, especially in the incarnation of his own Son, are extended not to me only †, but likewise to all who worship and serve him with reverence and godly fear; and that from fathers to children, and from age to age, till time shall be no more.

51 His way herein is like those methods of providence in which he exerts remarkable acts of the exceeding greatness of his power for the help of his people and the confusion of his enemies; as in former dispensations, so likewise in this: He abases the haughty in all their schemes, and chuses the weak things of this world to

con-

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† Here, and in the next verse, the virgin seems to turn her thoughts to Christ himself who was to be born of her, calling him her God and Saviour, because the angel told her that he should be the Son of the Highest, whose name should be *Jesus* the Saviour; and she rejoiced in hope of her own everlasting salvation through faith in him, which is a blessing common to all true believers, more

than in being his mother after the flesh, which was an honour peculiar to her; because, without the first, the must have been for ever miserable notwithstanding the last.

‡ Here the virgin begins to carry her thoughts, like one of a public spirit, to an extensive view of the spiritual benefits that were to be brought in to others by the flesh which should be born of her.

51 He hath put down the mighty from their seats; and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy.

55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

confound the mighty.

52 He who humbled the pride of *Egypt, Assyria*, and *Babylon*, and pulled down *Pharaoh, Sennacherib*, and *Nebuchadnezzar*, from their thrones, and raised up others in their stead; and who in his holy providence, brings some low, and lifts others up, (1 Sam: ii. 7, 8): He, in the dispensations of his grace, humbles proud, self-righteous, and self-sufficient sinners; destroys their refuge of lies, and breaks to pieces their vain confidence; and he revives the hearts of the humble and contrite ones, and puts the highest honour upon them.

53 He has granted the desire of such as see their need of a Saviour, are earnest in their inquiries after him, and cannot be satisfied without him; and has enriched them with the best of blessings: And, on the other hand, he has rejected those that are full of themselves, that boast of riches in their own merit, or in the good opinion of others, or in having the treasures of this world, and take up their rest in these things as if they needed nothing more to make them happy; he has denied them the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom.

54, 55. And, as to God's own peculiar people the *Jews*, he has in all ages past been particularly gracious to them in many extraordinary preservations and deliverances; and now, when they were sunk into the grossest darkness and corruptions in doctrine and practice, he is seasonably raising up a Deliverer from their ignorance and error, sin and ruin: And this he doth merely for his mercy's sake, which at first induced him to make them his people; and to promise several of our fathers, and particularly *Abraham*, that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed; which good word shall be fulfilled, as it was designed, not only to *Abraham* himself, but to all his spiritual seed, first among the *Jews*, and afterwards among the *Gentiles*, through all ages in this world, and for ever in the world to come.

56 Thus *Mary* sang the praises of God on account of the Messiah who should be born of her: And when she had spent about three months, rejoicing and blessing God with her cousin *Elisabeth*, till she was thoroughly assured † by facts that God was fulfilling his word to herself, she went back to her own home.

57 Now

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† It is probable that the virgin found herself to be with child before she left *Elisabeth*; and some suppose that she staid with her till she saw her delivered of *John the Baptist*, though, for the sake of finishing the account here given of *Mary*, the evangelist mention-

ed her departure before *Elisabeth's* delivery: But it is more generally thought, that *Mary* only staid till *Elisabeth's* reckoning was very near out; and then returned home, to avoid the company that would come to *Zacharia's* house at so remarkable a birth as that of *John*.

57 Now Elisabeth's full time came, that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him *Zacharias*, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called *John*.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing-table, and wrote, saying, His name is *John*. And they marvelled all

57 Now when Elisabeth's reckoning was out, answerable to the full time that women usually go with child, she was brought to bed of a son, according to God's promise by the angel to her husband.

58 The tidings of this were soon spread abroad among her acquaintance and relations, who heard how God (*μεγαλυν*) had magnified his mercy, in taking away her former grievance, and putting a signal honour upon her, and that in old age, by giving her a son out of the common course of nature, from whom great things might be expected; and they came to visit and congratulate her upon this joyful occasion.

59 And when, on the eighth day from his birth, they came to his circumcision, according to God's appointment in the law; as it was customary to name the child at that solemnity, because it was at the circumcision of the father of the faithful that God styled him *Abraham*, (Gen. xvii. 5, &c.) the company generally agreed that it would be proper to call this son *Zacharias*, in honour of his own father's name.

60 But (*και*) *Elisabeth* replied, "No, no, that must not be his name; it shall be *John*," as she knew † God had appointed it to be.

61 Her friends, surprised to hear her so earnest and so peremptory in insisting on this, expostulated with her, saying, What a strange fancy is your's! We cannot imagine what you mean by it, since there is none of this name among all your relations: If therefore you will not admit him to be called *Zacharias*; surely, in respect to your own family, you should think of some other name that is found among your near of kin &c.

62 At last, to end the dispute, they made signs, as well as they could, to let *Zacharias*, the child's father, know what they were talking about, he being deaf; and to desire that, as the right lay in him, so he would signify his own mind as to the name that should be given to his son.

63 Then he, being dumb as well as deaf, made signs to them to give him a writing-book; and, having received it, set down these words, according to the order of the angel, (ver. 13.) "His name is *John*." At which all the company were amazed, not knowing what had passed

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† She knew this, as she did that her son should be a *Nazarite*, (ver. 13.) either by information from *Zacharias* in writing, or by revelation to herself personally.

§ It seems as if, for shewing honour to parents and near relations, it were then

lately become a custom among the Jews, as it is now-a-days amongst us, to call their children by their father's, or by some of their near kindred's names; but it was far from being so in ancienter times, as appears from the general, if not universal current of registers in the Old Testament.

passed between the angel and him.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

64 And the time being now expired, till which he was to continue dumb for his former diffidence, (ver. 20.) God immediately restored to him the use of his speech; and his tongue, which had been so long silenced, was set at liberty, and employed in shewing forth the praises of the Lord, by thankful acknowledgments of his great goodness in giving him this son, and by humble confession of the iniquity and of the just punishment of his own unbelief.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea.

65 Now the report of this birth, and of the miraculous circumstances relating to it, was soon spread in the neighbourhood round about, and became the subject of serious conversation in all places through the mountainous parts called the hill-country of *Judea*, the people being generally filled with astonishment and awful reverence when they talked or thought about it.

66 And all they that heard them, laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

66 And they that heard of these strange things took particular notice of them, revolved them in their own minds, treasured them up in their memories, and had high expectations of some very extraordinary consequence, saying in themselves, and one to another, What an uncommon man will this make! Surely he is designed for great work. And the providence and grace of God were remarkably seen, from his very infancy, in the continual care he took of him, and of all things relating to him, and in the holy qualities with which he endued him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

67 In the mean while, his father *Zacharias* was abundantly filled with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, by whose inspiration and suggestion he broke out, with holy rapture, into the following instructive and prophetic hymn of praise.

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

68 Glory, honour, and blessing, be ever ascribed to the only living and true God, who is *Israel's* covenant-God: For, tho' he seemed to neglect them for several ages past, he has now at length looked with compassion upon them, (*ἐπιστάτο*.) and acted the kindest part toward them, in sending his angel with good tidings, in bringing the Messiah's forerunner into the world, and enabling the virgin *Mary* to conceive that glorious Person himself; and, by him, he is now about to ransom his peculiar people from the sin and misery, and every kind of bondage, into which they were fallen.

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David;

69 He, of his own mere love and grace, has provided, and is sending, a mighty and royal Saviour of *David's* race, who, like an horn of honour, shall exalt us, and, like an horn of power, shall defend us from
our

our enemies, and push them down to utter destruction.

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began :

70 All this is done according to the various promises, which he made by the ancient prophets, from the beginning of the world, thro' many generations afterwards, concerning the seed of the woman, who should be raised up, as the seed of *Abraham*, from the tribe of *Judah*, and family of *David* :

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ;

71 That we might be delivered from all our spiritual enemies, sin, Satan and the world, death and hell ; and might be freed from the power of those that maliciously and inveterately opposed us, and would otherwise have for ever prevailed against us.

72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant :

72, 73. This Saviour is now coming to fulfil God's promises of the Messiah, that mercy of mercies ; and to make good his gracious, holy, and inviolable covenant to the children of promise ; and particularly the oath (*Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18.*) by which he confirmed it to *Abraham* our father and the father of all that believe :

73 The oath which he swore to our father *Abraham*,

74, 75. His great design in which was, that he would certainly, in due time, vouchsafe the favour to us, that being rescued, by the merit, might, and grace, of the promised Redeemer, out of the power of all our enemies, whether temporal or spiritual, we might be at liberty for, and engaged in his service, and might be enabled to perform it, without distrustful slavish fear of God, or discouraging tormenting fear of our enemies themselves ; and that we might persist in all the duties of piety, righteousness, and sobriety, as in his sight and presence, looking up to him for the seasonable aid which he sees we need, and walking in all good conscience before him, with constancy and steadfastness therein, to the end of our days.

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76 And then, turning by way of *apostrophe* to the infant, he went on, saying, Thou, my dear new-born son of mine old age, shalt hereafter be, and be generally owned to be, in a peculiar manner, the prophet † and forerunner of the Messiah, who will be God incarnate, § even the most high God. For thou shalt go before this

76 And thou child shalt be called the prophet of the Highest : for thou shalt go before the face of the

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† The Spirit of prophecy had departed from *Israel* about three hundred years ; but now began to return : *Zacharias* (as well as *Simeon*, *Anna*, and others) was acted by it, being filled with the Holy Ghost, *ver. 67.* ; and, under his inspiration, he foretold concerning his son *John*, that he should be a prophet, and should be generally esteemed to be so, as he really was by the common people. And though a prophet sometimes signifies in Scripture only one who delivers the mind and will of God to others ; yet

John was, strictly speaking, a prophet, who foretold what Christ would do, as well as pointed him out to the people as already come among them, *Mat. iii. 15, 12.* & *John i. 23, 27.*

§ Christ being one in Godhead with, tho' distinct in personality from, the Father and Spirit, is the most high God together with them : Hence he is called the great God, even our Saviour, *Tit. ii. 13.* ; and ever all God blessed for ever, *Rom. ix. 5.* which amount to the character of the Highest, in distinction from

the Lord, to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.

this great Lord, the Jehovah of *Israel*, to give notice of his appearance, and to put things into readiness for receiving him :

77 To give his chosen people the knowledge of salvation, not, as the *Jews* have generally expected, by their own personal performance of a legal righteousness; but by a free pardon, thro' that Saviour ἡ , who is coming to take away the sin of the world, (*John* i. 29.):

78, 79. The original spring of which benefit lies in the mere, undeserved, and compassionate kindness (ἐλεος καὶ ἔλεος) of our God, answerable to the tender movings of a parent's bowels, in a way of pity toward his miserable children; by which Christ, (ἀνατολὴ τοῦ ἡλίου) the rising Sun of righteousness, who is originally from above, sheds his enlightening, reviving, and saving beams, in his personal appearance and spiritual influence, to expel not only the gloominess of Old-Testament types and figures, but likewise to diffuse light among heathen nations, who were involved in the thickest darkness of stupidity and idolatry; to irradiate the minds of those who by nature were overspread with the mists of ignorance, error, and wickedness; and to guide his people into the way which leads to peace with God and with one another, and to peace in their own souls, till they arrive at perfect and everlasting happiness.

80 In this manner *Zacharias* poured out his soul in joyful thanksgiving and praise: And his young child visibly increased, not only in bodily strength and stature, but also in the natural capacities, spiritual enlargements, holy fortitude, and religious endowments of his mind, from his youth up, like one highly favoured of God, and ripening apace for extraordinary service. And, as he was to shew an example of mortifiedness to this world; and of intimate communion with God, he usually, like a second *Elias*, resided in solitary places ἡ , free

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From all creatures. And it seems plain that it is he who is here styled the highest: For as *Aaron* was *Moses'* prophet, *Exod.* vii. 1.; so *John* was, in a peculiar manner, Christ's prophet and forerunner, which *Zacharias* speaks of in the following words with a plain reference to what the angel had said concerning him, ver. 16, 17. See the note there.

¶ Some by *salvation* here understand Jesus the Saviour, who is called an *Horn of salvation*, ver. 69. and *God's salvation*, chap. ii. 30. The latter part of the paraphrase refers to this sense of the word.

§ As the gifts and graces of the Spirit, which *John* was filled with, set him above

needing the advantages of a polite and learned education in the schools of the prophets, he dwelt in a wilderness, which is most generally thought to be that of *Ziph*, or that of *Mass*, where *Saul* pursued *David*, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 24, 25. Though there were several country-towns and villages in these wildernesses, which were not far from *Hebron*, *Josh.* xv. 54, 55.; yet as they were but thin peopled, they are called deserts. Now *John's* living in one or other of these, which lay the best part of an hundred miles from *Nazareth* where Christ dwelt, was wisely ordered, by the providence of God, to prevent a personal acquaintance between them, till Jesus

free from much company, till the time of God's appointment for his appearing publicly in his ministry, which, according to the law, (*Numb. iv. 3.*) was at about thirty years old.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what care and certainty are the great things of the gospel delivered to us! and with what a train of miracles was the incarnate God and Saviour ushered into the world, that the ancient prophecies concerning him and his forerunner might be punctually fulfilled! Nothing is too hard for the Lord to do; and unbelief will ever meet with a just rebuke. The age of miracles and prophecy now revived, to open a blessed dispensation of grace; and the same Spirit, who formed Christ's body in the womb, can form his image in our hearts, and turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. Oh with what reverence should we always think of Jesus as the Son of God, and as the Lord our God; and of the Holy Ghost, as a divine person, who exerts the power of the Godhead!—Christ has a spiritual kingdom, which shall endure for ever; and all its great and glorious blessings take their rise from the riches of God's free and sovereign mercy, and are made effectual to us by his almighty power, and faithfulness to his own word, notwithstanding all our unworthiness. What a solid ground is this for faith! Its language is, Be it unto thy servant according to thy word; and its effects are, humility and admiration, joy and praise: Blessed are they who thus believe; for there shall be a performance of the things that are told them from the Lord. How should we rejoice, and sing for joy, like the virgin and *Zacharias*, upon hearing of a Saviour born for us, and much more upon receiving him into our hearts! And with what pleasure should we reflect on the great salvation which he brings to others as well as ourselves! How happy is the state of true believers in the remission of their sins, in the audience of their prayers, and in deliverance from the power of all their enemies! But how miserable must the case of others be, who are still in the hands of those that hate them, and that mean nothing less than their eternal perdition! How earnestly then should sinners fly to Jesus for all salvation! And how concerned should his people be to give glory to God, by believing; to walk in all his ordinances and commandments blameless, and that particularly in the relation of husbands and wives; and to serve him with integrity, freedom, and delight, as under his eye, abounding therein yet more and more all their days! And when he calls any to peculiar service, as he did *John the Baptist*, they may depend upon his being with them to fit and furnish them for it. May we lay up all these things in our hearts, to raise our expectations and our praising songs! Blessed be God for his gracious visits by a Redeemer.

C H A P. II.

The birth of Christ at Bethlehem, 1,—7. It is notified to shepherds by an angel, and an heavenly host attends with songs of praise, 8,—14. The shepherds publish it abroad, 15,—20. He is circumcised and presented in the temple, 21,—24. Simeon's and Anna's prophecies of him, 25,—39. The state of his youth, and his dispute with the doctors in the temple, 40,—52.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

AND it came to pass in those days, **J**ESUS being conceived, and *John the Baptist* born, the providence of God so ordered it, that, about
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Jesus came to *John's* baptism, that so there might be no room for the least suspicion as if they had contrived beforehand to bear an honourable testimony to each other. See *John. i. 32,*

those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

this time, *Augustus Cæsar*, the Roman emperor, published an edict for taking an account of all the subjects of his empire, which was then in its highest glory, and was called the *whole world*, because it extended to the greatest part of the known and civilized nations; the design of which edict was, that a register might be made of their persons, families, qualities, possessions, and taxes issuable from them, and that answerable tributes might be paid to *Cæsar*.

1 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria)

2 And this was done † at the time when *Cyrenius*, called by the Romans *Sulpicius Quirinius*, was, by the imperial authority, prefect or president of the province of *Syria*, inclusive of *Judea* as dependent upon it.

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

3 In obedience to this command, every man, who was absent from the city, where the head of his family was born or had its principal residence, repaired thither, that he might be registered there.

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David),

4, 5. Now *Joseph*, the espoused husband of the virgin *Mary*, being, as well as she, descended from the royal line of *David*, set out with her from *Nazareth*, a city of *Galilee*, where they then dwelt; and went to a city of *Judea*, called *Bethlehem*, which was *David's* native place, (1 Sam. xvi. 1, 4.) that they might be enrolled among those of that family. And *Mary* was so big with the child she had conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, as to be near her time of delivery.

5 To be taxed, with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 This order of the emperor *Augustus*, which was made only with political views, was wonderfully overruled, by the providence of God, to fulfil some, and clear up other prophecies, that related to, and were characteristic of, the Messiah, as he was to be of the tribe of *Judah*, and of the family of *David*, and to be born at *Bethlehem*, (Gen. xlix. 10. Isa. xi. 1. and Micah v. 2.); for at the very time when both *Joseph* and *Mary* were, on this remarkable occasion, brought to *Bethlehem*, her reckoning was our.

6 And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should deliver:

7 And she brought

7 And there she was brought to bed † of that Son, who,

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† It is most generally supposed that this taxing was first begun during *Cyrenius's* government of *Syria*: But as the words in the Greek (*απαριθμησωντων Ρωμου*) may be differently rendered, and *Josephus's* account does not agree with our translation of them, others think they should be read, *this taxing was made before Cyrenius was governor of Syria*: And others contend, that, even keeping to our translation, they relate, not to the time of the valuation or enrollment, but to the time of gathering the taxes according to

that valuation, which was twelve years afterwards; and by this time the Jews were not only a depending tributary province, but had likewise a Roman governor set over them; and so the great *Strife* came just at the time of the sceptre's departing from *Judah*, according to the prophecy in Gen. xlix. 10. See *Pridem's Connex* vol. ii. 8vo. p. 652, &c. And the whole world being then in peace, that was a proper time for the birth of the Prince of peace.

† Christ, being born at the time of this enrol-

brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

who, in his divine nature, was (*πρωτοτοκος* *πρως αριστος*) *begotten before all creation*, Col. i. 15.) and, in his human nature, was her first-born in such a manner as to be, by way of eminence, holy to the Lord, and the Prophet, Priest, and King of his family the church: And when the mighty God and everlasting Father thus became an infant of days, so indigent were his parents, that his mother swathed him with such mean blankets and rollers as she could get, and made use of a stable for his chamber, and of a manger for his cradle, because, the city being then full of people, there was no room to be procured in the inn itself for a person of her poverty.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

8 The time of this important birth was at that season of the year when shepherds were wont to lie abroad and watch their sheep all night; some of which were then in the fields near *Bethlehem*.

9 And, while they were employed in their lawful calling, observe what an honour God put upon them, rather than upon the chief priests and rulers, kings and nobles of the earth; and what an early intimation he herein gave, that Christ should not derive his authority from man, nor aim at a temporal kingdom! As *Jacob* and *Moses* had the visions of God while they were keeping their flocks, (*Gen. xxxi. 11.* and *Exod. iii. 1, 2.*); so † the angel of the Lord came down in a visible form from heaven, and, stopping his course in the air, (*αερα*) stood over their heads, that they might see him; and, at the same time, a glorious brightness, the emblem of the Divine Presence, shone all around them; at which wonderful sight they, like mortal, tho' § good men, were filled with great surprise and fear.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people:

10 Then, to relieve their labouring minds, and encourage an humble composure, confidence, and joy, the angel spoke comfortably to them, saying, Do not be dismayed or affrighted, as if any danger were at hand: For behold, I am come to tell you the best news that ever reached the ears of the sinful sons of man; a matter of the greatest joy, not only to yourselves, but to many others with you; not to the *Jews* only, but to the *Gentiles* also, even to people of all nations that shall bear and receive it.

B 2

11 For

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enrolling, was probably himself registered together with *Joseph* and *Mary*, as a subject of the *Roman* empire; and so was born in the form of a servant, and made under the imperial as well as divine law.

before had appeared to *Zacharias* and to *Mary*.

§ These shepherds seem to have been religious men, that feared the Lord; for it is so such that God reveals his secrets, *Psal. xxv.*

14.

† This probably the angel *Gabriel*, who

11 For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

11 For to you, the children of *Israel*, and of the fathers to whom the promises were made; and to you, sinners, who need a Saviour, and must be for ever undone without him; to you, in distinction from the fallen angels; to all and every one of you that shall believe in him, is the long looked for Messiah born, this very day, at *Bethlehem*, the city of *David*, (1 Sam. xvii. 12.) from which it was anciently prophesied (*Mic. v. 2.*) that He should arise who is the anointed of God, *Sion's King*, and Lord of all.

12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.

12 And the sign by which ye may certainly distinguish the new-born Infant from all others, is this: Ye, going into the city, shall find him in the stable of an inn, wrapped about with swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

13 Immediately upon the angel's delivering this joyful message, a great company of other celestial spirits attended him, to celebrate the praises of God, and congratulate the happiness of men, upon the incarnation of his Son, in the following lofty strains.

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.

14 The glory of God is now displayed more than ever it was before: May all possible honours be ascribed to him, in the most exalted adorations, among his people in this world, and among saints and angels on high! The greatest prosperity and happiness is now brought to sinful men on earth, † and particularly to the objects of his peculiar love among them: May it spread far and wide in their reconciliation with God, with us, and with one another, and in the peace of their own souls, that enmity and discord, confusion and trouble, may no more be heard of among them! The most affecting instance of the mere good pleasure of God's goodness now breaks out toward the human race, in distinction from the angelic nature: May all desirable blessings spring from thence, and be communicated, to the glory of divine grace, in their salvation thro' the Messiah!

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

15 As soon as these glorious spirits had in this manner sung the praises of the Redeemer's birth, they returned to heaven; and the shepherds, believing what they had been hearing, communed with one another about it, saying, Come, let us go forward to *Bethlehem*, that we ourselves may see the blessed Saviour, who God has told us, by an immediate express from himself, is so lately born there.

16 Ac-

N O T E.

† As this verse may be considered under the form of a declaration, and of a wish; and as, in the last clause, the *Alexandrian* and several other copies read *in peace*, according

to which the rendering may be, *Peace among men of his good-will*; I have taken all these senses into the paraphrase. *Vid. Mill. Nov. Test. in loc.*

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard it, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcision of the child, his name

16 Accordingly they hastened thither with all speed; and following the directions of the angel, soon found out *Mary and Joseph*, with their Infant-son lying in a manger, just as the heavenly messenger had represented the case.

17 And, their faith being hereby further confirmed, they were so full of joy, that they could not hold their peace; but took all opportunities, wherever they came, to publish the vision, and the declaration and song of the angels, which they had been favoured with, as also what they themselves had seen at *Bethlehem*, relating to this child.

18 And all that heard the shepherds account of these things were greatly amazed, and at a loss to know what to make of it. They could not think it likely that such a sort of plain, honest, undesigning men should form the story, and go about to impose it on the world; and could not but know that their testimony was strengthened by the general expectation at that time of the Messiah's appearing, and by the then prevailing notion that his birth would be at *Bethlehem*, (*Mat. ii. 4, 5.*): And yet it was wonderful in their esteem, that he should be born of such mean parents, and in such despicable circumstances; and that persons of such low figure as these shepherds should be the men to whom God sent an angel to reveal it.

19 But *Mary*, the mother of Jesus, believed as well as wondered at these things; and, for the strengthening of her faith, and expectation of what might further appear, she carefully observed and seriously reflected upon them, comparing what the angel had said to the shepherds, and the shepherds to her, with what she before had heard from *Gabriel*, and from *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*; though, to prevent an appearance of vain-glory, she kept them mostly to herself.

20 And the shepherds returned to the duties of their civil station, with the high praises of God in their hearts and mouths: They admired and adored his infinite love and grace to man, and his affecting condescension in honouring themselves in so extraordinary a manner with the first notices of it; they gave glory to God for all that they had heard and seen at *Bethlehem* as well as in the fields, and for the exact correspondence which they found between facts and the angel's words.

21 Now, on the eighth day after the birth of this child, (see the note on *Mat. xxvii. 63.*) his parents took care to have him circumcised according to God's command, (*Gen. xvii. 8, 9.*): Which painful ordinance he was brought under, not because he, who was holy in

name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

his birth, needed, like other children, to be cleansed from original sin; but that he might appear in the likeness of sinful flesh, and be visibly made under the law by a sacred right, which obliged him to keep the whole law; as also that he might be owned to be the seed of Abraham, and a member of the Jewish church; might wear the badge of the children of God, and put an honour upon the solemn covenant-dedication of the infant-
seed of God's professing people to him: And, at his circumcision, his parents, according to custom, publicly declared his name to be *Jesus*, as the angel ordered him to be called, at his appearing first to *Mary* before the conception, and afterwards to *Joseph* before the birth, of the child, (chap. i. 31. and *Mat.* i. 21.)

21 And when the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

21 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

22 And forty days after his birth, which was the time appointed in Moses's law for † the purification of the mother of a male child, (*Lev.* xii. 2, 3, 4.) his parents brought him to Jerusalem, that they might present him in the temple before the Lord, by which all righteousness early began to be fulfilled in him.

23 This was done in obedience to the law, (*Exod.* xiii. 2.) where God ordered that all the first-born of Israel should be consecrated to him, in commemoration and thankful acknowledgment of his having delivered theirs, when those of the Egyptians were slain by the destroying angel: (*Numb.* iii. 13.) Accordingly Jesus, who is the first-born among many brethren, was presented in the temple, as Mary's first-born ‡, that he might be deemed holy to the Lord.

24 At the same time his mother likewise offered the sacrifice appointed in the law of God for her purification: And as her husband and she were too poor to afford a lamb and a dove, which were required of those that were able, she, as was allowed in case of poverty, (*Lev.* xii. 6, 7, 8.) offered a couple of turtle-doves or young pigeons; one for a burnt-offering, in testimony of her thankfulness; and the other for a sin-offering, in testimony of her sinfulness, and unworthiness of the mercy she had received; and both together, to make a typical atonement for her.

25 And he hold,

25 While Jesus appeared in all these circumstances of meanness in the temple, observe the honour which at the

NOTES

† Some good copies read it, (*αἱματι*), their purification, taking in both the virgin and Jesus; and though he had no sin of his own, yet, as he was to be made sin for us, he came under the legal ordinance for purification, like other children, as if he had been a sin-

ner. Vid. Mill. in loc.

‡ Christ's birth being expressed by his opening the womb, shews that he was born of the virgin in the usual way of women bringing forth children, whatsoever some of the ancients vainly imagined to the contrary.

hold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord Christ.

27 And he came by the spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

the same time was put upon him: There was in Jerusalem, a noted man, named *Simeon*, who was a person of great integrity and devotion, strictly just toward men, and eminently religious toward God; and who believed, and was daily looking for an accomplishment of, the promises concerning the Messiah, the hope of whom was the joy of the faithful in Israel, and whose appearing would bring to them the richest consolations: And the Holy Ghost came upon this holy man, in a way of extraordinary revelation and prophetic impulse;

26 And he was divinely warned, (*ἐκ προφητείας ἁγίου*) by the inspiration of the Spirit, that the joyful, long-looked for day of God's Messiah's appearing, was so nigh at hand, that, old as he was, his own eyes should behold him before he died †.

27 Accordingly, at the very time when *Joseph* the reputed father, and *Mary* the real mother, of Jesus, brought him into the temple to present him to the Lord according to the legal custom before-mentioned, (ver. 22.) this *Simeon* came thither likewise by the suggestion of the Spirit of God.

28 And, as soon as he saw the Infant, it being revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that this was the Lord's Christ, his heart leaped for joy; and, in holy transport, he caught the dear Saviour in his arms, and, embracing him ‡, adored, and magnified, and gave thanks to God for him, in the following song of praise.

29 Now, Lord, I have done with the present life, thou having given me the utmost that my heart could wish for in it: And, as this performance of thy promise, about seeing the Messiah, is an intimation § that the time of my departure is at hand, I am ready to die at thy command; and it is with the greatest satisfaction that I leave the Saviour in this world, and hope to meet him with rich advantage in a better.

30 For I am highly favoured beyond all the prophets and holy men that have ever gone before me; their predictions are now accomplished, and thy gracious promise particularly to me thy unworthy servant is fulfilled; these mortal eyes of mine have been blessed with the sight of him, who is the sum and substance, and the author and giver, of all the salvation which thou hast promised to bestow thro' him;

B 4

N O T E S.

31 Whom

† Seeing death is a Hebraism for dying, Phil. lxxxix. 48.

‡ Some suppose that *Simeon* was a priest, and that he took Jesus in his arms to perform the priest's part in presenting him to the Lord.

§ *Simeon* seemed to understand, that what was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost, ver. 26. carried this meaning, That, as soon as he should have seen the Lord's Christ, he should die; and he was willing to have it so.

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against:

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the

31 Whom thou hast provided in thy eternal counsels, and now sent into the world, and for whom thou hast prepared a body, that he may appear with open evidence and effectual operation, as a Redeemer among all nations whatsoever.

32 Thou hast given him to be a light to the Gentiles, who have in all ages sat in darkness; and to restore the preserved of Israel, who were sunk into great degeneracy, (*Isa. xlix. 6.*); yea, and to bring the highest honour to thine ancient people the Jews, as he derives his birth from them, will personally converse with, preach, and do his mighty deeds, and begin his saving work first among them, and will afterwards send out his gospel from them for the conversion of others; and in him shall all the true seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory, (*Isa. xlv. 25.*)

33 In this manner Simeon celebrated the praises of God, giving free vent to his sacred joy at the sight of the Messiah: And both Joseph, and Mary his mother, reflecting on this, together with what they had seen and heard before concerning him, stood amazed at the remarkable concurrence of such magnificent testimonies to the great and glorious things that were to be done by him.

34 And while they were filled with delightful wonder, Simeon congratulated their happiness, and begged of God to bless them on account of their relation to Jesus; and particularly addressing himself to the virgin Mary, he said, Observe, this very child is ordained of God, and brought into the world, to be eventually an occasion of stumbling and falling to many Israelites, as was prophesied of him, (*Isa. viii. 14, 15, 18.*); but the direct and principal design of God in sending him, is to raise up many others of them, and even of those that at first stumbled at him, to spiritual life and happiness, thro' faith in him here, and to eternal glory hereafter: Many also shall fall, in a temporal sense, by outward troubles and disgraces for his sake; and shall rise in a spiritual sense, by the inward consolations and spiritual honours that he will bestow upon them: And he shall appear in such wonderfully mean and suffering circumstances, that many will speak with bitter enmity, blasphemy, and revilings, against him.

35 Yea, so inveterate will their prejudices and cruelties be against him, that you, who have the honour of being his mother after the flesh, shall suffer as much anguish and pain, as if your heart were thrust through with a sword, on account of the shocking things which you shall be eye and ear witnesses of as done and said against

the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

against him, and by means of the persecutions which you shall suffer for his sake because of your relation to him and profession of him †; all which will come to pass for the discovery of many hypocrites and sincere believers, that it may be clearly seen, Who are for him, and shall be saved; and who are against him, and shall be lost for ever.

36 And there was one Anna a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity:

36 There was likewise one *Anna*, who was endued with the spirit of prophecy; she was the daughter of *Phanuel*, of the tribe of *Aser*, and a very old woman, who had been married only to one husband, and lived in a state of wedlock but seven years from her virginity to her widowhood.

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years; which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.

37 The age of this widow was about eighty-four years: And tho' she was so old, yet such were her uncommon piety and devotion, that she constantly attended the worship of God at the temple, morning and evening, and on all occasions; and was very frequent in solemn fastings and prayer, to as great a degree, as the frailty of human nature, at her advanced years, could be supposed to admit of.

38 And she coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

38 This holy woman coming into the temple, as well as *Simeon*, at the very time when Jesus was brought thither; and she, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, knowing him to be the Messiah, heartily blessed God for him, and talked of him to all her religious acquaintance in *Jerusalem*, who were waiting with faith, hope, and longing desire, for the salvation which they were then expecting would soon be brought to his people by the great Redeemer.

39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

39 When every thing relating to Christ and his mother had been done at *Jerusalem* as the law required in their circumstances, they, together with the reputed father *Joseph*, returned in due time ‡ to *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, which was the town of their usual residence.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit,

40 And the child Jesus increased in bodily strength and stature; and ¶ the natural powers of his human mind daily improved, with his advancing years, as they do in other children, only with abundantly more strength and

N O T E S.

† *Epiphanius*, as is usually observed, says, that *Mary* herself suffered martyrdom for Christ. *Vid. lib. iii. Hæres. xxviii.*

‡ *Luke* passes over *Joseph's* flight with Jesus and his mother into *Egypt*, which we have an account of, *Mat. ii.* and which, as is generally supposed, took up better than two years before their return to *Nazareth*.

¶ His waxing strong in spirit, seems to relate to the natural improvements of his human soul: and the following expressions more immediately respect his extraordinary

spiritual endowments, which I take to have proceeded rather from the power of the indwelling Godhead, which was personally united with the Man Jesus, than from the gifts of the Holy Ghost; because it is never said of him, as of *John the Baptist*, (*chap. i. 15.*) that he should be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb; nor is any mention made of Christ's being filled with the Holy Ghost, till his baptism, when he entered upon the public discharge of the office for which his Father sent him.

spirit, filled with wisdom : and the grace of God was upon him.

and vigour ; and together with the enlargement of these, he was visibly enriched, every day more and more in an extraordinary manner, with divine wisdom, free from all mixture of folly or error, by the irradiating light of the indwelling Godhead, which gradually opened itself in him, and filled him with every grace, far beyond one of his age, † and highly recommended him to the favour of God.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

41 Now, as at the passover all the males of *Israel* were obliged by the law to appear annually before the Lord at *Jerusalem*, *Joseph* constantly went up thither ; and *Mary*, in the greatness of her piety, attended him every year on those solemn occasions, to celebrate that great festival there.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast.

42 And when Jesus came to be twelve years old, ‡ his parents took him along with them to *Jerusalem*, that he, together with them, might attend the usual rites and ordinances of that religious feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem ; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.

43 And when they had continued there the full length of the appointed time, till all the worship belonging to that solemnity was over, his parents set out for their journey back again to *Nazareth* ; but Jesus himself staid still at *Jerusalem*, to manifest something of the glory which was afterwards to be more fully revealed in him ; *Joseph*, and *Mary* his mother, knowing nothing of the matter.

44 But they supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey : and they sought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance.

44 But, as great companies used to travel together in their return home, they concluded that he was among some of their relations or acquaintance, tho' not present with themselves †, and so were easy till they had gone a day's journey ; when, neither seeing nor hearing any thing of him, they began to be in great pain about him, and to inquire after him among all the companies with whom they thought he might most probably associate.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

45 And when, upon inquiry, they found their mistake, and knew not what was become of their dear child, from whom they justly expected the best of blessings to themselves and to *Israel*, they, full of frights and fears, hastened back again with all possible speed to *Jerusalem*, to make the strictest search after him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found

46 Here likewise they sought for him in vain, till the third day, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 63.) when, to the joy of their hearts, they found him in an apartment of

N O T E.

† *Kagiz*, grace, sometimes signifies an excellent internal quality ; and at others, the favour of God : And in both these senses it is applied to Christ, *John* i. 14. & *Luke* ii. 52.

Persons were obliged to do the duties of adult church-membership.

‡ Or the men and women travelling mostly in distinct companies, his mother might think that he was with his father, and his father that he was with his mother.

§ At this age, the *Jewish* doctors say,

found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee, sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

of the temple where the doctors used to discuss matters relating to the law; and there, though but twelve years old, he was sitting among them, and shewing his great modesty in hearing their debates, and his extraordinary wisdom in proposing questions to them, and in answering such as they put to him:

47 In so much that all the audience were exceedingly amazed at the manner of his talking, which was not like a child, but like one who had the wisdom of God in him; something of his divinity displaying itself on this occasion, in such a surprising manner, that he outshone all the rabbies themselves in the sagacity and prudence of his questions and replies.

48 And when his parents found him thus employed and admired among such company, they were amazed to think what early appearances here were of the great things that they had reason to expect from what they before had heard and seen concerning him: And as *Joseph*, being only his father-in-law, might not think proper to chide him, his mother, taking him aside, expostulated with him after the following tender manner: Ah, my dear son! why didst thou stay behind thy father and me, without our knowledge or consent, to put us into such a terrible fright about thee? O! think of the distress this has cost us: Our minds have been day after day upon the rack, ever since we missed thee; and we have been diligently searching among all our kindred and acquaintance for thee, with a thousand fears lest some dreadful mischief had come to thee: How couldst thou give us an occasion of so much grief and trouble?

49 Jesus replied, in a way of dutiful respect to his supposed father, as well as to his real mother, How comes it to pass that, after all which has been told you about me, ye should so little consider my having a Father in heaven, whom I must prefer to all earthly parents, and who has sent me on special business into the world, which I must attend to? Where was your faith, that ye should be so painfully solicitous in your seeking after me? and where could you so reasonably expect to find me, as in my heavenly Father's own house, and employed in his affairs?

50 And yet they did not take in his meaning about the spiritual nature of his work, since, according to the prevailing notions of that day about the Messiah, and according to the declaration of the angel that he should have the throne of *David* his father, (chap. i. 32.) they expected it would have lain rather among the princes and rulers of this world, than among the doctors in the temple.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

51 When by this answer he had plainly intimated that he, as the Son of God, might justly claim the liberty he had taken without their leave, he nevertheless, to shew that he was really a man, who came to perform the obedience belonging to every relation of life into which he was cast, readily returned to live with them at Nazareth in a private and obscure manner † till about the thirtieth year of his age, (chap. iii. 23.) and cheerfully submitted to their commands in every instance of filial duty. In the mean while, his mother carefully treasured up all these remarkable occurrences in her memory; and often reflected seriously upon them, in hopes of understanding them better in time to come.

52 And as Jesus grew up in bodily stature, he all along remarkably increased in extraordinary attainments of divine and spiritual; as well as of natural wisdom and understanding, as fast as his human soul was capable of them; and in his acceptableness to God, and to those men that had opportunity of being acquainted with his holy and amiable qualifications.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Who that duly considers *Augustus's* decree, and the great purposes answered by it, without any design in him to accomplish ancient prophecies, in proof that our Jesus is the true Messiah, can doubt of God's foreknowledge and government of the free actions of men? And O how glorious is the salvation brought in by Jesus Christ! how honourable to God, how full of grace and peace to the men of his good-will! How delightful are the tidings of it in the gospel; and what high praises are due to God on its account! How cheerfully should we embrace that dear Saviour; and how cordially believe in him, and recommend him to others! How great is the consolation that such shall find in him; and how willing must it make them to die, and go to heaven, and leave this world of sin and sorrow behind them under Christ's care and influence to form and bless it, and in hopes of being with him to behold his glory! And how, after his example, may God be glorified in the meanest business of private life! But, alas! how many are there that only wonder at these things; and how many that stumble at them to their own perdition! Happy souls, who, after they have fallen, rise again by faith in a Redeemer! How evidently did the characters of the true God and true man, constituted of an human, improving soul, as well as body, early appear in our blessed Lord! How deep was his abasement in fulfilling all righteousness, that he might be a Saviour to us! And yet what signal honours were put upon him amidst all his humiliation!—How beautiful is the character of a truly religious man, whilst he is just as well as devout, and is constantly looking for complete redemption by Jesus Christ! To exemplify this amiable character, under the power of divine grace, our children should be early brought under the seal of the covenant, and devoted to the Lord; young people should aim at an imitation of Jesus, in filial duty, and in an increase with all the increases of God, which are acceptable to him, and render them lovely in the eyes of men; married persons should

N O T E,

† *Justin Martyr* tells us, that he worked at his father's trade, as a carpenter, in making ploughs, and yokes for oxen: thereby shewing forth the righteousness, meaning of private life, and teaching us not to be idle. *Dial. cum Tryph. p. 316.* And God was so

highly honoured by Christ's faithfully discharging the duties of so mean and obscure a station, that he reckoned it a part of the righteousness by which he justifies them that believe in Jesus.

† The

should conscientiously imitate *Joseph and Mary*; women, after child-birth, should offer public as well as private thanksgivings to God; all of us, whether young or old, or whatever may be our places and relations in life, should steadily attend the ordinances of divine worship, as opportunities offer, whatsoever charge or pains it may cost us: And if we would find Christ in them, we should seek him, sorrowing for sin, and for our former neglects of him, and be very solicitous in our inquiries after him; should seek him in all places, and particularly at his house, where it may be most likely to meet with him; and should not give over till we find him. May we keep all these things in our hearts! And may the grace of God be upon us!

C H A P. III.

The general design of the baptism and ministry of John 1,—9. His particular instructions to the common people, publicans and soldiers, 10,—14. His account of the approach of Christ, 15,—18. His imprisonment by Herod, 19, 20. Christ's baptism, 21, 22. And his pedigree from Adam, 23,—38.

TEXT.

NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,
 & Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of *Tiberius*, who was the third of the *Roman Cæsars*; when, with respect to the civil affairs of the *Jews*, *Pontius Pilate* was, under the emperor, governor of *Judea*; and *Herod*, one of the sons of *Herod the great*, was † ruler of *Galilee*, and his brother *Philip* had the dominion of *Iturea* and *Trachonitis*, and *Lysanias* had that of *Abilene*; and when, with respect to the *Jewish* religious affairs, *Annas* and *Caiaphas* shared in the administration that belonged to the office of the high priest ‡: At this time *John the Baptist*, the son of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, having till then led a retired life in an obscure village in the wilderness, received a commission immediately from God; the word of the Lord coming to him, as it had formerly done to the prophets of old, to enter upon his public ministry, and preach the doctrines which God revealed to him.

3 Ac-

NOTES.

† The last three of these rulers were called *tetrarchs*, either because each of them had under his government a fourth part of the dominions of *Herod the great*; or because theirs was the fourth rank of *Roman* governors, the first of which was the emperor, the next a *proconsul* who had the government of a province, the third a *king*, and the fourth a *tetrarch*. See *Lightfoot on the place*.

‡ The scripture was now departed from *Judah*, which had lately been made a province to the *Roman* empire; and all things were out of course among the *Jews*: High-priests were, contrary to the law of God, frequently chosen among them, or imposed by imperial authority upon them, as is in-

timated, *John* xi. 25. & xviii. 13. where it is said, *Caiaphas* was high-priest that year in which Christ was crucified; and such as had once bore that office ever afterwards retained the name. Some suppose that *Annas* and *Caiaphas* were alternately employed in executing that function year after year, or that one was the deputy of the other: But perhaps *Annas* represented *Moses*, as the *nasi*, prince, head, or president of the *Sanhedrim*; and *Caiaphas* represented *Aaron*, as the proper high-priest; and, as appears from *John* xviii. 13, 24. both these continued in their office till the death of Christ. This therefore was the proper time for the great *Messiah*, the *Restorer of Israel*, to come into the world.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins;

3 Accordingly, beginning his ministry, and exercising it for a while, in the wilderness of *Judea*, (*Mat. iii. 1.*) he afterwards went further into all parts of the country which lay about *Jordan*; and, preaching the necessity of repentance to a corrupt, degenerate age, he called upon them that should make a profession of it, to be baptized in the name of the approaching Messiah, as the sign and seal of their obtaining, thro' faith in him, the forgiveness of all their sins, which by their baptism they were obliged to repent of. (*Acts xix. 4.* See the note on *Mat. iii. 2.*)

4 As it is written in the book of the words of *Elijah* the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 *John* did this, according to the prophecy, (*Isa. xl. 3, 4, 5.*) where he is spoken of as one who should lift up his voice aloud in the desert, to proclaim the coming of the Messiah, and to act the part of his forerunner, saying, in allusion to the custom of harbingers, that used to go before their princes, and give orders to clear and level the roads, and to cut strait paths thro' wild and desolate places, for their triumphal entries, "Let all obstructions that lie in your depraved hearts and lives, give way to the Lord Christ, the *Jehovah* of *Israel*, who is just ready to appear among you, that he may have free access to your faith, and may be received in such a manner as is suitable to his gracious and holy design." (See the note on *Mat. xi. 10.*)

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

5 And, for their encouragement, *John* told them, that wherever Christ should exert his power and grace, humble souls should be exalted, and proud and lofty hearts subdued; perverse tempers and dispositions should be regulated, and rough spirits smoothed; and sinners of all ranks and characters should be effectually wrought upon, reclaimed, and turned to the Lord.

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

6 And as the glory of the Lord should be revealed in a more illustrious manner than ever before; so persons of all nations, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, should know and enjoy that great and glorious salvation which God was then bringing into the world by Jesus Christ.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who

7 When, in the course of *John's* ministry, vast numbers, and among them many of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, flocked to his baptism, (*Mat. iii. 7.* see the note there); he, knowing their several characters, addressed them in the following manner: O generation of men, which, for subtilty, venom, and mischief, are the seed of the old serpent the devil; Who could have expected that such as you, who either think yourselves righteous enough already, or make a jest of all religion, should ever take upon you obligations to repent, and fly by faith to the approaching Saviour for the remission of

who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

of sins, and deliverance from the wrath to come? What is your motive or design herein? But remember I now tell you, that, unless ye unfeignedly turn from every false way to him, the vengeance of God will certainly come in a little time upon you to your utter ruin as a nation in this world, and upon every one of you personally to your everlasting perdition in the next.

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

8 If therefore ye profess to repent, and turn to God thro' the promised Seed, see that ye give good proof of your sincerity therein, by the humble and holy obedience of your hearts and lives; and let none of you go about to evade my solemn admonitions, or to bolster yourselves up with presumptuous hopes of happiness and safety because of your peculiar covenant-privileges, as the descendents of *Abraham*: For, if ye go on in your sins, and reject the expected Messiah, I assure you that God will utterly cast you off, and shew his almighty power in raising up a spiritual seed to *Abraham*, who shall be blessed with him, through faith in Christ, from among the *Gentiles*, such as these *Roman* soldiers and publicans, (ver. 12, 14.) tho', in your account, they are as unlikely to be made alive to God, and taken into his favour, as the very stones under your feet.

9 And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

9 And as an ax, levelled at the root of a tree, threatens immediate destruction; and barren trees, after all means have been ineffectual to make them fruitful, are cut down and burnt: So God's hand is now lifted up, just ready to strike, for the many provocations that have been offered him; and if any of you reject the last and most endearing methods and overtures of his grace, and bring forth no good fruit by those means, ye will speedily be cut off in his great righteousness, and consumed by his wrath.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

10 And while the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, thro' the pride of merit on one hand, and of reason on the other, seemed to be altogether unmoved by the engaging and the awful things that *John* said to them, many of the common people were struck with convictions of their sin and danger; which put them upon serious inquiry, saying, What are the fruits meet for repentance † that we should bring forth?

11 He answered them, and said unto them, He that hath

11 *John* replied, To evidence the sincerity of your repentance, shew compassion to the poor, by distributing out of your conveniences for the relief of their necessities:

As

N O T E.

† *John* had said, ver. 8. *κατασκευάσατε καρπὸν ἵνα μετανοήτε*, &c. "Do therefore, or produce fruits meet for repentance;" and, in exact correspondence to this expression, the people ask, *τί οὖν ποιήσωμεν*, "What therefore shall we do, or what fruits are we to produce meet for repentance?"

hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none: and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

As for instance, Let him who, having two coats, can do very well with one, give the other to some miserable object that wants necessary clothing; and let him who has food enough and to spare, give some of it to such as are ready to perish with hunger. This will be a good sign that your hearts are turned from the love of this world, and from sinful and luxurious indulgences, to the love of God and of your neighbour.

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

12 Then the collectors of taxes, being under the like convictions, came to be baptized of him, and asked the same question, relating to themselves, saying, Pray, master, what are the particular fruits of repentance that we should produce?

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

13 To these he answered, Rectify the abuses of your office; do the duty of your places, with mercy, and with faithfulness between the government and the subject; and do not add to the people's burden by extorting or insisting on more from them than is due to *Cæsar*, or by taking bribes to increase your own wealth: This is the proper fruit of repentance in those that have been hard-hearted, covetous, and oppressive.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

14 Some of the soldiers likewise, coming to *John's* baptism, asked him, What are the special things to be done by us to shew the truth of our repentance? He replied, The best proof ye can give of it is, to abandon the vices that persons of your calling are most incident to: As for instance, Do not be insolent and outrageous by hussing and frightening, or plundering and abusing, the people; or by breaking, instead of keeping, the peace: Never misrepresent your fellow-soldiers to their officers, or other subjects to the government, either to gratify a malicious blood-thirsty temper, or to extort money from them: And never murmur at your lawful pay, nor be mutinous about it, nor want to add to it by any undue means; but live contentedly upon the public allowance. Thus he advised every one to take a conscientious care about keeping himself from his own iniquity.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of *John*, whether he were the Christ or not,

15 And there being, at this time, a general expectation of the Messiah's appearing; the extraordinary strain of gravity, piety, and authority, which ran thro' *John's* ministry and behaviour, put the people upon thinking whether this person himself were not he whom they were looking for.

16 *John* answered, saying unto them all, I indeed

16 *John*, observing this, took the utmost care to undeceive them, saying, I am only come as the forerunner of the Messiah, to preach the doctrine of repentance, and remission of sins through faith in him; and to turn you

indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire;

you over to him, by baptizing you † with water: But the Christ of God, who is just ready to appear, is infinitely superior to me, in his person, and in the excellence and efficacy of his qualifications, office, and works; so that I think myself unworthy of the honour of even carrying his shoes after him, (*Mat. iii. 11.*) or untying and taking them off from his feet: He will baptize † some of you with the gifts and graces of his Holy Spirit, which he will shed down upon you in a visible appearance of fire, (*Acts ii. 3.*); and which will be as much more powerful and penetrating, in its operation for spiritual and holy purposes, than my baptism, as fire is than water, in an external application of them to the body. (See the note on *Mat. iii. 6.*)

17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

17 And as a husbandman separates wheat from the chaff, which lay mixed together on the floor, by shaking and winnowing it in a fan; and lays up the wheat in his granary, but throws the chaff into the fire: So Christ will make a thorough search into, and an exact separation between, true believers and hypocritical professors in the visible church, by his word, Spirit, and providence here, and at death and judgment hereafter; and he will preserve the righteous from the forest tribulations on earth, and receive them to his everlasting kingdom in heaven; but will execute destructive judgments on the wicked in this world, and cast them into everlasting burnings in the next.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

18 This is a brief specimen of *John's* ministry, in which he added many other particulars suitable to his character as the forerunner of our Lord, preaching to the people the glad tidings of the gospel (*εὐαγγelizετο τοῦ λαοῦ*) by Jesus Christ, whom he pointed out to them, with a serious application to their minds and consciences, in the exhortations he gave them.

19 But Herod the

19 But at length, after having preached about a year and half ||, he, not fearing the face of any man, dealt very

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† Some suppose that the words *John* used in applying the water were these: *I baptize you with water; but a mightier than I cometh, who shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire; and so it was baptizing them into the faith of Christ for the remission of sins, that they might believe on Him who should come after him, as it is expressed, Acts xix. 4.*

‡ It is not the common Christian baptism, but Christ's own baptizing with the Holy Ghost and with fire, that *John* here opposes to his own baptism: For *John's*, and the Christian baptism, abating the different forms of expression used in them severally, were for

substance the same, both in the element, and in the signification of the ordinance; only one was baptizing them into the faith of him who was to come, and the other into the faith of him who is come: And those apostles whom Christ called during *John's* ministry, had no other baptism with water than that of *John*; since Christ himself administered water-baptism to none, *John iv. 1.* and there is no appearance of their baptizing one another.

§ Dr *Lightfoot* says it was about twenty months; and that *John* was kept in prison some months above a year, before he was

the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod hath done,

20 Admired this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened :

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,

very plainly with *Herod* the governor of *Galilee*, about all his beloved vices, and particularly his sin of adultery and incest in marrying *Herodias*, his brother *Philip's* wife, while *Philip* himself was still living, and after he had children by her †.

20 *Herod* was so exasperated at this elose and home reproof, that though he had sometimes heard *John* with pleasure, and had a secret veneration for him as a good and holy man; yet to get rid of such an impartial monitor, and to gratify *Herodias*, he added this horrid wickedness to all the rest, that he clapped him up in prison, and, after a considerable time, was prevailed upon to take away his life.

21 Now, to return: While crowds of people came to *John*, and he had baptized them, Jesus himself, tho' he needed not like others to be baptized into the faith of the Messiah, or with a baptism of repentance; yet resolving to fulfil all righteousness, and to sanctify this ordinance, and enter himself into the Christian-church by it, as he had been entered in his infancy into that of the Jews by circumcision, he also was baptized by *John*; and immediately thereupon, betaking himself to prayer, there was a visible opening of the firmament :

22 And, in answer to his prayer, the Holy Ghost descended from thence in the appearance of a luminous body, which came down hovering like a dove, (see the note on *Mat. iii. 16.*) till it rested upon his head, to imitate his being then anointed with the Spirit for his office; and, at the same time, an audible voice was directed to him from God the Father, saying, Thou art my dear and eternal Son, in whose person and office my soul delights, and in whom I think with pleasure of my great design of saving all that I have given to thee. (See the note on *Mat. iii. 17.*)

23 Jesus was about thirty years old when he was baptized, and thus distinctly and miraculously owned and sealed by his Father and the Holy Ghost in order to his entering upon his public ministry: And his genealogy, according to the flesh, by his mother's side &

rec-

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put to death: But the evangelist mentions these things here in few words, that he might afterwards go on with the history of Christ, without interruption, from his baptism; though *John* continued preaching about a year after he had baptized Christ, before his own imprisonment.

† See *H'kely* on *Mat. xiv. 3.*

§ As *Matthew* gives us Christ's legal and royal line from his father-in-law *Jos'ph*, who

descended by his own father *Jacob* from *Solomon*, the son and successor of *David* to his throne: So *Luke* seems to give us Christ's natural line, as the seed of the woman, from his mother *Mary*, who, as some have taken notice, the talmud says, was the daughter of *Heli*; and so descended from *Nathan*, another of the sons of *David*. But as the families of women were not enrolled under their names, or reckoned as distinct families

24 Which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi, which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Janna, which was the son of Joseph,

25 Which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Amos, which was the son of Naum, which was the son of Esli, which was the son of Nagge,

26 Which was the son of Maath, which was the son of Mattathias, which was the son of Semei, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Juda.

27 Which was the son of Joanna, which was the son of Rhesa, which was the son of Zorobabel, which was the son of Salathiel, which was the son of Neri,

28 Which was the son of Melchi, which was the son of Addi, which was the son of Cosam, which was the son of Elmodam, which was the son of Er,

29 Which was the son of Jose, which was the son of Eliezer, which was the son of Jorim, which was the son of Matthat, which was the son of Levi,

30 Which was the

reckoning upwards to the first man *Adam*, to shew that he is the promised Seed of the woman who should break the serpent's head, stands thus: Jesus being the real Son of the virgin *Mary*, and being born after her espousal to *Joseph*, he thereby became the son-in-law of *Joseph*; and *Joseph*, by his marriage with *Mary*, was the legal son of *Heli*, her own father.

24 This *Heli* was naturally descended from *Matthat*, *Matthat* from *Levi*, *Levi* from *Melchi*, *Melchi* from *Janna*, *Janna* from *Joseph*,

25 *Joseph* from *Mattathias*, *Mattathias* from *Amos*, *Amos* from *Naum*, *Naum* from *Esli*, *Esli* from *Nagge*,

26 *Nagge* from *Maath*, *Maath* from *Mattathias*, *Mattathias* from *Semei*, *Semei* from *Joseph*, *Joseph* from *Juda*,

27 *Juda* from *Joanna*, *Joanna* from *Rhesa*, *Rhesa* from *Zorobabel*, *Zorobabel* from *Salathiel*, *Salathiel* from *Neri*,

28 *Neri* from *Melchi*, *Melchi* from *Addi*, *Addi* from *Cosam*, *Cosam* from *Elmodam*, *Elmodam* from *Er*.

29 *Er* from *Jose*, *Jose* from *Eliezer*, *Eliezer* from *Jorim*, *Jorim* from *Matthat*, *Matthat* from *Levi*.

30 *Levi* from *Simeon*, *Simeon* from *Juda*, *Juda* from *Joseph*,

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in *Israel*: So this account is copied out, according to the custom of the Jews, from one of their authentic genealogies, under the husband's name; which is the reason why *Mary* is not mentioned, though, strictly speaking, it seems to be Christ's genealogy by her: For as *Joseph*'s natural father was *Jacob*, (*Mat. i. 15.*) he was only the son-

in-law of *Heli*, *Mary*'s father; and it may be observed, that the words *ὡς νομίζουσιν*, which we render *as was supposed*, rather signify, referring to the genealogy, *ut lege sancitum est*, as it was legally settled, or was found on record. He that would see other representations of these things, may consult *Græius*, *Lightfoot*, and *Wibbly*.

the son of Simeon, which was the son of Juda, which was the son of Joseph, which was the son of Jonan, which was the son of Eliakim,

Joseph, Joseph from Jonan, Jonan from Eliakim,

31 Which was the son of Melea, which was the son of Menan, which was the son of Mattatha, which was the son of Nathan, which was the son of David,

31 Eliakim from Melea, Melea from Menan, Menan from Mattatha, Mattatha from Nathan, Nathan from David,

32 Which was the son of Jesse, which was the son of Obed, which was the son of Booz, which was the son of Salmon, which was the son of Naasson,

32 David from Jesse, Jesse from Obed, Obed from Booz, Booz from Salmon, Salmon from Naasson,

33 Which was the son of Aminadab, which was the son of Aram, which was the son of Esrom, which was the son of Phares, which was the son of Juda,

33 Naasson from Aminadab, Aminadab from Aram, Aram from Esrom, Esrom from Phares, Phares from Juda,

34 Which was the son of Jacob, which was the son of Isaac, which was the son of Abraham, which was the son of Thara, which was the son of Nachor,

34 Juda from Jacob, Jacob from Isaac, Isaac from Abraham, Abraham from Thara, Thara from Nachor,

35 Which was the son of Saruch, which was the son of Ragau, which was the son of Phalec, which was the son of Heber, which was the son of Sala,

35 Nachor from Saruch, Saruch from Ragau, Ragau from Phalec, Phalec from Heber, Heber from Sala,

36 Which was the son of Cainan,

36 Sala from Cainan †, Cainan from Arphaxad, Arphaxad

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† This Cainan is found only in the septuagint; and our evangelist writing most immediately for the use of the Hellenistic Jews, who chiefly used that translation, might insert Cainan, as he met with it there, or in some other public records then in being. But all the other names, from Abraham back to Adam,

are found also in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, in the like order as Luke has placed them; and all the names from David back to Abraham are the very same as are mentioned in Matthew's genealogy. See the notes on Mat. i. But the learned Bochart supposes that some transcriber might insert Cainan here

which was the son of Arphaxad, which was the son of Sem, which was the son of Noe, which was the son of Lamech,

37 Which was the son of Mathusala, which was the son of Enoch, which was the son of Jared, which was the son of Maleleel, which was the son of Cainan,

38 Cainan from Enos, Enos from Seth, and Seth was descended from Adam, who was, by creation, the Son of God.

RECOLLECTIONS.

The great *Shiloh*, who according to ancient predictions was to be the seed of the woman after the flesh, has certainly been ushered into the world, under a divine character, by his forerunner *John the Baptist*, and by the witness from heaven that was given from the eternal Father and his Spirit, in a miraculous manner, to Christ as the Son of God and a distinct Person in the Godhead. How inferior are the best of men to him; and O what an honour is it, and how sensible should we be of our utter unworthiness, to be employed even in the meanest services for him! How should every heart be opened to receive him; and how affecting is the motive to repentance, taken from the grace brought in by the gospel for remission of sins, that all sorts of sinners, even *Gentiles* themselves, may see the salvation of God! Where this grace prevails, it rectifies the disorders, and levels the mountains of opposition, that lie in sinners hearts; who, whatever their character may be, have need to flee unto Jesus for an escape from the wrath to come: And where there is repentance unto life, it usually begins with the sins that we are most addicted to; and is discovered by a departure from them, as fruit meet for repentance. Though external privileges and divine ordinances are to be prized and improved according to the circumstances of things; yet they, of themselves, can be of no saving advantage to us, and therefore are not to be rested in: For whatsoever our pretences and vain confidences may be, if we bring not forth good fruit, destruction will be unavoidable: And while many think well of themselves; and, depending upon outward privileges, miscarry, to their eternal perdition; how often doth the almighty power of God raise up monuments of his sovereign grace, from among the most unlikely sinners, to his everlasting praise! But alas, how mixed and imperfect is the state of the church in this world! However, a cleansing and separating time will come, to the joy of the saint, and the terror of the hypocrite and sinner; and a man, whose heart is carnal, may be evidently discerned, even now, by his flinching, and being enraged at faithful reproofs for beloved sins; though sometimes, like *Herod*, he may have a secret veneration for godly ministers, and may hear them gladly.

N O T E

by mistake; and vindicates the sacred canon, even on that supposition. *Vid. Geogr. p. 1. l. ii. c. xiii.*

C H A P. IV.

Christ's temptation and fasting, 1,—13. His entrance on his public ministry,

ministry, 14, 15. His preaching at Nazareth, where the people wonder, and yet generally despise him for the meanness of his parentage, 16,—30. At Capernaum, where he cast out a devil, and heal's Peter's mother-in-law and many sick people, 31,—41. And his preaching in several other places, 42,—44.

TEXT.

AND Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

PARAPHRASE.

JESUS being solemnly anointed for his mediatorial office, at his baptism, by an unmeasurable effusion of the Holy Ghost, retired in the fulness of the Spirit, and by his immediate suggestion, from *Jordan* to a very † desert place; that, like a servant devoted to his Father's work, he might give himself to fasting and prayer, as a proper preparation for it; and that, like a champion, he might enter the field of battle, and might signally overcome the evil-one.

1 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: And when they were ended, he afterwards hungered.

2 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it may be made bread.

3 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

4 And the devil

2 There he continued for forty days together, praying to his heavenly Father, and conflicting with and vanquishing various temptations which the devil offered to him: And all that time he was miraculously supported without eating or drinking any thing; but at the close of those days, he, being truly a man, was hungry.

3 Hereupon Satan, taking the advantage of his fainting circumstances in a barren wilderness, said to him, If you are indeed the Son of God, as was lately declared at *Jordan*, I challenge you to prove it by turning this stone which I present to you, or any others now before you, into bread, that you may not suffer to the utmost extremity, and even perish with hunger.

4 But since complying with this demand would have looked as if our Lord were impatient of hunger, and distrustful of his Father's love and care; or as if he would set up for acting separately from him, and independently on him; he replied, It is written, with relation to *Israel's* hunger in the wilderness, (*Deut. viii. 3.*) that the life of man is not sustained merely by natural food, but by the all-governing, influential Providence of God, which commands a blessing upon it, and can preserve life, either by providing extraordinary means, or by its own immediate power, when ordinary means fail; and that therefore man ought to trust in him for all necessary supplies, in the way of duty, according to his word.

5 Satan having been defeated in his attempt to ensnare our Lord by *the lust of the flesh*, tried whether he could not prevail upon him *by the lust of the eye*; and there-

NOTE.

† Some suppose that this was in the wilderness of *Judea*; and others that it was in the great desert of *Horah*, or *Sinai*, where *Israel* were tried for forty years, and *Moses* and *Elijah* fasted forty days.

vil taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered, and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence.

therefore, † carrying him up to the top of an exceeding high mountain, he, like the prince of the power of the air, instantly formed, in the valleys round about, a representation of all the grandeur of this world, as in a large landskip, containing an appearance of states and kingdoms, courts and palaces, and the like.

6 And together with this representation he said, Behold the riches and delights, the honours and powers, that are found among the kingdoms of this world! All these charming possessions are entirely at my disposal; for they are committed to my order and management, and I bestow them on whomsoever I please.

7 If therefore you will but for once pay religious homage to me as to the deputed god of this world, I will immediately transfer the whole of my power over them, and property in them, to you.

8 But Jesus rejected this assault, not by urging, as he justly might, that Satan was a liar, and an insidious enemy to God, and therefore unworthy of such homage; but by saying with the utmost indignation, Away with all this insolence, I cannot suffer your thus invading the divine prerogative: For the eternal and unchangeable rule of worship, to the exclusion of all mere creatures, is established in what is written, (*Deut.* vi. 13, 14. and x. 20.) which plainly carries this sense, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

9 As Christ could no more be seduced by the lust of the eye than of the flesh, the devil accosted him with another temptation suited to work upon *the pride of life*: Accordingly our Lord, going with him to *Jerusalem*, permitted his setting him, in a very frightful and dangerous height, upon one of the wings or turrets of the temple, (see the note on *Mat.* iv. 5.) and then Satan, having no power to thrust him down from thence, said to him, If you are indeed the Son of God, you may be sure of your Father's protection, especially at this sacred place, where he is more remarkably present than any where else upon earth, and where angels attend to do his will: Throw yourself therefore headlong down from hence; and let that noble exploit prove either your own divine

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† This temptation is placed after that relating to Christ's casting himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, in *Mat.* iv. And the order in which *Matthew* has placed them seems to be the true order in which they occurred: For he plainly methodized them by the particles *then*, (*ver.* 5.) and *again*, (*ver.* 8.); and adds at the conclusion of the tempta-

tion about Christ's casting himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, that *then* the devil left him, (*ver.* 11.) but our evangelist has not thus distinguished them; having neglected the order, as of no importance to the history; or perhaps inverted it for some particular reasons, for which see *Lightfoot* on the place.

divine power, or the care of your pretended Father to preserve you from hurt.

10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee.

11 And in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus answering said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

10, 11. For, since you appeal to the scripture, I will appeal to it likewise to prove that this is a reasonable demand, and that, if your pretensions are just, you can run no risk by complying with it: For it is written of the Messiah, (*Psal. xci. 11, 12.*) *God shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

12 But Jesus replied, This presumptuous proceeding would be going out of the way of duty, and so would be none of my ways, in which protection is promised, or is to be expected; but would contradict another scripture, where it is said, (*Deut. vi. 16.*) *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*; which plainly intimates that dangerous hazards are not to be run, nor extraordinary methods to be tried, without necessity; and that God has not promised miracles for the preservation of any, when it may be had in the ordinary course of providence. (See the note on *Mat. iv. 7.*)

13 In this manner Christ effectually refuted all the temptations of the devil; and when Satan had tried his utmost, and found himself shamefully baffled in every attempt, he left him for the present, resolving to try afterwards to do that by his instruments and by violence, which he could not do by fraud himself.

14 Then Jesus returned like a victorious champion into *Galilee*, under the powerful anointing of the Holy Ghost; and entered upon his public ministry, which soon spread his fame thro' all the country.

15 And the reason of this was, because he preached in the synagogues, wherever he came, with such majesty and authority, and confirmed his doctrine by such great and merciful miracles, that the people were universally struck with wonder and pleasure, and could not but think and speak of him with honour and applause.

16 After he had been some time in other parts of *Galilee*, he went to *Nazareth* where he had mostly resided in the days of his minority; and, upon coming hither, he resorted, as usual, to the synagogue on the sabbath-day: And being a member of that congregation †, by virtue of his having constantly joined in wor-

ship

N O T E.

† We do not find that Christ ever read the scripture in any other synagogue but this: *Nazareth*; the reason of which seems to be, because he was not a member of those

congregations, but only of this: And the Jewish writers tell us, that none but a member of the synagogue might read there. But his great reputation as a prophet, and the various

stood up for to read.

ship with them during his former residence there, he stood up to read some section of the holy scripture, as was customarily done on the sabbath-days, (*Acts* xiii. 14, 15.)

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet *Isaiah*; and when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

17 And, as every book of the law, and of the greater prophets, was a single roll of parchment by itself; that which † the minister of the congregation put into his hands, and part of which was to be read that day, was the prophecy of *Isaiah*: Then Christ, unrolling the parchment, fixed upon a passage relating to himself, (*chap.* lxi. 1, 2.) which in sense, and mostly according to the septuagint, ran thus ||:

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised;

18, 19. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 When our Lord had read these words, he, rolling up the volume again, returned it to the public minister from whom he received it; and then § sat down to preach: And as the fame of his being an extraordinary prophet had by this time reached *Nazareth*, all the people looked intently toward him, expecting that he would explain what he had read, and earnestly wishing to hear what he would say on so remarkable a text.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down; and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21 Hereupon he began his discourse, in which he said, The prophetic words I have been reading are at this very time fulfilled in myself, and in what ye shall now hear from me. I, who was filled with the Holy Ghost at my baptism, am come, with a commission from my Father, to publish the glad tidings of salvation, and effectually evangelize the poor of this world, and the poor in spirit, who are emptied of themselves; to succour, heal, and save souls that are wounded and distressed in reflections on their own unworthiness and vileness, guilt and danger; to bring redemption to those that were in bondage under the law, and under the power of sin and Satan; to open the eyes of their understandings that were spiritually blind, as well as to restore

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears.

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various miracles he wrought to confirm it, procured him admission to preach in any synagogue wherever he went.

† The minister of the synagogue, says Dr *Lightfoot*, was called the angel of the church, the bishop or overseer, who prayed publicly, took care of the reading of the law, and sometimes preached, &c. See *Hebr.* and *Talm. Exerit.* on *Mat.* iv. 23.

|| Whether this was the section which was in course to be read that day, or whether our Lord purposely turned to it for the subject of his assigned discourse, is uncertain.

§ The Jewish doctors used to stand up when they read the scriptures, and to sit down when they taught the people; accordingly our Lord read standing, and preached sitting.

restore sight to them that were corporally blind; and to set the oppressed free from all their legal yokes, and their bondage of spirit, by which they were brought into as miserable a condition as persons † that are galled and bruised with fetters and chains: In a word, I am sent to proclaim a most joyful and glorious jubile ‡ by the gospel of salvation, that sinners may have free remission of all their penal obligations to divine justice in the forgiveness of their sins, may be delivered from all their miseries, and may be restored to the divine favour and to the forfeited inheritance of eternal life.

21 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

22 And the words which he spoke upon this occasion were so full of majesty and grace, that all the people in the synagogue were struck with wonder and astonishment to hear one who had not been educated in the schools of the prophets talk at this uncommon rate: And yet the generality of them cavilled at him, saying, by way of contempt and reproach, Is not this the son of *Joseph*, the poor carpenter, who was brought up with him? (See the note on chap. ii. 15.)

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

23 Jesus therefore, knowing their prejudices against him, said to them, Though your own consciences tell you, that my doctrine speaks surprisingly good and excellent things; yet your unbelieving hearts are objecting, and turning an old proverb against me, saying, "*Physician, heal thyself*: As it is reported that you have done wonderful works in other places, and particularly at *Capernaum* §, we insist upon it, that, if you are able, you heal our sick, our lame, and our blind, here at home, among your own kindred and acquaintance; otherwise we will not regard you."

24 And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

24 But I assuredly tell you, that, were I to work ever so great or many miracles among you, ye would not believe. For your objection against me, on account of my being the son of *Joseph*, verifies another old observation, That a teacher sent from God is not ordinarily so well thought of or received among his own neighbours, as among strangers: The meanness of his family, and the low circumstances in which he all along lived among them, bring his office into contempt; and it

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† Here is a beautiful gradation, in allusion to the miserable state of such captives as were not only cast into prison, but, like *Zedekiah*, had their eyes put out, and were bound with chains and loaded with irons, (2 Kings xxv. 7.)

‡ This has a manifest reference to the great year of jubile, which was a joyful year to servants and debtors, and to them that

had mortgaged their estates, who, at the return of the fiftieth year, were set free; liberty being then proclaimed through all the land of *Israel*, Levit. xxv. 8,—17.

§ This intimates, that Christ had been for some time preaching and working miracles in other places, before he came to *Nazareth*.

it becomes a matter of envy, that he who in private life stood on the level with or was below themselves, should wear the superior character of a prophet to them. It is therefore much fitter for me to perform my miracles in other places, than among a people whose prejudices will not give way to conviction.

25 But I tell you of a truth, Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet: and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

25, 26. Besides, God uses a holy sovereignty in the dispensations of his favour, not as man judges to be most likely, but as seems good in his sight: Thus in the days of *Elijah* the prophet, there was a great drought for three years and a half together †, which occasioned a distressing famine upon the earth; and though at that time there were many necessitous widows in the kingdom of *Israel*, and even at *Jerusalem* itself, yet it is certain matter of fact, that *Elijah* was sent for the relief of none of them, but only of a poor widow, who lived at *Sarepta*, a *Gentile* town which lay within the borders of *Sidon* ‡.

27 There were likewise many leprous persons in the land of *Judea*, in the days of *Eliseus*, (whose name, in the *Greek*, is *Eliseus*;) and yet none of them were cured by means of that prophet: But (1 Kings v. 8,—14.) *Naaman* the Syrian was healed, (2 Kings v. 8,—14.) though he was so far from being an *Israelite*, that he was of a nation which were not only strangers, but enemies to *Israel* and to their God. If therefore I chuse to display my glory and shew mercy among *Israelites* in distant parts, rather than among my own townsmen, neighbours, and acquaintance; yea, were I to do this even among the *Gentiles* themselves, rather than among the *Jews*; there is no more reason to cavil at me for it, than there was of old at *Elijah* and *Eliseus*, and the dispensation of providence by them, for relieving necessitous and diseased *Gentiles*.

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† An account of this famine we have at large, 1 Kings xvii. & xviii.; and the apostle *James* refers to it, chap. v. 17. But, in 1 Kings xviii. 1. it is said, that the word of the Lord came to *Elijah* in the third year, saying, Go shew thyself to *Abab*, and I will send rain upon the earth: And yet Christ says, the heaven was shut up three years and six months; and the apostle *James*, that it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. To reconcile this, we are to observe, that the third year, in which God spoke to *Elijah* about sending rain, is to be reckoned, not from the beginning of the drought, but from the time when *Elijah* began to sojourn with the widow of *Sarepta*; and that a year of drought had preceded, whilst he dwelt at the brook *Cherith*, and was fed by the ravens there; and after a while, or at the end of days, (το ο γρη),

which, in that language, often signifies the end of a year, the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land, 1 Kings xvii. 1,—7. So that, putting the time all together, it was in the fourth year, from the beginning of the drought, that God spake to *Elijah* of sending rain; and this is determined by Christ, and the apostle *James*, to be three years, and a half or six months.

‡ *Sidon* was a *Gentile* city, out of the borders of the land of *Israel*. God sent *Elisha* thither, who, in the *Greek*, is called *Eliseus*, and to make him a prophet of the *Gentiles*, the first that ever went among them: And when our Lord himself went among the *Gentiles*, it was into the coast of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, Mat. xv. 21. to shew mercy to a poor woman, as *Elisha* had done before to a poor widow, herein giving a specimen of the mercy designed for the *Gentiles*.

Gentiles, rather than *Israelites* that were in like miserable circumstances.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

28 As soon as our Lord had said these things in the synagogue, and thereby suggested as if the people of that town were unworthy of his favour, and the *Gentiles* themselves should be made partakers of it; they who, but just before, *bore him witness, and wondered at his gracious words*, (ver. 22.) were generally filled with the utmost indignation and rage against him:

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill, (whereon their city was built,) that they might cast him down headlong.

29 And, in the heat of their fury, they tumultuously broke up the assembly all at once; and thrust him, not only out of the synagogue, but of *Nazareth* itself; and, hurrying him away to the brow of the hill on which the town stood, they attempted to dispatch him, by throwing him down the precipice, tho' he had lived so many years unblameably among them.

30 But he passing through the midst of them, went his way,

30 But, as his time for dying was not yet come, and this was not that sort of death which he was to suffer, he miraculously sprang away from them before they were aware, leaving them to the dreadful consequences of their outrage against him.

31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath-days.

31 And he removed from thence to dwell at *Capernaum*, another town in *Galilee*; and preached in their synagogue on the sabbath-days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

32 And his doctrine, together with his gracious and authoritative manner of delivering and confirming it, was so striking, that the people could not but stand amazed at it; for it was attended with divine and powerful evidence.

33 And in the synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil; and cried out with a loud voice,

33, 34 And among other wonderful works which he wrought to confirm it there, the following instance was very remarkable. One sabbath-day, whilst he was preaching in the synagogue, there was a certain man possessed of the devil, that wicked spirit, who was so full of enmity to Christ, so afraid of his power, and so enraged against his gospel, that he spoke in or by the man, crying out with great vehemence, and with an audible voice, in the name of himself and his associates, O thou Jesus of *Nazareth*, pray give us no disturbance; thy proper business lies with men, and not with us who desire to have nothing to do with thee; surely the time is not yet come for thee to destroy our dominion, or to torment us: Alas! I dread contending with thee; for I know that thou art the Son of God †, holy in thy nature

34 Saying, Let us away: what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of *Nazareth*? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the holy One of God.

N O T E.

† This confession of Christ was extorted from the devil by the terror he was in, or else he made it with a design of paying such a public compliment to Christ as might render his character suspected among the Jews; and it is probable that the *Pharisee* took occasion

ture and design.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

38 And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house: and Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her. And immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

40 Now when the

35 But Jesus, refusing to receive testimony from the devil, severely checked him; and, with sovereign and awful authority, commanded him to be silent, and to quit possession of the man. Hereupon Satan was instantly forced to retire: And tho', to shew his rage and reluctance at parting, he threw the poor creature into violent convulsions before all the company, and left him like one dead; yet he immediately recovered, by which it appeared that he had received no manner of hurt.

36 And the people seeing that Christ wrought so great and undeniable a miracle, in such a godlike manner, were extremely surprised at it, saying within themselves, and one to another, What an astonishing word is this! Who ever saw or heard any thing like it? For he only speaks, and it is done; such power and authority go forth with his word, that even the infernal wicked spirits are forced to submit to his absolute command, and to do as he orders them.

37 And the report of this amazing cure was soon spread abroad, and gave him a vast reputation, far and wide; so that the whole country rung with his praises.

38 Now as soon as Jesus had publicly wrought this miracle in the synagogue, he retired from thence to Simon Peter's house, whose habitation was in this town; † and his wife's mother being at that time dangerously sick of a fever, her friends, encouraged by what he had just before done in the synagogue, acquainted him with her threatening case, and earnestly intreated him to shew his power and goodness in healing her.

39 They no sooner asked, but received. Jesus, in the greatness of his compassion, went into the room where she lay; and, as he stood looking upon her, he, like the sovereign Lord of all, without any ceremony, or application to his Father, commanded the fever to depart from her, and took it off to the perfect recovery of her health and strength all at once: And, as an evidence of this, she presently got out of bed, went about the business of the house, and did what was requisite for the entertainment of our blessed Lord and the company.

40 Then, as soon as the sun was set, at which time the sabbath was over, all the people thereabouts, who had any sick relations or friends, brought them to Jesus, that he might heal them, whatsoever their diseases were; the

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cession, from the devils owning him, to reproach him as if he cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils, Mat. xii. 24.

† This evidently confutes the *Papists* no-

tion of the celibacy of the clergy: For the apostle Peter himself had a wife, whose mother lay sick at his house; and here it was that our Lord probably dwelt.

the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

42 And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him that he should not depart from them.

43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.

44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

the *Pharisees* having suggested, that it was unlawful for them to carry their sick to him, or indeed for him to heal them, on the sabbath-day: And so great were his power and mercy, that, as fast as they came, he, by a bare touch, without the use of any means, instantly healed them all, of what kind or degree soever their sicknesses were; not one of them went away without a cure.

41 There were likewise many brought to him, out of whom, in the same sovereign way, he cast out evil spirits barely by his word of command; and, upon their taking leave of the possessed persons, they made hideous outcries, saying, Ah, we find that thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God: But, as their testimony was of no advantage to him, he commanded them to be silent, and would not suffer them to publish who he was; for they indeed certainly knew him to be the true Messiah.

42 And the next morning †, before day-light appeared, he arose, and retired to a solitary place, that he might have an opportunity for secret prayer, (*Mark i. 35.*) but as soon as the people missed him, they carefully searched after him till they found him; and, when they came to him, they were very urgent in their intreaties, that he would please to honour and bless them with a constant abode in their city and neighbourhood.

43 But (†) he told them, that, whatsoever might be their ends in this request, he could not grant it, consistently with his great design of preaching the gospel of the kingdom in one place as well as another, saying, My ministry is not to be confined to *Capernaum*, but I must preach the glad tidings of salvation to other cities as well as yours; for so the commission runs which I have received of my Father.

44 Accordingly, taking his leave of them for the present, he travelled about from town to town, thro' all *Galilee*, preaching in their synagogues wherever he came, and confirming his excellent doctrine by his beneficent and wonderful works. (*Mark i. 39.*)

RECOLUTIONS.

How often do the greatest temptations succeed the highest testimonies of God's love! As soon as our blessed Lord himself had been owned from heaven as the Son of God, and filled with his Spirit, he was tempted, like as we are, yet without sin; but came off with triumph, that he might be able to succour them that are tempted. When Satan, taking the advantage of necessitous and dangerous cir-

NOTE.

† In *Mark i. 35.* it is said, that in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out. But he might rise before, and yet not go out till it was day; or, as Dr *Lightfoot* reconciles these accounts, Though the natural day of the Jews began from sun set-

ting; yet they also made the midnight a distinctive period, to part between day and day; so that they reckoned up till midnight for the day that was past, and reckoned down from midnight for the morning of the following day.

circumstances, put him upon first distrusting, and then presuming upon, the providence and promises of God; and when he grew so insolent as to offer him the possession and the government of the world, upon condition of his paying religious worship to him as God's delegate, which is due to none but God himself; Christ defeated all his assaults by the sword of the Spirit, thereby setting us an example, and shewing us the way to resist and overcome every temptation through him that loved us.—O what dreadful work has sin made! It has turned once good and holy angels into malicious and unclean spirits; has perverted human nature, and subjected it to the devil's cruel tyranny; has introduced all the diseases and miseries that afflict mankind; and has brought our dear and blessed Saviour into all the humbling and suffering circumstances that he endured in our world. But what a gracious, suitable, and almighty Saviour have we! He is the sovereign Lord of life and death, of devils and men; and by virtue of the office to which his Father has anointed him, he is the deliverer of miserable captives, and the great physician of soul and body, who can easily heal the distempers of both, by his word, and the divine energy that attends it: And he exerts his power and grace on the most unlikely, and the most unworthy, as seems good in his sight. How excellent is his doctrine! how laborious and diligent was he in preaching it, especially on the sabbath-days! and how gloriously did he confirm it, without the least room for suspicion of fraud! But, alas, how few are savingly wrought upon and converted by it! And how many are there that get no further than the very devils themselves in their faith concerning him as the Son of God and the true Messiah; or than the people that heard his preaching and saw his miracles with attention and wonder, and bore witness to his gracious words, and yet immediately were filled with prejudices and envy, turned head against him, and sought to destroy him! But no designs against his life could prosper, till he had fulfilled his ministry and the time was come for him to resign it.

C H A P. V.

Christ preaches out of Peter's ship, 1,—3. His intimation of the success of Peter's and his partners ministry, by a miraculous draught of fishes, 4,—11. He heals a leper, 12,—15. Retires for prayer, and returns to preaching, 16, 17. Cures a man sick of the palsy, 18,—26. Calls Levi, and converses with publicans, 27,—32. And vindicates his disciples for not fasting in those days, 33,—39.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Genesareth,

1 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets.

3 And he entered

PARAPHRASE.

NOW while Jesus continued in Galilee, he was so acceptable to the common people, that they flocked and crowded in vast multitudes about him, to hear him preach the gospel of salvation, which was indeed the word of God: And, as the synagogues were not large enough to contain them, he went to the shore of the sea of Tiberias, which is called the lake of Genesareth.

2 And there he saw two fishing-boats lying near the shore; but the servants that belonged to them †, and had been fishing a great while to no purpose, were gone out of them to wash and cleanse their nets.

3 In the mean time our Lord, to avoid the inconvenience

NOTE.

† Some suppose that these fishermen were Simon and Andrew, who were said to be casting their net into the sea, (Mat. iv. 18. and Mark i. 16.) If so, it seems to have been

to walk the net after fishing: But I rather take this to relate to the servants washing their nets, while Simon and Andrew remained in the boat.

tered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land: and he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at thy word, I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto their partners which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying,

nience of being crowded by the multitude, and of having his voice drowned, went into one of the boats, particularly *Simon's* whom Christ named *Peter*, (*John* i. 42.); and, meeting with him there, he courteously entreated him to put off to a small distance from the land; which being done, Jesus, without regarding any distinction of places for religious worship, sat down in the vessel, and preached from thence to the people as they were standing on the shore.

4 And, when he had finished his discourse, he desired *Simeon* to steer still further to a deeper part of the lake, and there to drop his nets for fish; thereby designing to manifest his own power and goodness, and to give a lively emblem of the wonderful success which his servants should have in the work of the ministry under his command and influence.

5 But (*xai*) *Simon*, not knowing Christ's intention, said to him, Sir, I doubt it will be lost labour; for we have been fishing all night, and taken a deal of pains already without any success: However, in obedience to your command, and in hope that it may not be altogether in vain, I and my men, weary as we are, will make another trial.

6 Then they let down their net; and Christ, as sovereign Lord of the seas as well as of the dry land, made it well worth their while to observe his orders, he bringing together a prodigious number of fishes by his own influence upon them; so that the men immediately inclosed such a vast multitude, that the net began to tear by means of their bulk and struggling.

7 Hereupon, their partners being in the other boat, at a considerable distance out of call, they made signals for them to come with all speed to their assistance in drawing up the net: And they coming, helped them to manage it in such a manner that they caught fishes enough to load both the boats with them, and even to overload them, so that they were in danger of sinking by the great weight of their cargo.

8 This was, in all the circumstances of it, such an unexpected display of divine knowledge and dominion, that when *Simon*, who was likewise called *Peter*, saw it, he threw himself down at Christ's feet: And instead of suing for pardoning and sanctifying grace to deliver him from the guilt and power of his sins, as he ought, and certainly would had he then clearly understood on what a saving design Jesus came into the world; he, on the other hand, full of awful confusion and fear, as even good men used to be at any uncommon appearance of

ing, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

of the divine presence, humbly besought him, saying, Lord, I beg that thou wouldest please to withdraw from me, and go out of my boat; for I am a sinful wretch, utterly unworthy and unable to stand in thy presence, and to converse with thee.

8 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

9 For he having used to fish in that sea many years, and never seen or heard any thing like the success which ensued upon his obeying Christ's word, was struck with exceeding great amazement, as were also all the men in the boat with him, at the vast shoal which they so miraculously caught at one draught, after they had been toiling all night before to no manner of purpose.

10 And so was also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

10 James likewise and John, the two sons of Zebedee, who belonged to the other boat, and were partners with Simon in the fishing-trade, were much astonished at this event: And to relieve them, Jesus, instead of taking Simon, as he justly might, at his word, spoke in a kind, meek, and encouraging manner to him, saying, Let not your fear and surprise thus overwhelm you, and make you rashly wish for my absence as if I were an enemy: What I have now done is an act of miraculous goodness, as well as power; and I have further designs of much greater favour to you. As now you have caught a great multitude of fishes, by letting down your net at my order; so I intend, from this time forward, to make you a minister and an apostle; and by preaching the gospel, according to my command, and under my influence, you shall be as remarkably successful † in a better sort of fishing for the souls of men, that they may be drawn to me, and so may be brought out of a state of sin and misery into a state of salvation.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

11 In like manner he spoke to Andrew, Simon's brother, who was with him in the boat; and soon after to James and John, who were in the other vessel, and whom Jesus afterward met ashore, (Mat. iv. 18,—22.) and his word went with such power to their hearts, that, instead of going to make their market, they, amidst the greatest flush of prosperity in their fishing-trade, immediately threw up that employment, and all their worldly interests with it, and from that time forward constantly attended him as his disciples. (See the note on Mark i. 18.)

12 And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy;

12 And while Jesus was travelling thro' Galilee with these disciples, as he was one day entering into a certain city ‡, behold, a man all overspread with a leprosy, seeing

N O T E S.

† This was remarkably fulfilled in the conversion of 3000 by means of Peter's first sermon after Christ's resurrection, (Acts ii. 41.)
‡ This was Capernaum, and Christ had
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fy; who seeing Jesus, fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

13 And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

15 But so much the more went there fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

16 And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by,

seeing him, fell prostrate before him, and humbly intreated him, with great earnestness and importunity, saying, Lord, my case is very miserable and dangerous, past hope of relief by human means; but I firmly believe, that, if thou pleasest, thou canst easily cleanse and heal me; and, as I have heard of thy pity to others, I throw myself at thy foot for mercy.

13 Hereupon Jesus stretching forth his hand, laid it upon him, as a prophet might do on a leper; and at the same time to shew that his will is no more to be distrusted than his power, he, like the sovereign Lord of all, said in the authoritative manner, "I will; be thou cleansed." And at that very instant the man was perfectly cured of his leprosy, according to his faith in the power of Christ, and even beyond his faith in his will.

14 And Jesus peremptorily commanded him not to publish abroad what he had done: But, says he, go directly to a priest, whose office it is to judge of leprosy, and whether persons are cleansed from them or not, (*Lev. xiii. 2.*) and offer yourself to his examination, that he may pronounce you clean; and then perform the rites, which in that case are required by the law of Moses, in acknowledgment of your purification, (*Lev. xiv. 4,—7.*) that the most obstinate of the Jews may have a legal conviction of your being really cleansed, and of my divine power in healing you; and that none may object against me, as if I disregarded God's law.

15 But the man was so full of joy and ecstasy, and so desirous to spread the praises of his gracious benefactor, that, seeming to forget himself, or not to understand the design of Christ's charge, he could not tell how to hold his peace: And Jesus became so very famous by this means, that prodigious multitudes flocked after him, to hear his excellent discourses, and to have their diseases healed.

16 And, the crowd being so great and continual, he privately retired, as he was often obliged to do, to some solitary place in the wilderness, that he might have opportunity to refresh himself, and to spend time alone in solemn prayer.

17 A while after this, he returned again to Capernaum; and one day, whilst he was preaching there in a house, (*Mark ii. 1.*) several of the Pharisees and scribes, the most captious of all the Jews, were sitting to hear him, that they like spies might seek occasions of quarrelling

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not yet entered into the city, as appears from *Mat. viii. 1,—6.* Accordingly the preposition *in* may be rendered *at*, or *by*, as the preposition *in* the Hebrew is, *Job. v. 11.* and *x. 11.*

by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.

18 And behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy; and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before Jesus.

19 And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with his couch, into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering, said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

23 Whether is

ca-

telling with him. For this purpose they came together from all parts; some from several towns and cities of Galilee, others from Judea, and others as far as from Jerusalem itself: And, in the presence of all these, the power of the Lord Jesus exerted itself in the miraculous cures of many that were sick of various distempers.

18 Among the rest, there was an astonishing instance. A certain man, being grievously afflicted with the palsy, was so very weak as to be brought in a couch or bed upon the shoulders of four of his friends, (*Mark ii. 3.*) who endeavoured to get him into the room where Jesus was, and lay him at his feet for a cure:

19 And when, after much striving, they found that all their attempts to carry him in at the door were in vain, because of the throng of people before it, they found means of getting up, on the outside of the house, to its flat roof; and there, breaking open a trap-door, they let him down, as he lay in his bed, into the very room where Jesus was preaching to the people. (See the note on *Mark ii. 4.*)

20 As soon as the man was in this manner laid at his feet, Jesus observing the greatness of the paralytic's faith, as well as of those that brought him, put a public honour upon it, saying to him with great tenderness, affection and authority, to shew his power and will to heal him, Son, your sins are pardoned; and you may confidently expect their penal effect, in your grievous distemper, to be removed.

21 The scribes and Pharisees hearing him pronounce the remission of this man's sins in such a sovereign and absolute way, were filled with prejudices and envy against him, and reasoned in their own minds about it after this manner: Who does this man pretend to be, that he dares assume to himself, in this blasphemous style, the unalienable prerogative of Deity? For who but the great God himself, against whom all sins are committed, can have such absolute power to forgive them?

22 But Christ, being as privy to all their secret thoughts and whisperings as if they had spoke them out, replied, Why do ye argue at this perverse and injurious rate, and entertain evil surmises against me as if I were a blasphemer on this account? I will put what I have said upon a fair trial, whether I am possessed of this peculiar property of God or not.

23 Is it not as much the prerogative of God †, merely by

N O T E.

† If, as some pretend, Christ meant no more when he said, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*, than when he said, *Rise up and walk*, his question would seem to be very trifling, as amounting

easier? to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

by a sovereign absolute word of command, to restore this extremely weak paralytic to perfect health in an instant, as it is to forgive his sins? If I have power in myself to do one, is not that an evident proof of my authority to do the other likewise? Nay, if I blasphemed in what I said, would God ever suffer me to confirm it, by enabling this man to rise up immediately and to walk away with full strength and vigour?

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins, (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.

24 Now that ye may be plainly convinced, that I, who appear among you under the character of the Messiah, am indeed a divine person, and have power, even whilst I am here on earth, to pardon sin, I will give you a clear demonstration of it, by instantly removing this man's distemper, which (as all diseases are) is the fruit of sin: And then, turning to the sick man, he spoke to him, with all the majesty and authority of a God, in the following manner, I absolutely command you to get up, and in the presence of all this people to carry home your bed.

25 And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

25 And, at this word of command, the man was all at once restored to the perfect use of his limbs, and got up immediately in the sight of all then present; and, as if nothing had ailed him, carried home the bed on which he lay sick before, rejoicing and blessing God for the wonderful cure that was so suddenly and effectually wrought upon him.

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

26 Yea, all the common people likewise, tho' they had not just conceptions of Christ's acting by a divine power inherent in himself, were struck with the greatest astonishment, and ascribed glory to God for sending him among them; and at the same time they were possessed with an awful reverence and dread, like persons apprehensive that the divine presence was in a sort of visible manner among them: And upon the whole, they cried out, Such mighty works, and such a sovereign way of performing them, as we have seen to-day, are very surprising indeed, far beyond all that was ever seen or heard of before.

27 And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom; and he said unto him, Follow me.

27 After this our Lord went out of *Capernaum* again; and as he was walking near the sea of *Galilee*, (Mark ii. 13.) he saw one *Levi*, who was also called *Matthew*, sitting at his office to receive the toll for goods which was carried over that sea: And Christ, preventing him with his loving-kindness, said, Come along with me, and I will make you an instrument of gathering the noblest tributes of praise and glory to God.

28 And

N O T E.

mounting to no more than this, "Which is easier? to heal the man, or to heal him? To do what I mean under one of these forms of expression, or to do the same thing that I mean under the other? To take off the palsy as the temporal punishment of his sin, or to cure it?" And as a proper forgiveness, with

respect to the eternal punishment of sin, is ascribed to Christ, *Acts* vii. 60. and *Gal.* iii. 13. so it is here plainly distinguished from his healing the palsy; and the Pharisees evidently understood it in that manner. See the note on *Mat.* ix. 2.

18 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

28 And these words were set home with such divine energy, that, without conferring with flesh and blood, he immediately obeyed the heavenly call, threw up his commission as a publican, quitted his great and exorbitant gains, and became a sincere disciple of Christ, accompanying him wherever he went.

29 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans, and of others that sat down with them.

29 And *Matthew's* soul was so inflamed with love to Christ, that he took an opportunity, being rich, to invite him and his disciples to a liberal entertainment at his own house, (*Mat. ix. 9, 10.*): And there he got together a great number of tax-gatherers, and others of his former companions, who were persons of ill repute among the people, to take part of the feast, that they might converse with Jesus, and be in the way of finding grace, as well as himself.

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

30 But some of the envious and hypocritical *scribes* and *Pharisees* observing this, were highly offended; and, not daring to attack our Lord himself, muttered to his disciples, hoping to prejudice them against him for it, saying, How shameful is this in your master, to bring you into company, and cause you, together with himself, to eat and drink so familiarly with such wicked wretches as these publicans and the rest of the profligate sinners that are with him.

31 And Jesus answering, said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

31 Jesus knowing this (for nothing could be hid from him) took up the argument; and, answering for his disciples, said, My conversing with this sort of men is not to approve of, or encourage them in, but to turn them from, their iniquities: I go among them, as a physician does among his patients, to recover and heal them; and every one knows that a physician's work lies, not among the healthy, or such as think themselves so well as to have no occasion for him, but among those that are sick and would be glad of his help.

32 I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

32 Accordingly my business, in coming into the world, is not to bring such to repentance as never sinned, if there were any of that character upon earth; nor can I reasonably hope for success in this work among those who are as conceited of their own righteousness as if they had no sin: But I am come to recover those sinners, and the chief among them, whose consciences convict them as transgressors, and who see and feel their spiritual sickness and danger, and are sensible that they need a cure. This sufficiently justifies my admitting the worst of men into my company, in order to their conversion and salvation.

33 And they said

33 About this time some of *John's* disciples, (*Mat. ix. 14.*) being egged on by the *Pharisees*, took occasion

said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them?

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

36 And he spake also a parable unto them: No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old: if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and

to object against the more social and less austere way of living, which Christ allowed to his followers, than they themselves practised, saying to him, How comes it to pass, that while we, the disciples of *John the Baptist*, that unquestionably good and holy man; and while the *Pharisees*, who profess the strictest sanctity, are often engaged in days of solemn fasting and prayer, (see the note on *Mark ii. 18.*) your disciples nevertheless live more at large, and neglect these pious, humbling, and self-mortifying duties?

34 Jesus, in reply, intimated to them, that every thing is beautiful in its season, saying, How unsuitable and improper would it be for the friends of a bridegroom, who are called to rejoice with him in the festivals of a wedding, to give themselves up, at that very time, to the austerities of fasting? As therefore your master, *John* himself, has truly called me the bridegroom of the church, (*John iii. 29.*) it would be very unseasonable and unbecoming for my disciples to spend their time in fasting and mourning whilst I am personally present with them.

35 But it will not be long before I, with whom they now rejoice as with a bridegroom, shall be removed from them by death, and shall leave them exposed to many trials and dangers, which will furnish proper occasions for days of humiliation and fasting, with prayer.

36 And, still further to illustrate the matter, he added the following similitudes: As no one of common sense would go about to mend an old rotten garment with a piece of new strong cloth; or if any should be so imprudent as to attempt it, the strength of the new cloth would, upon every stretch, occasion a still greater breach in the old coat, and the new and old stuff would appear to be very improperly put together, (see the note on *Mat. ix. 16.*); so it would be utterly incongruous for my disciples to damp their rejoicings, in my presence, by the severities of abundant fastings.

37 And as no prudent man fills old leathern bottles (see the note on *Mark ii. 22.*) with new and spirituous wine; if he should, the briskness of the wine would endanger the bursting of the bottles, and the loss of both: So my disciples being but weak and tender, and unaccustomed to fasting, they having been only publicans and fishermen, and being not yet thoroughly settled in their principles about the nature of my kingdom; it would be too great a burden and discouragement for them, to be put all at once upon severe abstinences and mortifications.

38 But as it is apparently best to put new fermenting wine into new bottles, which are ordinarily the strongest, and

and both are preserved.

39 No man also having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better.

and by that means both are most likely to be secured: So it is most suitable to my wisdom, tenderness and care, not to over-load my disciples, but to proportion their work and difficulties to their light and strength, and to the circumstances of things; and this makes all agreeable.

39 And, to use a proverbial expression upon this occasion, As no person, who understands good wine, and has been used to that which is old, is presently brought to relish that which is new, but prefers the old to it; so the life and power of religion is, to experienced Christians, like old wine, vastly preferable, in their esteem, to all the noise and shew of bodily services, which are like the bouncing and frothing of new wine: And whatever advantage there may be in strict and frequent fastings, as subservient to self-denial and a mortification of the flesh; yet these will not be easily relished by such as have been always used to a freer way of living, till by degrees the soul finds the benefit of these duties, and they become familiar to it by practice.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How vile do we appear in our own eyes, when we see ourselves in the light of Christ's glory, who, like the God of nature, commanded the watery tribe to come into Peter's net, as an emblem of his powerful grace in gathering souls to himself by the ministry of the gospel! But if we have right thoughts of him, as a Saviour, under our sense of sinfulness and unworthiness, we shall see a necessity of drawing near by faith to him, instead of desiring him to depart from us. To them that believe, he will grant remission of sins, and deliverance from all their dreadful effects: And how should our obtaining this mercy fill us with the highest rejoicing, thankfulness, and praise! If Jesus, seeing our faith, says to any of us, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," no powers of hell or earth can reverse the blessed sentence; and if he speaks to the heart, it readily yields to his command, who came to call the chief of sinners to repentance, and to bring salvation to them from all their iniquities and distresses. And O how abundant is his grace to repenting and believing souls! He takes them into a marriage-relation to himself, in which all their joys and griefs depend upon his presence with them, or his withdrawals from them: But he will never utterly leave or forsake them; he will always espouse their cause, help them over their difficulties, proportion their work to their strength, and by degrees familiarize to them the most humbling and self-denying duties. And though days of fasting and prayer are not unnecessarily, much less superstitiously, to be multiplied; yet times of great affliction and trial are proper occasions for them; and Christ will incline and enable his disciples to perform those duties, in their season, to rich advantage.

C H A P. VI.

Christ shews the lawfulness of works of necessity and mercy on the sabbath-day, 1,—11. Retires for prayer, 12. Cures twelve apostles, 13,—16. Heals many diseases, 17,—19. His sermon to his disciples and the multitude, about the happiness of faithful sufferers for his sake, 20,—23. The misery of having this world for a portion, 24,—26. Love to enemies, and doing good, 27,—38. Ministers and people

known by their fruits, 39,—45. And the necessity of practising true religion, 46,—49.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn-fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath-days?

3 And Jesus answering them, said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was an hungred, and they which were with him;

4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the shew-bread, and gave also to them that were with him, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

6 And it came to

PARAPHRASE.

NOW on the first sabbath after the second day † of the passover, Jesus was going thro' a field of corn which was then near ripe; and his disciples, who were with him, being hungry, plucked some of the ears, as the law allowed, (*Deut. xxiii. 25.*); and having cleared the corn from the chaff, by rubbing it in their hands, they staved their hunger with it.

2 But (†) some superstitious Pharisees being nigh, and observing this, took occasion to quarrel with the disciples, and tacitly to reflect upon their Lord himself for it ‡, saying, How dare ye, the followers of Jesus, profane the sabbath at this rate, by doing what is equivalent to reaping, or dressing victuals, which are forbidden on God's holy day.

3 In answer to this cavil, and in defence of what the disciples had done, Jesus replied, Have ye, who pretend to so much skill and exactness in understanding and observing the law, never taken notice of what David and his company did, in a like case of necessity, when they were hungry in a journey? (*1 Sam. xxi. 3,---6.*)

4 Do not ye there read, how, on that occasion, he went into the court of the tabernacle, and took from thence some of the loaves that had been offered to God, which he and his followers eat, though, in the ordinary course of things, these were the portion of the priests, and the law allowed none but them to eat of it? And yet David was never charged with any crime for doing this; it was justifiable by the law of necessity and mercy; and so is what my disciples have now done.

5 And in further vindication of them, he added, That, as they did this in his own presence, and by his allowance, while they were attending upon him, they had a sufficient authority for it; because the institution of the sabbath itself was from him, as the God of nature and the God of Israel; and is subject to his explanations and alterations, as the Messiah and Head of the church. (See the notes on *Mat. xii. 8.* and *Mark ii. 28.*)

6 On another sabbath-day also he went into one of their

NOTES.

† From this day were reckoned seven weeks to the feast of pentecost; and the first sabbath after it was called *octaves of pentecost*. (See *Lights* and *Whity*. And it is natural to suppose, this being the sabbath, that Jesus was either going to, or returning from, some synagogue, as is represented in the pa-

raphrase on *Mat. xii. 1.*

‡ In *Mat. xii. 2.* and *Mark ii. 24.* the Pharisees are represented as speaking after this manner to Christ, as they are here said to do to his disciples; but both might be true, they speaking first to one, and then to the other.

† 12

to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught; and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath-day; that they might find an accusation against him.

8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose, and stood forth.

9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with

their synagogues to preach; and there was among the people a certain man whose right hand was wasted and shrunk, and rendered utterly incapable of any use or service.

7 And as the Jewish doctors and Pharisees knew that Christ had used to take pity on miserable objects, they carefully observed whether he would go about to cure this man; that, if he should, they might endeavour from thence to expose him to the people, as a profaner of the sabbath himself, as well as a defender of those that in their account had broke it.

8 But Jesus, knowing the malicious and ill-natured, as well as superstitious thoughts of their hearts, ordered the man, whose hand was shriveled, to stand up in the midst of the assembly; thereby intimating that he intended to heal him: Accordingly the man stood up, in hopes of a cure.

9 Then Jesus turning to the Pharisees, who by this time had expressed their thoughts as if it were not lawful for him to heal on that day †, he said unto them, I will make one appeal to your own consciences, and demand your answer: Is it most lawful, honourable, and pleasing to God, and most agreeable to the design of a sabbath, to perform an act of so much mercy and goodness without delay, as healing this man, and thereby preserving his life ‡, and making him capable of hereafter getting a livelihood? Or, under a pretence of strictness in observing this holy day, to be so hard-hearted and cruel, as to let him continue languishing, and incapable of getting a subsistence, when only by a word's speaking I can recover him?

10 And as they made no reply, because they could think of none that might serve their own turn, he, first looking round about upon them for a while with holy indignation and grief at the hardness of their hearts, (Mark iii. 4, 5.) and then turning to the poor man, commanded him, with all the majesty of a God, to stretch out his withered hand: And he instantly enabled him so to do; it being perfectly restored to its proper size and strength, colour and activity, equal to the other.

11 Hereupon the Pharisees, instead of admiring Christ's power and goodness, were filled with the utmost rage and fury at his having so openly exposed them and gained

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† It is probable, that upon Christ's bidding the man stand forth, by which they perceived that he designed to heal him, they asked the question which is recorded, *Matth.* xii. 30.

‡ Christ calling the cure of this man, *sa-*

ving his life, seems to intimate, as some of the ancients supposed, that by the loss of his right-hand he was disabled from getting his living; he having no other way to sustain himself, and his family, if he had one, than by the labour of his hands.

with another what they might do to Jesus.

gained such reputation to himself; in so much that they resolved, if possible, to be his death, and consulted one with another, and with the *Herodians*, what steps to take for accomplishing it. (*Mark. iii. 6.*)

12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

12 About this time Jesus, having made many disciples by means of his preaching and miracles, retired one evening to the top of a hill for secret prayer; and, as a particular design of the greatest importance then lay immediately before him, he spent the whole night in solemn devotions, to recommend it, and all concerned in it, to his Father's blessing, in a house of prayer, (*ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ* †.)

13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles:

13 And the next morning, ordering all his disciples to draw near, he, by a sovereign act of his own will, as Lord of his kingdom, chose from among them twelve †, whom he called apostles, or extraordinary messengers; and whom he authorised, as his chief ministers, to be his special witnesses, and to publish the gospel, and work miracles in confirmation of it.

14 Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

14 Now the names of the twelve were these: *Simon*, whom Christ surnamed *Peter*; and *Andrew*, *Simon's* brother; *James* and *John*, who were likewise brethren according to the flesh, being the sons of *Zebedee*, and were made brethren in Christ, as well as in the apostleship; † *Philip*, and *Bartholomew*;

15 Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes,

15 *Matthew* the publican; and *Thomas*, who was more incredulous than all the rest of the apostles about Christ's resurrection; *James* the son of *Alphaeus*, who was likewise called *James the less*, and the brother of our Lord; and *Simon Zelotes*, who was also known by the name of *Simon the Canaanite*;

16 And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

16 *Judas* or *Jude*, who was likewise called *Lebbeus*, and surnamed *Thaddeus*; and last of all was *Judas Iscariot*, who proved the perfidious traitor of his Lord.

17 And he came down with them, and stood in the plain; and the

17 Jesus having chosen these twelve apostles, who ever afterwards attended him as his family, he came down with them to a lower flat part of the mountain, where he stood § ready to receive all that should come to

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† The Jews had (*εὐαγγελιστῆς*) oratories, or houses of prayer, in fields and mountains, for retirement, and for the convenience of such travellers as might come those ways: And it seems that our Lord spent the night in prayer in one of these houses. *Vid. Vitrings. de Synag. Vet. l. i. p. 1. c. 1.*

‡ The number of the apostles was twelve, answerable to the number of the tribes of *Israel* that sprang from the twelve sons of *Jacob*: And these twelve apostles were, under

Christ, the spiritual fathers of the New-Testament church, begetting them to him by the gospel.

§ This *Philip* was not the deacon and evangelist of that name spoken of *Acts vi. & viii.*; but we read of him, *John i. vi. xii. & xiv.* And some think, that *Bartholomew* was *Nathanael*; see *Hammond* on *John i. 42.* And for an account of several others, see the notes on *Mat. x. 3, 4.* and *Mark ii. 14.*

§ *Τὸν* *ἐκείνῳ* may very well signify a flat

the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

18 And they that are vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all.

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are

to him; and immediately the company of disciples that used to follow him resorted to him again; and, his fame being spread far and wide, a great multitude of people flocked about him, from all the towns and villages of Judea, and from Jerusalem itself, and from those parts of the sea-coast that lay toward Tyre and Sidon: Some came a great way to hear him preach, and others to be cured of their various distempers;

18 And some that were miserably possessed of devils, and thereby dispossessed of themselves, were brought to him: And all diseases and evil spirits, how great or many soever, flew away at his command, who, in an instant, recovered them that were afflicted.

19 Yea, so visible and remarkable was the divine power by which he healed them, that every one who wanted to be freed from any kind of malady, pressed hard to come at him, believing that, if they could but touch him, they should certainly be cured; and it was to them according to their faith: For efficacious influence not only came at his will and word, but proceeded from his own person, as the fountain of all power, to the healing of every one of them. (See the note on Mark v. 30.)

20 And as he was the great Physician of souls as well as bodies, so he preached the gospel of his grace to them that came to hear him; when, looking upon his disciples, he began with saying, in the audience of the people, Ye are greatly blessed indeed who are among the poor of this world, and have left all its allurements to follow me; and who are so meek and lowly in heart, under an affecting sense of your utter insufficiency, sinfulness and unworthiness, as to renounce all trust and confidence in your own wisdom, strength, and righteousness: For ye are the subjects of the kingdom of grace, to whom all its blessings belong; and are entitled to the kingdom of glory, which shall be your inheritance forever.

21 Blessed are ye who willingly suffer hardships and hunger for my sake, and are more earnest in your desires and pursuits after spiritual and eternal blessings than after your necessary food: For all these appetites of your renewed souls shall be certainly and abundantly satisfied. Whatsoever the world may think of you, ye are really blessed,

N O T E S.

flat and even part of the mountain toward the foot of it; and so it agrees with Mat. v. 1. if this and that relate to the same discourse. And after all that commentators have said, *pro* and *con*, it may be more natural to suppose, that this is rather, partly an abstract, and partly an enlargement, of Christ's sermon on the mount, Mat. v. &c. than another

discourse delivered at a different time and place: And the chief objection against this supposition seems to be removed, if he was then on a plain part toward the foot of the mountain; or if, as some think, he being pressed by the multitude in the plain, went up the hill again to preach to them.

are ye that weep
now : for ye shall
laugh.

blessed, whose outward circumstances are now afflictive on my account ; and whose inward grief and mourning for sin, and for the dishonour done to my name, are still more touching to you : For ye shall have secret consolations to sweeten these troubles ; and in a little time everlasting joy and gladness shall be upon your heads, and all your sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

22 Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

22 Once more, Blessed are ye, even when the wicked of the earth shall be full of enmity and spite against you, and refuse to have any society with you in civil or sacred concerns ; and when they shall load you with infamous slanders, as if ye were the most detestable wretches on earth, and shall pass unrighteous decrees against you, merely for your faithful adherence to the true Messiah.

23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy : for behold, your reward is great in heaven : for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

23 Think of these things as your glory : Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, that ye are counted worthy to suffer shame for my name's sake : For observe what I say, heaven will make you a rich and everlasting amends for all your tribulations in this world. And ye are herein only the brethren and companions of the best men that ever lived upon earth : For, in former days, the ancestors of these wicked persecutors used the most famous prophets, and holy men of God, in the like barbarous manner ; and as ye have fellowship with them in their sufferings, ye shall likewise be partakers of their glory.

24 But wo unto you that are rich ! for ye have received your consolation.

24 But, on the contrary, Dreadful is the case of those among you, whether ye profess to be my disciples or not, who are rich in your own conceits, self-opinionated and self-righteous ; and who trust in the riches of this world, as if your happiness lay in them : For ye already have your all ; and as your consolation is more imaginary than real, and there will be none after it, it is but a miserable portion.

25 Wo unto you that are full ! for ye shall hunger. Wo unto you that laugh now ! for ye shall mourn and weep.

25 Wo unto those of you, that are so full of yourselves, and of creature-comforts, as to desire nothing better ! For ye shall hereafter be entirely destitute of every thing that is good ; and your eager, painful appetites for happiness shall never be satisfied. Wo unto those of you, that now spend your days in jollity, mirth, and pleasure, are strangers to godly sorrow, and indulge yourselves in sensual delights ! For all your joy shall soon be turned into bitter mourning, weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, for ever.

26 Wo unto you when all men shall speak well of you

26 And a heavy wo lies upon those of you who, preferring the applause of men to the favour of God, temporize and stick at nothing to gain the good-will and good word of every man, and study to accommodate yourselves to their lusts and passions, that they may flatter

of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

27 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also.

30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do

ter you, as ye do them! For it was by these means that men, in former ages, were generally brought to careless hypocritical and false prophets, more than the true and faithful servants of God.

27 But to proceed: I say unto every one of you that hear me preach, Do not confine your love, as ye have been taught by the rabbies, to your own countrymen, friends, and relations, nor to those of your own religion; but bear all good-will, even to your enemies, and be so just to them as to have a due esteem of every thing that is valuable in them or done by them: And how inveterate soever they may be against you, be ye so far their friends, as to do what in you lies to promote their happiness.

28 Speak as well as you can of them, and wish all good to them, who revile and imprecate the worst of evils upon you; and, instead of returning their injurious and spiteful usage, recommend them to the mercy of God, begging that he would convince them of their iniquities, change their hearts, and forgive them; and that he would restrain and defeat their wicked purposes, and be better to them than they are to you, or than ye yourselves can be to them.

29 And if the violence which any one offers be as affronting and provoking to your person † as a cuff on the ear or face, and as injurious to your property as taking away a useful garment; rather yield to his repeating the affront and injury, than gratify malicious resentment in righting yourself. If you cannot readily get relief by legal authority, and in methods becoming Christian charity, rather suffer wrong, than seek private revenge, or than indulge a litigious quarrelsome temper by expensive and tedious law-suits, in which the remedy may be worse than the disease.

30 If any one, whether friend or enemy, asks relief, and you are well satisfied he is in want, be ready to give to him according to your ability; and if any honest man has borrowed your money, or taken your goods upon trust, and is not able to return or pay for them, do not arrest the poor insolvent debtor, and throw him into prison, nor be severe in demanding what cannot be had.

31 And let this be the general rule of your conduct toward every one, in all situations of life, Whatsoever, upon serious, cool and disinterested consideration, ye would think to be fit and reasonable, in equity or charity, in honour or conscience, for others to do or refrain doing to you, were ye in their circumstances, and they

in

N O T E.

† These seem to have been proverbial expressions, to signify an invasion of the tenderest points of honour and property.

do ye also to them
likewise.

in your's; put yourselves into their place, so as to make their case your own, and do, or forbear, the very same things to them.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 Judge not, and

32, 33, 34. These are the holy, excellent and distinguishing duties of religion, which I enjoin upon them that would be my disciples: For if ye only return love to those that have an affection for you, and are kind only to them that are so to you, and lend only to them from whom ye expect to receive again as much or more, what is there in all this that can be of any account with God? Or what man will have any great esteem of this, or think himself obliged to you for it? For the common principles of humanity and prudence, of gratitude and justice, yea, of interest itself, naturally prompt to these things. And all this is no more than, generally speaking, people do, who know nothing of God, and have no conscience, or principle of religion to govern them. It is no more than is done by the very heathens, nay, by the publicans themselves, who, as ye yourselves judge, stand in the rank of the worst of sinners, and are some of the most self-interested, covetous and oppressive sort of men in the world; and they do all this to persons as bad as themselves. If therefore ye go no further than this, what do ye more than others? or what are ye better than they?

35 But I insist upon it, as ever ye would be my disciples indeed, That ye be kind even to such as injure you; that ye do good, and lend, as there may be occasion, to them from whom ye can reasonably hope for no returns. And know for your encouragement, that whatsoever ye thus do from a principle of faith in me, and of love and obedience to me; the less hope ye have of a due reward from men, the greater shall be your reward of grace from God, who will often return it with large increase in this world, and will certainly remember and own it to your everlasting advantage in the next: And ye will hereby resemble, and shew yourselves to be, the children of your heavenly Father; for, in his providential dispensations, he is merciful and good to the ungrateful and wicked, as well as to the thankful and holy.

36 Let it therefore be your highest ambition and concern, that ye may have grace to imitate the blessed and glorious God himself, as children of his own likeness, in extending your beneficence and charity, as far as possible, to all sorts of men, whether they be friends or foes, good or bad.

37 Moreover, take heed of rashly censuring others, or judging their hearts and their eternal state: And do

and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.

not be forward to aggravate any one's crime, or utterly condemn him in doubtful cases, or for a single act, as ever ye would not be judged and condemned by others, nor by the great God, for your uncharitableness, and for taking his judgment into your own hands: And when, in private, personal affairs, any offend you; put the most favourable construction on their conduct, and be ready to pass it by, as ever ye desire and hope for forgiveness from those whom ye yourselves may disoblige; and especially from God, against whom, *in many things, ye all offend.* (Jam. iii. 2.)

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.

38 And, whenever ye are called to charitable distributions, give freely and liberally, as ye are able, and as need requires; and God will, one way or other, return blessings upon you, either in kind or value, with such an advantageous overplus, as shall be like not barely filling, but even thrusting and heaping a bushel, till it runs over: For according to the true meaning of a proverbial expression, *He that sows or gives sparingly, shall reap or receive sparingly; and he that sows bountifully, shall also reap bountifully.* (2 Cor. ix. 6.)

39 And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

39 Our Lord likewise took occasion to caution the people, under the covert of a parable †, against ignorant and false teachers, and particularly the *scribes and Pharisees*, those blind guides, and to warn his disciples against being like them; saying, "If one blind man leads another, what can be expected but that they both should fall into mischief?" Thereby intimating, that if any ignorant and erroneous preacher, who knows not God and the way of salvation, pretends to teach others, and they give themselves up to his guidance, they are all in the utmost danger of falling into the pit of destruction, and of perishing there together; the people without excuse, and the preacher with high aggravations of his sin and misery.

40 The disciple is not above his master: but every

40 Whatsoever difficulties and sufferings therefore, said he, may attend my followers in observing and communicating the better instructions which I have given them in my doctrine and example, let them not think much at it: For the disciple should not expect to be exempted from doing what his master doeth, nor from suffering

N O T E.

† As parables were suited to prevent prejudices against the truths intended by them, and to stir up inquiries after them, (see the note on *Mat. xiii. 3.*); so Christ sometimes spake by them for gracious information to his own disciples, and for righteous concealment from others who wilfully shut their eyes against clearer light. *Mat. xiii. 10, 11,*

23. And at other times he used them, when he knew that plain and open declarations would too much provoke the passions of his hearers, and that they could not be borne, *Mark iv. 33.* It is not this reason that he seems to use the parable of *the blind leading the blind.*

every one that is perfect, shall be as his master.

40 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

41 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

42 For a good tree bringeth forth corrupt fruit: neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

43 For every tree is known by his own fruit: for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes.

sering what he submitteth to; but the highest perfection of a disciple lies in his being like his master, and learning of him.

41 And let him who would be duly qualified to instruct and reform others, begin first at home: For how preposterous and unbecoming is it for any of you to be quick-sighted in discerning, and severe in aggravating and censuring, even the smallest failings of others; but, at the same time, to be blind, or exceeding favourable, to your own more heinous crimes, so as to overlook, extenuate, and excuse them, as if they were mere trifles, or there were no harm in them?

42 Or how can you be fit to correct lesser matters that are amiss in your brother, and with what face can you attempt it, while you take no notice of your own much greater faults; or, if you are conscious of them, take no care about redressing them? This is the grossest hypocrisy: And whatsoever such an one may pretend to, he is no enemy to sin, as such; but is rather an enemy to his brother, than to his sin; nor is he like to do much good by his reproofs. If therefore you would act a wise, and upright, and a successful part in correcting and instructing others, begin first with your own heart and ways; see that they be purified from the guilt and power of all iniquity; and then you will be more capable of reproving and directing your brother with judgment, decency, and authority, and more likely to succeed in it.

43 For every man is good or bad, according to his governing principle; and his life will be answerable to it. As the fruit of a good tree is excellent, and that of a bad one is worthless, according to their respective kinds: So a good man and holy minister, whose heart is renewed by grace, brings forth the genuine fruits of righteousness in his life and doctrine; and an unrenowned man and corrupt minister, whose principles are wrong, brings forth fruits of iniquity and falsehood in his conversation and ministrations; nor can the contrary to this be reasonably expected from them severally.

44 For as men rightly judge of the nature of a tree, by the sort of fruit it bears; so they may of peoples prevailing thoughts and dispositions, by their tendencies and effects. For as, in the natural and vegetable world, every thing produces according to its own nature, fig-trees figs, and vines grapes, neither of which can grow upon thorn-trees and bramble-bushes: So, in the spiritual and moral world, gracious and holy men and ministers bring forth spiritual and holy words and actions; and

and unregenerate carnal men cannot produce fruits of righteousness in their lives and ministry, while their notions are corrupt and their hearts vicious.

45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

45 This may be further illustrated by the nature of a fountain. As a clear and sweet spring will send forth clean and pleasant water; so the man, whose heart is enriched with stores of spiritual knowledge and grace, will bring forth such things in his life as are savoury and edifying, and well-pleasing in God's sight: And, on the other hand, as a filthy, muddy spring will send forth foul and nauseous streams; so a graceless man, whose heart is full of vile lusts and corrupt affections, will vent such things as are offensive to God, and injurious to himself and others: For men's language and behaviour will be according to the prevailing thoughts and bias of their hearts.

46 And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

46 Now, to apply all this to yourselves: What signifies your pretending relation to me; or your verbal acknowledgements of me, with seeming respect, as your Lord; or your loud addresses, with seeming earnestness and importunity, to me as such; or even your preaching in my name to others? How preposterous and absurd, how vain and hypocritical, is all this; what an affront to me, and what a cheat upon yourselves? Or with what face can ye do it, or what good ends can ye propose to yourselves by it, if at the same time ye do not receive me and my words into your hearts by faith, nor yield yourselves up to mine authority, nor act suitably to your profession of my name?

47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like.

47, 48. The case of sincere believers, and of hypocritical professors, may be fitly represented by this plain similitude: Whoever comes by faith to me, attends to my doctrine, and heartily falls in with it, that he may observe and put it into practice; he is like a careful, prudent man, who, being to build an house, dug away the loose ground, till he could lay its foundation upon a solid rock; and this was such a strengthening to it, that no floods or storms could undermine or overthrow it. So the true believer cannot satisfy himself with notions and professions or superficial pretences in religion, but searches till he find a sure foundation to rest upon; and then builds, by a practical faith, on the Rock of ages; and, being founded on this Rock, no temptations or terrors, persecutions or dangers, how furiously soever they may beat upon him and shake him, shall ever be able to overthrow and ruin him in his spiritual and eternal concerns; he will endure to the end, and be saved.

48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

49 But he that

49 But, on the contrary, whoever only gives my word

heareth and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth, against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

the hearing, and takes up with a bare profession of my name, without concerning himself any further; he is like a foolish, weak man, who, being to build an house, took no manner of care about its foundation; but set it upon loose or sandy ground, which had no strength or firmness in it; and as soon as ever any flood or storm beat upon it, down it fell to its utter ruin. So will it be with the hypocritical, false professor: He, having no solid support for his pretences to religion or his hopes of happiness, will never be able to stand in a day of great trial; but when the times run against him, and grievous persecutions befall him for the gospel's sake, he will prove a sad apostate in this world, and perish with a vengeance in the world to come.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How consistent are works of necessity and mercy with the sanctification of a sabbath to the Lord! and yet how vain are pleas from thence against a religious observance of the Lord's day! Christ's authority is a sufficient answer to the cavils of men; but is not to be stretched beyond his design. He knows all our thoughts, and sees when any one's eye is evil because his is good; and we, after his example, should never be afraid of doing good, how much soever others may be enraged at it, or how maliciously soever they may reproach us for it: It is our duty to attempt every thing that he commands us, in hope of strength from him to enable us to perform it; but we, like him, should give ourselves to prayer, especially when important affairs lie before us. How wonderful and effectual are Christ's works of power and mercy! They are blessed indeed, whom he blesses; but they must be dreadfully miserable that fall under his wo and curse. O what rich advantages will the saint have over the sinner in the other world; and what a wide difference is there in their rewards, how much soever the sinner may prosper and the saint may be afflicted here! And amidst all the trials of the present life, how beneficent and kind, beautiful and excellent, is the spirit and design of Christianity, which calls us to an imitation of our heavenly Father, in his most amiable and endearing perfections and operations, to forgive injuries, and to overcome evil with good! It is a great thing to be a Christian indeed; and what a reproach is it for persons of that character, not to do more than others toward God, and toward enemies as well as friends! What occasion have they for daily humiliation and repentance, on account of their continual fallings short of the glory of God; and what need of daily forgiveness for daily sins! Were we more sensible of our own defects, we should be less severe in our censures of others; but holy men are the fittest and most likely to be instruments of promoting holiness in those about them. It therefore highly concerns us to take heed whom we hear and follow, and how we teach and lead: Our chief ambition should be to copy after Christ; and if we are but conformed to him in his holiness, we shall not think much at being so in his sufferings. The great end of hearing his doctrine is, to receive it by faith, and practise it in evangelical obedience: For true religion begins in the change of a man's heart; and the only way of others judging concerning it, is by the fruits it produces in his life. If we indeed come to Christ, and receive him with such a faith as works by love, we rest on a sure foundation; and, whatsoever our temptations and difficulties may be, we shall hold on and hold out to our eternal safety and joy: But if we take up with hypocritical pretences, shews, and forms, without the power of religion, we shall certainly miscarry in a day of trial, to our present shame and everlasting ruin.

C H A P. VII.

Christ cures the centurion's servant, 1,—10. Raises the widow's son from the dead at Nain, 11,—18. John's messengers to Christ, and his answer to them, 19,—23. His account of John, and of his ministry, 24,—30. His reproof of the Jews for rejecting both John and himself, 31,—55. And his illustration of God's free forgiveness, with its effects, by the similitude of a forgiven debtor, 36,—50.

TEXT.

NOW when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this :

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

6 Then Jesus went

PARAPHRASE.

NOW when our Lord had finished the afore-mentioned discourse, which he delivered in a public manner to his disciples and abundance of other people then present, he went to *Capernaum*, the place of his most usual residence.

2 And at this city there was a servant of a certain *Roman* captain over an hundred soldiers, who was much esteemed by his master, and lay dangerously sick of a palsy, (*Mat. viii. 6.*) just upon the point of death, and past all hope of recovery by any human means.

3 And when the captain heard of Christ's miracles, and of his arrival at that place, he believed that this wonderful Person could heal his servant: But, being himself a *Gentile*, and a *Roman* officer, thought it might be too presumptuous to go in person and ask such a favour; and therefore, in testimony of his own humility, and great respect to Jesus, he got some of the *Jewish* elders, men of character, to go to him, and earnestly intreat that he would come to his house and cure his sick servant. (See the note on *Mat. viii. 5, 6.*)

4 Accordingly, when these messengers came to our blessed Lord, they were very urgent with him to gratify the centurion; and, to enforce his request, said for him, what he never would have said for himself, *viz.* That he was worthy, not only of regard from the *Jewish* nation, who were highly indebted to him; but even of Christ's kindest notice, as if he were obliged to shew him this favour:

5 For, say they, though he be a *Roman* officer, yet he has a great affection for us *Jews*, and for our religion †; and, in testimony of his faith in the God of *Israel*, he himself has, at his own proper cost and charges, built us a synagogue for divine worship.

6 Then Jesus, who loves to encourage, and grant the requests

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N O T E.

† He probably had acquainted himself with the law and the prophets whilst he lived among the *Jews*, and from thence had conceived a good opinion of them as the people of God; and his loving their nation

relates to his respect to them above all other nations, though it cannot be supposed that he had an esteem for every individual person among them.

† When

went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof;

† Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

§ For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers: and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

¶ When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith,

requests of, humble souls, readily went with the messengers, in order to his working the cure for which they came to him: And as soon as the centurion heard of his condescension and grace in coming with such a design toward his house, he still humbled himself yet more and more, and sent other friends to meet him in the way; and they, personating the centurion, said, Lord, It is too much for thee to give thyself the trouble of coming home to me: I am far from insisting upon this; for, whatever kind things others may say of me, I am a poor *Gentile* sinner, who cannot but think myself utterly unworthy of being honoured with thy presence in my house.

7 This thought prevented me, otherwise I had certainly waited in person upon thee; and I much more count myself unworthy of thy coming unto me: Besides, I am well satisfied that there is no need of thy stooping thus far to such a poor sinful wretch as I am, in order to thy answering my request; but that, wheresoever thou art, if thou wilt only give the word of command, my servant shall be as effectually recovered as if thou wert corporally present with him.

8 For even I, (*κεν γαρ εγω*) a mean, petty officer, have such authority over my band of soldiers, that, whenever I give the word of command, they readily obey me, and go and come, and do this and the other business, according to my appointment, whether I am present or not: How much more canst thou, who exercisest absolute power † in the way of thy working, like the sovereign Lord of sickness and health, life and death, secure obedience to thy orders; so that all distempers must come and go at thy command, whenever thou pleasest, and wherever thou art?

9 When Jesus heard these uncommon expressions of the centurion's faith, attended with such profound reverence and humility; though he could not but know it beforehand, being himself the author of it, he seemed as if he were mightily surprised at it, as people use to be at rare and unexpected events: And, turning to the company that were going along with him, he spake of it to them in terms of high admiration and applause, saying, to the centurion's honour, and the reproach of the *Jews*, I have not met with any instance of so remarkably eminent and humble a faith before, no, not among God's

N O T E.

† When we observe how the expressions of the centurion answer to what he may be supposed to have read, about the sovereign dominion that was peculiarly ascribed to the God of *Israel*, in ordering distempers to go and come at his pleasure, (*Deut. vii. 15. &*

xxxii. 39. & 1 Sam. ii. 6.) we can hardly forbear thinking that he believed in Christ, as a divine Person, who could send or take off distempers, in a sovereign manner, by his bare word, whenever he pleased.

† He

faith, no not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the bier, (and they that bare him stood still:) and he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15 And he that was dead, sat up, and began to speak: and he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up

God's own covenant-people the *Israelites* themselves, as has now been manifested by this *Gentile* officer, from whom there was little room to expect any at all.

10 And as Christ thus commended, so he graciously owned and answered, his faith, (*Mat. viii. 13.*); for as soon as the centurion's friends returned home, they found his servant perfectly recovered from his late dangerous disease.

11 As Jesus always went about doing good, so the next day he turned his course to a certain town called *Nain*, in the outward border of *Issachar* toward *Samaria*; and several of his disciples, with great multitudes of other people, accompanied him thither.

12 Now as he approached the entrance into the town, observe, a remarkable opportunity offered for displaying his divine power: He met with a dead man, whom the *Jews*, according to their custom, were carrying upon a bier to bury him in a place out of the city; and whom, being the only son of a widow, she, with a great company of her friends and neighbours, were attending to his funeral.

13 When therefore the Lord Jesus saw the tender mother bitterly lamenting the loss of her son †, he, of his own mere goodness, without any one's speaking to him, was moved with compassion towards her; and, resolving in himself what to do, spoke in a friendly manner to her, saying, Do not take on at this mournful rate for the death of your son.

14 Upon which they that carried the corpse made a stop to see what Jesus intended to do; and he, coming up, laid his hands upon the bier on which the dead body lay; and, with the majesty and authority of a God, said, Young man, I command thee to get up.

15 As soon as Jesus had uttered these words, the dead man, instantly rising, sat upon the bier, and began to speak, in the audience of the people, as if nothing had ailed him: And Christ restored him to his mother alive and well, that he might be a comfort to her, and that every one might be fully satisfied of his being truly raised from the dead.

16 And all the company were struck with awful fear and wonder, to see a dead man immediately recovered to life by a sovereign word of command: And, being convinced that nothing less than the power of God himself was in it, they broke out into thankful and admiring praises, saying, An extraordinary prophet, even the great

N O T E.

† He probably had been the chief support and comfort of her widowhood.

up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

18 And the disciples of John shewed him of all these things.

19 And John calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them unto Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, They said, John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits: and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

great Messiah himself, whom we expected, is come amongst us, (*John vi. 14.*); and God at length (*verses 4 and 5*) has looked upon his people *Israel* in much mercy, to redeem them from all their troubles. (*Chap. i. 68.*)

17 And this miracle was so evident †, unexceptionable, and divine, that it could not be concealed or denied; but the report of it was spread to Christ's honour, and became the subject of common conversation far and near, through the whole province of *Judea*, and all the countries on every side that bordered upon it.

18 Among others, there were some disciples of *John the Baptist*, who, seeming to be concerned for his credit, and envious of Christ's growing reputation, went to their master in prison, and told him all that they had seen or heard of this and other wonderful miracles, that they might have his opinion about him who wrought them.

19 And as *John* had all along directed his disciples to Christ, so he was desirous to have matters further cleared up and confirmed to them concerning him: And therefore, singling out two of them, who might be depended upon as faithful witnesses, he ordered them to go, as from himself, to Jesus, and ask him this plain question, Whether he was indeed the Messiah, (*ερχόμενος*) who, according to ancient prophecy, should come into the world; or whether they were to expect any other person under that character?

20 Accordingly, when the two messengers came to Jesus, they told him, *John the Baptist* had sent them to desire, that he would please to satisfy them, whether he was indeed the promised Messiah, whom they expected to come into the world; or whether they were still to wait for the appearance of some other?

21 And, at the very instant of their arrival, Jesus was working and went on to work many miracles, in healing all sorts of diseases, casting devils out of persons that were possessed, and restoring sight to the blind, and to do other acts of mercy and power that were prophesied of as to be particularly performed by the Messiah, (*Isa.*

N O T E.

† It is horrid and ridiculous trifling, instead of arguing, for any infidels to insinuate, without the least foundation, against the plainest matter of fact, as if this young man was not really dead, but was only in a sort of lethargy: For his mother and other relations and friends certainly believed him to be dead; and he being an only son, for whom there was so much lamentation, we may be sure they would never have attempted to bury him had there been the least ground of suspicion to the contrary. Besides, if the

notions that infidels have of Christ were true, how could he, coming by as a stranger, know better than all the young man's own acquaintance, that he was only in a lethargy? Or, if he fancied such a thing, how could he tell that he would awake out of it just at the minute when he should touch the bier and speak to him? And why should he, of his own accord, hazard his reputation so far, as to offer to raise him to life, upon such unlikely suppositions in his own mind?

† Christ

(Isa. xxxv. 5, 6. and lxi. 1.)

21 Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the gospel is preached.

22 Then, turning to the messengers, he ordered them to go back to John, and tell him all that they themselves had been eye and ear witnesses of, as certain proofs of his being the true Messiah; particularly, that he opened the eyes of the blind, made the lame to walk, cleansed lepers, restored the deaf to their hearing, and even raised the dead to life again; that he did all these in a sovereign, godlike manner, barely with a touch or a word, according to his own will; and that the gospel, for the confirmation of which he wrought these miracles, was preached to, and mostly received by, the poor of this world, and was heartily embraced by meek and humble souls.

23 And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me.

23 And to all this our Lord further added, He, and he only, is happy, and shall be so for ever, who is not prejudiced against me; nor rejects me by unbelief; nor is ashamed to own me, on account of my spiritual, self-denying, and holy doctrine, or the meanness of my appearance and followers, or the envy of mine enemies, and the like.

24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? a reed shaken with the wind?

24 When John's disciples were gone back to him † with this answer, Jesus began to speak to the common people with high commendation of him and of his ministry, saying, What end did ye propose to yourselves in flocking after John, when he preached and baptized in the desert? Did ye follow him for nothing? Or did ye go to see and hear a whimsical man talking backward and forward, in the testimony he gave to me? If so, this was mere trifling indeed, like running to see a reed shaken to and fro with the wind: But he certainly was another-guess person; his doctrine was important, and always the same; and you ought to have been steadfast in your adherence to it.

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live deli-

25 What was it then that ye followed him for? Did ye expect to meet with a man appearing in all the pomp, luxury, and gaieties of this world, that ye might gratify your curiosity with such a sight? Or did ye go to hear him, and to be baptized by him, in pursuit of temporal honours? This was as foolish, as it was unworthy: For a man of such a character, and promoting such views,

was

N O T E S.

† Christ did not speak the following things in the hearing of John's disciples, lest he should seem to flatter John, or to puff up his pride, or to compliment him into an adherence to his former testimony to himself. As, to avoid all suspicions of this kind, he held no correspondence with John in prison, nor did any thing to set him at

liberty; so, for like reasons, he might defer this commendation of him till the messengers were gone; and then deliver it to the people, to prevent all imaginations as if John were wavering in his former opinion, and had sent the two disciples on this errand for his own rather than their satisfaction about his being the Christ.

delicately, are in kings courts.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is he of whom it was written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God, is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John:

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken this generation? and to what are they like?

was to be expected in a royal court; and would have appeared in another sort of place, and made another sort of figure, than John did.

26 If then it was not with such expectations as these, What was it that ye went out after him for? Was it to hear a prophet of the Lord? This I know ye then thought him to be, and ye thought right: For I tell you, that he was indeed a prophet, sent from God to reveal his mind and will, and to tell you things to come; yea, he did more than any of the prophets that went before him, as he plainly pointed out the Messiah himself, and shewed him to the people as already present among them.

27 So great a man was John in his office, that he is the very person of whom the Jehovah of Israel said, (*Mal. iii. 1.*) *Behold, I will send my messenger before the Messiah's face, as his immediate harbinger, to tell the Jews of his being just at hand, and to turn their eyes toward him that they may receive him, (see the note on Mat. xi. 10.)* In this, John excelled all that went before him.

28 For I assure you, that, on this very account, none of the holy prophets, born of women, ever were so great and eminent in their light and work as John the Baptist: And yet, great as he was in what he saw and said concerning the Messiah, the meanest faithful minister in my kingdom shall know and preach more of me, and so shall be more excellent and honourable in his work and office, than John himself; and the weakest true believer, under the gospel-state, shall exceed him, in his knowledge of my person and office, righteousness and grace.

29 And, as his ministry was so eminent, great multitudes of the common people, yea, even some of the publicans themselves, men of the vilest characters, were so wrought upon by means of his preaching, that they justified God as righteous, and condemned themselves as sinners, when they heard John speak of the wrath to come; and they publicly owned him, and his doctrine, to be of God, by their so readily submitting to his baptism.

30 But the men of figure and learning and high conceit of themselves, such as the self-righteous Pharisees and the scribes, refused and despised John's doctrine and baptism, and thereby turned that dispensation of God's wisdom and grace toward them into an aggravation of their own guilt and condemnation.

31 Hereupon the Lord Jesus took occasion to say, What shall I compare the men of this perverse generation to? or by what similitude shall I represent them? It is hard to find a proper parallel to them.

32 They

31 They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced: we have mourned unto you, and ye have not wept.

32 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

33 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold, a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.

34 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

31 They are like some surly and awkward children at play in the streets, who are justly complained of by their companions for not acting their part in concert with them, saying, Whilst, in imitation of musicians at feasts and other joyful occasions, we played cheerful tunes to you, ye would not answer them with a dance or any other expressions of joy; and whilst, as if we were at a funeral, we gave you mournful tunes, ye would not weep or use any tokens of sorrow; but always did directly contrary to what ye were called to: Just so the men of this corrupt age, especially the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, do by *John the Baptist* and me, opposing us in every thing, and regarding us no more than if all that we said were a mere farce, to be treated with contempt and scorn.

32 For when *John*, like the children that acted the part of mourners, came preaching the doctrine of repentance, and led a retired, austere, and abstemious life, suitable to the nature and design of his work, they would not weep; but rejected both him and his doctrine, and loaded him with reproach, as if he were a melancholy man possessed by an evil spirit.

33 On the contrary, when I the Messiah, like the children that played cheerful tunes, came preaching the glad tidings of salvation; and, suitable to the nature of my joyful work, went into a free, open, and engaging conversation, eating and drinking sometimes with *Pharisees*, and at others with publicans and sinners, to do them good; these men likewise rejected me, and the gracious words that proceeded out of my mouth, and turned all into the vilest reflections upon me, as if I were a glutton and a drunkard, and an encourager of the most odious and infamous sinners. So horribly perverse were they, notwithstanding all that evidently appeared, or could be urged, to the contrary.

34 But the wisdom of God in these different methods of treating and trying them, and in the doctrines preached by *John* and me for the recovery of lost sinners; and the wisdom of falling in with these doctrines, to the acknowledgment of me as the personal † Wisdom of God, (*Prov. viii.*); is owned, and heartily approved of, by all true believers; who are taught of God, and made wise to salvation; and are standing instances of his wisdom, and witnesses to it, in its holy, powerful, and saving effects upon them; and who will at last reap its rich

NOTES.

† As wisdom will bear all these senses, and it is difficult to fix on one to the exclusion of the rest, I have, as often on like occasions, taken them all into the paraphrase.

rich advantages, to the glory of God, and their own eternal happiness.

36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster-box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him, saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was

36 After this †, a certain *Pharisee*, whose name was *Simon*, (ver. 40.) courteously invited Christ to take a meal at his house; and, as he sought all opportunities of doing good, and was an example of civility as well as holiness, he, accepting the invitation, went home with the *Pharisee*, and sat down to eat.

37 And whilst he was at table, behold, a certain woman, who had been notorious for her wickedness, being informed that Jesus was gone to the *Pharisee's* house to refresh himself, came thither, bringing an alabaster-box of rich and costly ointment, which she designed to lay out upon him; she being a penitent believer, whose heart was full of respect and affection to him.

38 And as he was sitting at table, according to the usual manner of the *Jews*, in a leaning posture, with his legs thrust out behind; she, placing herself at his back, fell a weeping so plentifully as to drop her tears upon his feet, and then wiped them with her own hair the chief ornament of her head, kissed them most affectionately, and suppled and perfumed them with the ointment; hereby testifying her deep humility and sorrow of heart for her former iniquities, her ardent love to Christ, and desire of his favour, and her great willingness to do her utmost to honour and serve him.

39 But (s.) when the *Pharisee*, who had invited him, saw what this woman did, he, knowing her former base character, was highly offended at it, thinking with himself, according to the superstitious opinions of his sect, Surely if this Jesus were really such a prophet of the Lord as he professes to be, he could not be a stranger to this woman's infamous character, and to the vicious course of life that she has led; and would not have suffered her so much as to touch him, much less to handle, wipe, kiss, and anoint his feet, lest he should be defiled thereby; for she certainly is a very scandalous wretch.

40 Then Jesus, knowing his thoughts as perfectly as if he had spoken them out, and designing to return an answer to them, said to him, *Simon*, I have a case to lay before you. The *Pharisee* immediately replied, Pray, sir, go on; I am ready to hear you.

41 Jesus then proceeded to propose, and ask his thoughts

N O T E S.

† That this history, and one like it in *Mat.* xxvi. 7. & *Mark* xiv. 3. were not the same, seems very evident: Because, after this, *Jesus went through every city and village preaching*, &c. (chap. viii. 1.); whereas after that,

which was but six days before his last passover, (*John* xiii. 1. see the note on *Mat.* xxvi. 6, 7.) he continued in *Bethany* and *Jerusalem*, (*Mark* xi. 8.) See *Whitby* on the place.

† This

a certain creditor, which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

41 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?

42 Simon answered and said, I suppose, that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

43 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

44 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

45 Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

thoughts upon, the following parable, saying, A certain man was creditor to two other persons, who had run in debt to him for considerable sums of money; but one of them owed him ten times as much as the other.

42 And when they were both so very poor, that neither of them had any thing left toward discharging his own debt, the creditor in his great goodness and compassion freely forgave each of them the whole: Now what I desire of you is, to tell me freely, which of these two you apprehend will have the greatest affection for his generous benefactor, and think himself most obliged to testify his gratitude to him.

43 The *Pharisee*, not perceiving what Christ aimed at, readily answered, It is plain to me, that the man to whom the greatest debt was forgiven will be most sensibly affected with the exceeding kindness of his creditor, and will love him best. Jesus replied, You are certainly in the right, and your answer is undeniably just.

44 Then turning and pointing to the woman, at whom the *Pharisee* had taken offence, Jesus said to him, *Simon*, apply your answer to the case of this woman. Do you look with wonder, and with a carping eye, at what she has done? It is because you have not such a sense of the greatness of your sins, and of the endearing mercy of forgiveness, as she has, whose love has far surpassed your's. You, who think yourself more holy than your neighbours, have indeed invited me with civility to your house; but have been wanting, even in the usual tokens of respect † to invited and acceptable guests: But she, who looks upon herself as the chief of sinners, has abounded and exceeded in them all. You have not so much as given me a little water to wash my feet, nor a towel to wipe them: But she has washed my feet, not with common water, but with her own affectionate and penitential tears, and has used the very hairs of her head as a towel to wipe them.

45 You, at my entrance into your house, did not so much as give me the usual salutation of friendship in a kiss: But this woman, whom you despise and are offended at, has been in a manner incessantly kissing my feet over and over again, in token of her humility and love.

46 You have not bestowed upon me so much as common oil, to anoint my head, in token of your respect: But this woman, who came hither to pay me honour, has anointed even my feet, and that with precious ointment,

N O T E.

† This intimates that it was customary with the Jews to shew respect and kindness to their welcome guests, by saluting them with a kiss, by waiting and wiping their feet, and anointing their heads with oil or some fine ointment.

ment, as thinking nothing too much to be done for me, or too costly to be bestowed upon me.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

47 Now the reason of this difference between her behaviour and yours toward me, lies in the different sense ye respectively have of the greatness of your sins, and of the necessity, worth, and obligation of a full and free pardon. I therefore tell you, These expressions of her love and gratitude are a plain evidence, that, whatsoever she has been, her many sins are now graciously forgiven her; † for she has discovered a most uncommon affection, like one melted with the thoughts of her high obligation to me for the remission of her uncommon crimes: But, on the other hand, one who, like you, thinks lightly of his sins, and imagines that he has merit enough of his own, very near, if not entirely, to quit scores, will have little affection for me, and little sense of his obligations to me; but will treat me in a cold and indifferent manner, as you have done.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

48 Then directing his words immediately to the woman herself, that he might comfort her against the distress of her own spirit, and against the *Pharisees* towns and censures, he spoke with wonderful endearment and authority to her, saying, Thy sins, many and great as they have been, are all freely remitted to thee.

49 And they that sat at meat with him, began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

49 At the hearing of this, they that sat at table with him were still more offended, and presently thought in their own minds, and began to say privately among themselves, (*is savoris*.) What must we think of this man, who not only admits such a vile wretch to handle and kiss his feet; but likewise pretends thus absolutely to assume to himself the unalienable prerogative of God, in forgiving sins.

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace.

50 But (*sc*) he nevertheless persisted in assuring the woman of her pardon, saying, Thou art brought into a state of salvation, to the complete remission of all thy sins, through faith in me; do not be discouraged, but go home, rejoicing in a sense of the abundant grace which I have extended to thee.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How unreasonable are the objections of infidelity against Christ in his divine and saving characters, which he has so evidently demonstrated in healing all manner of diseases, raising the dead, and pardoning sins, with all the efficacy and authority of a God! How tender are his compassions to the afflicted and destitute; and how

N O T E.

† The parable, of which this is the application, plainly shews, that her *loving much* is mentioned, not as the cause or reason, but as the effect and evidence, of her being forgiven, and of her apprehensions a-

bout it. And in this manner the particle *for* is often used, as particularly in *Hos. ix. 15.* where God says of *Ephraim*, *All their wickedness is in Gilgal: for there I hated them.*

how sovereign, free, and plenteous, is his mercy to all sorts of sinners, in the forgiveness of multiplied and aggravated iniquities! What high and exalting thoughts then should we have of him! what abasing thoughts of ourselves before him! and what pleasure should we take in doing good, on all occasions, after his example! It is surely matter of great importance for us to inquire after Christ, that we may know who and what he is, and may be in love with him, and not prejudiced against him; and he is ever ready to instruct and satisfy humble and inquiring souls, who should never think the worse of him, or of his religion, whatever reproaches, losses, or difficulties, they may suffer for his sake, or how much faster others may be offended at him, and may perversely set themselves against him. The meek he will teach his way, that they may be witnesses for God and religion, and may be made wise unto salvation; while self-righteous and self-sufficient persons are in the greatest danger of being left to reject God's counsel, to their own confusion! And O what a wonderful change does grace make upon a sinner's heart and life, as well as upon his state before God, in the full remission of all his sins through faith in the Lord Jesus! what great humility, relents, and godly sorrow for sin! what ardent love to Christ, and earnest desires to serve and honour him, will a sense of great forgiveness inspire us with! And if he says to any of us, "Your sins are pardoned," we may well go on our way rejoicing.

C H A P. VIII.

Christ preaches in several places, 1,—4. His parable of the sower, with its explication, 5,—15. His parable of the lighted candle, 16,—18. The high account he makes of his true disciples, as his nearest relations, 19,—22. He lays a storm at sea, 23,—25. He casts a legion of devils out of a man, and suffers them to enter a herd of swine, 26,—36. He is rejected by the Gadarenes, 37,—40. He cures a bloody-flux, and raises Jairus's daughter from the dead, 41,—56.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching, and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him;

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the things before-mentioned, Jesus travelled about from place to place, through many cities, towns and villages, taking indefatigable pains in publishing and enforcing among the people the best news that ever was brought to sinners, relating to their salvation through faith in him, who came to set up a kingdom of grace in this world, in order to his training up subjects for the kingdom of glory in the world to come: And the twelve disciples, whom he had chosen to be apostles, usually accompanied him, as his domestics, wherever he went.

a And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

2 And besides these more stated attendants, there were several women of considerable circumstances in the world, who, as they had opportunities, followed him, to hear and converse with him, they having found mercy in his casting devils out of some, and curing the diseases of others of them, as well as in enlightening and changing their minds and hearts. One of these was the remarkable *Mary Magdalene*, whom he had in a miraculous way delivered from the power of many evil spirits that had taken possession of her.

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

3 There was also a woman, of no mean figure, whose name was *Joanna*, and who was the wife of *Chuza* a steward or officer in *Herod's* court; and another woman, named *Susanna*; with several others, which accompanied Jesus, not as his domestics that used to be in the same house with him, but as friends and admirers of him and his doctrine: And as he humbled himself so low as to need assistances from others, unless he would be continually working miracles to support himself and the apostles his family; so these good women, out of their great respect, would not suffer him to be burdensome to strangers, but cheerfully supplied him at their own expence.

4 And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:

4 And one day, when abundance of people were come together from all the neighbouring cities, towns and villages, to hear him, he represented the nature of the gospel-dispensation to them by the following similitude, among others. (See the note on *Mat. xiii. 3.*)

5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

5 "A certain husbandman (said he) went forth to sow corn in his field; and, as he was casting his seed, some of the grains fell upon a hard beaten path, and, not being covered with mould, they were either trod to pieces by passengers, or picked up by the birds:"—Thereby meaning, that whilst he or any of his servants are preaching the gospel to all sorts of people, some of them are so careless, stupid, and hardened in their iniquities, and Satan has such power over them, that it makes no manner of impression upon them.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

6 "Other parts of the seed fell upon a bed of stones, covered over with only a very thin lay of earth, which gave it an opportunity of springing up presently; but it withered away for want of a sufficient depth in the ground, and moisture enough to cherish the roots:"—Thereby meaning, that others hear the word with some stirrings in their affections; but it having not entered into their hearts, and worked effectually there, a day of persecution and temptation soon blasts and destroys all.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

7 "Other grains were scattered among weeds and thorns, and began to spring up together with them; but these soon got head of the corn, overtopped and choked it, so that it came to nothing:"—Thereby meaning, that other hearers of the gospel go still further, under the power of strong convictions, in some hasty resolutions for the present; and yet the business, cares, possessions, and pleasures of life, have such a superior power over them as to stifle all again.

8 And other fell on good ground: and sprang up, and bare

8 "But there were some other parts of the seed that fell into a good sort of earth, where it sprang up, grew, and

bare fruit an hundred fold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

and thrived, and produced a very large crop, some of it to an hundred-fold increase:”—Thereby meaning, that there are other hearers who receive the truth in the love of it into their very hearts, they being seasoned with grace; and it becomes exceeding fruitful in their lives. And, at the close, Jesus, to awaken the people's inquiry into the meaning and importance of the parable, said, Whosoever is capable and desirous of being instructed in things that concern his own salvation, let him seriously consider what I have been saying.

9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

9 Our Lord having delivered this parable, as he did several others, without explaining it to the people; the apostles, and some of his other disciples, took an opportunity, when he was alone, to desire that he would please to open to them what he meant by it. (*Mark iv. 10.*)

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

10 He answering told them, That God, in his distinguishing favour, had given them an heart to desire, seek after, and understand, the great things of the gospel-kingdom, pertaining to his glory and their own salvation, which were all entire secrets till he came to reveal them, and are still strange things to carnal and unbelieving hearts that are prejudiced against them and cannot see their true excellence and glory, and which continue to be incomprehensible in some respects even to those that are enlightened by his spirit as well as by his word: But, said he, I represented these things to others only in a similitude, without explaining it, that as, through wilful perverseness and obstinacy, they shut their eyes and harden their hearts against my plainer instructions, they may be righteously left under the power of their chosen stupidity and blindness; and so the awful prophecy (*Isa. lxix. 9.*) may be fulfilled in them, as a people that see and hear the most plain and important truths in the ministry of the word, and yet do not truly discern them nor desire to be acquainted with them.

11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

11 Then he explained the parable to his disciples, saying, The seed sown represented the doctrines of the gospel, which the great Prophet of the church came forth to preach, in his personal ministry, and by the ministry of his servants.

12 Those by the way-side, are they that hear: then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

12 The persons meant by the hard beaten path, into which the seed did not enter, were those hearers of the gospel upon whom it makes no good impression through the hardness of their hearts; so that Satan obtains his will upon them, and effectually deprives them of all benefit by what they hear, turning off their thoughts from it, lest it should prove the means of their being brought to believe to the saving of their souls.

13 They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 And that which fall among thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

16 No man when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

13 The persons signified by the rocky ground, on which the corn sprang up at first, but soon withered for want of depth and moisture to cherish the root, were those hearers that attend to the word; and, having starts of joyous affections under it, take up some sudden resolutions to comply with it; but, for want of a principle of grace in their hearts, as soon as temptations, reproaches, and sufferings for the gospel, befall them, they are disheartened, and turn apostates.

14 And the persons described by the ground in which thorns and weeds sprang up with the corn and choked it, were such as, under the hearing of the word, have promising appearances of receiving the truth in the love of it; but as soon as they return again to the affairs of this present life, their superior attachment to its business and hurries, riches and pleasures, overpower their concern about their souls, so that nothing is effectually brought to pass for God's glory and their own salvation.

15 But he told them, that the persons represented by the good soil, which produced a plentiful harvest, were those hearers, whose hearts, being thoroughly changed by the grace of God, receive the doctrine of the gospel with a sincere faith, and upright desire of improving it and profiting by it to all the practical purposes for which it is designed; and, having thus received it, they retain it, prize it, and make frequent reflections upon it, that it may have its proper influence upon them, even after the sensible joy is gone which they had in hearing it; and so they habitually and perseveringly bring forth fruits of righteousness to God in great abundance, and that with a holy calmness and fortitude of spirit under all the tribulations and persecutions they may meet with for their holy profession.

16 Christ, having thus clearly and fully explained all these things to his disciples, proceeded to intimate their duty, as to spreading abroad that light to others, in their lives and preaching, which they had received, or might further receive, from him; saying, As a man never uses to light a candle with a design to conceal or hide it under a bushel, or in any obscure place where it cannot be seen; but sets it up visibly in a candlestick, that such as come into the room may have the benefit of its light: So I have given you these instructions, not that ye should smother them in your own bosoms, or keep them to yourselves; but that ye may communicate them, both by word and example, on all proper occasions, to others, for their knowledge and practice, to the glory of God and their salvation.

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid that shall not be known and come abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

19 Then came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

20 And it was told him by certain, which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

17 For whatsoever I secretly communicate in my instructions to you, must hereafter be publicly preached by you, wherever ye go; and nothing that I now speak with obscurity, under the covert of unexplained similitudes, shall be always concealed; but ye in due time must publish it, with the greatest freedom and plainness, to the whole world.

18 As ever therefore ye would dread answering for the contrary another day, when every secret thing shall be brought into judgment, take heed in what manner, and to what purposes, ye hear the great things of my gospel; for he that heartily receives the truth, and faithfully improves his light to the good of others, shall have a still further increase of understanding and assistances for his own and their advantage; but whosoever * thinks lightly of the truth, and do not concern himself about making a right use of it, for the profiting of others, shall lose even the good notions he before had, and be left to give them up for their opposite errors, being neither established in them, nor savingly benefited by them, as before he might seem to have been.

19 At another time, as Jesus was preaching in an house, and was surrounded with a vast multitude of people, (*Mark iii. 30, 31.*) his mother, and others of his nearest kindred, (see the note on *Matth. xii. 46.*) came thither to speak with him; but could not get near enough, the crowd being so very great.

20 Then some of the company informed him, that his mother, with several other relations, who were called his brethren, (see the note on *Matth. xii. 46.*) were waiting abroad, and wanted to change a few words with him.

21 But (4) instead of answering them directly, he, in his usual way of giving things a spiritual turn, took that occasion to express the affection he bore to his true disciples; and, pointing to them, said, These who receive and yield themselves up unto my divine teaching, are nearer and dearer to me than any relations according to the flesh; and whilst I am engaged in my heavenly Father's work, for his glory and their spiritual benefit, I cannot suffer myself to be interrupted by the respect that I owe to an earthly parent, or any other relation in the other world. (See the note on *Mark iii. 34.*)

22 And

N O T E.

* Our Lord here speaks not of special saving grace, but of spiritual gifts, and particularly of the knowledge of the truth which

we receive from him, that we might communicate it to others, as appears from the whole scope of the discourse.

22 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples, and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed, he fell asleep, and there came down a storm of wind on the lake, and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he awoke, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water; and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? and they being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this; for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

26 And they arrived at the country of the Ga-

22 And (and) on another occasion, when Jesus had been much employed in preaching and working miracles, and great numbers crowded about him, (*Mark* iv. 35, 36.) he took boat with his disciples, and ordered them to pass over the lake of *Gennesareth* to the opposite shore; accordingly they put off, and steered their course thither, at his command.

23 But while they were making the best of their way, he, as a man of like bodily infirmity with ourselves, having been fatigued by labours, lay down with his head upon a pillow, and fell fast asleep, (see the note on *Matth.* viii. 20.); and, as he was sleeping, there arose a terrible storm of wind, which all on a sudden caused such a swelling sea, that the boat was almost filled with water, and in the utmost danger of being sunk.

24 Then the disciples ran to him in a great fright; and, waking him, cried out, Lord, have compassion upon us, arise speedily for our help, we are this moment just on the point of being lost: And they no sooner cast themselves upon his care in their distress, but he got up, and, with the majesty of a God, charged the wind to cease, and the waves to rage no more, and immediately they obeyed their sovereign Lord: The wind was calm, and the waters became smooth and still.

25 And having thus wrought salvation for them, he reproved them for their unbelief, saying, Where was your dependance upon my power and goodness, after all the miraculous proofs I have given of them? What, did ye think that I was not able to help you, or had no care or concern for you, because I was asleep? Could not ye remember, that the great Watchman of *Israel* neither slumbers nor sleeps? Or did ye consider me as no more than a man, that ye so shamefully distrusted my care? upon which they were filled with awful reverence and amazement at their wonderful deliverance, and with confusion and shame for the diffidence and the terror that they had so sinfully given way to; and they said one to another, what sort of person is this! surely he must be more than a mere man; for he has acted the part of the sovereign Lord of universal nature, and even the winds and waves were forced, in an instant, to stop their furious course at his command.

26 Soon after this, they got safe to the shore for which they were bound, and which lay in the country

Gadarenes, which is over-against Galilee.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city, a certain man which had devils long time, and wore no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment me not.

29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him; and he was kept bound with chains, and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? and he said, Legion; because

of the *Gadarenes* *, a heathen land, on the other side of the lake opposite to *Galilee*.

27 And upon Christ's landing there, he met with a man, (see the note on *Mark* v. 6.) who was formerly (*EX TUNC VASAC*) an inhabitant of an adjacent town, but had been a great while so miserably possessed and harassed by devils, that he ran about like a furious mad-man, would keep no clothes upon his back, nor dwell in any house; but continually roved through desolate places, among the sepulchres of the dead, to the terror of all who passed that way.

28 When this poor miserable wretch set his eyes upon Jesus, he immediately roared out, under the power of the indwelling devil; and, running toward our Lord, threw himself down at his feet, and the evil spirit, speaking in the man, cried out with a loud and hideous voice, being forced by a superior power to express his own terror, saying, O thou Jesus, whom I know to be the Son of the most high God, I dread thy power, and desire to have nothing to do with thee; but surely the time for my full torments is not yet come, I therefore earnestly beg thou wouldst not inflict them upon me now.

29 He said this because Christ had already commanded him to depart † from the man, whom he had so long and so cruelly possessed: For this vile spirit had often thrown him into such an ungovernable fury, that though several attempts were made to fasten him down, and secure him in chains and fetters, he was too strong to be held by them, and, breaking loose, was hurried away into the most melancholy and desolate part of the country.

30 Then, that the standers-by might have the more affecting thoughts of this poor man's misery, and of the greatness of Christ's power in delivering him, he ordered the evil spirit to tell him his name? in reply to which he said, It was *Legion*, thereby meaning, that

not

N O T E S.

* In *Matth.* viii. 28. it is called the country of the *Gergesens*, whose inhabitants some suppose were the ancient *Girgashites*, mentioned in *Deut.* vii. 1. This country of the *Gergesens* included that of the *Gadarenes*: And so it appears that the place where Christ landed was in that part which was called the country of the *Gadarenes*.

† As our Lord's casting out devils is often distinguished from his healing diseases; so there are several things mentioned in the story of this man, that cannot be accounted for by any mere distemper whatsoever,

nor made common sense of, without supposing him to be possessed of the devil: As particularly, when he says his name is *Legion*, and expostulates with Christ for coming to torment them before their time; and when they intreated that they might not be sent out of that country, and asked his leave to enter into the swine, and, upon permission obtained, actually entered into them; nor can we reasonably suppose that any distemper could add such strength to this man, that no chains or fetters could bind him. See the note on *Matth.* iv. 24.

cause many devils were entered into him.

31 And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep.

32 And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain; and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw it, told them by what

not one only, but a great many devils were at that time in possession of the man, under one of their chiefs. (See the note on *Mark* v. 9.)

31 Hereupon the whole legion, finding that they could not resist Christ's power, joined in their request, that, upon casting them out of this man, he would not send them back to hell, to be confined in the bottomless pit *; but (*Mark* v. 10.) would suffer them to continue in the country of the *Gadarenes*, where they had hitherto ruled, with great power.

32 And as there was at that time a great herd, of about two thousand swine, grazing upon a neighbouring hill by the sea-side, the devils, knowing that they could do nothing without Christ's leave, earnestly begged him to permit their taking possession of that herd: And he suffered them to enter into the swine, and do their worst against them, as a righteous punishment upon some, and as a just and merciful rebuke and trial to others of that country. (See the note on *Matth.* viii. 32.)

33 No sooner had our Lord ordered the devils to go out of the man, without laying any further restraint upon them, but they, acting according to their own vile malicious temper, went directly and took possession of the whole herd of swine; upon which they were all immediately seized with a phrenzy, and ran furiously down a precipice into the sea of *Galilee*, where they were suffocated and lost.

34 The swine-herds seeing this, were terribly affrighted at it, and ran with all haste to tell it, as a piece of wonderful news to all the people they could meet with in the neighbouring city and country, wherever they went.

35 Which when the people heard, their curiosity and concern carried them out to see what truth there was in the strange report that had been made to them; and coming to the place where Jesus was, they saw him, and the man whom he had dispossessed of the infernal legion, sitting at his feet, regularly clothed, rational, composed and calm in his mind like other men: And they who before had often seen him running about naked, raving, and gathing himself, now, beholding such a great and sudden alteration in him, were struck with awful amazement.

36 And some, who saw all that had passed from the beginning, told them how Jesus had restored him to his

N O T E.

* Thus the accuracy, the expression here used, is rendered, into the bottomless pit. Rev. xx. 3.

what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about, besought him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now the man out of whom the devils were departed, besought him that he might be with him: but Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city, how great things Jesus had done unto him.

40 And it came to pass, that when Jesus was returned, the people

his senses, by casting out the devils that before had possessed him, and how he had permitted those evil spirits to fulfil their desire of entering into the swine, upon which they were hurried down the hill into the sea, where they were all drowned.

37 The *Gadarenes*, having heard the whole story, and loving their swine and their sins more than Christ and their own souls, were more afraid of him on account of their loss by the devils, under his permission, than pleased with the good he had done, and was capable of still further doing among them; and therefore, instead of desiring him to stay with them, that he might restrain the powers of darkness from doing them any further mischief, and might save them from their sins, and from the wrath of God, they all importuned him to depart from their country, that they might have nothing more to do with him; and he gave them up to their own choice, and going aboard a vessel, returned back over the sea of *Galilee*.

38, 39 But (¹) the man out of whom the devils were cast, earnestly begged that he might go along with Jesus, and so continuing under his gracious care, might be secured against their invisible, as well as visible power over him, might receive instructions about a still better salvation, and might go away from that wicked people, who would not consent that Christ should stay with them: However, Jesus would not allow of his attending him, lest it should look like ostentation and vain-glory; but ordered him to go home, and tell his countrymen * and acquaintance what a wonderful deliverance God had wrought for him, that they might be turned from idols to serve the living and true God: Accordingly he obeyed Christ's command; and returning home, took all opportunities of relating to every one he met with, in *Gadara*, and the rest of the cities in *Decapolis*, (see the note on *Mark* v. 20.) what a gracious, miraculous, and god-like deliverance Jesus had wrought for him, which was in effect the same as if he had said, Which God had wrought for him, because Jesus, who worked it by his own power, was indeed the true God.

40 Now upon the return of Jesus back to the other side of the sea of *Galilee*, the people, who were still waiting there, in hope of his coming to them again, were

N O T E.

* When our Lord wrought wonderful works in *Judea*, he usually ordered that they should not be divulged, because he would not needlessly provoke the *scribes* and *Pha-*

risees, nor seem to seek his own glory; but having wrought one among the heathens, he ordered it to be published, as the means of bringing others to believe in him.

ple gladly received him; for they were all waiting for him.

41 And behold there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue; and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a-dying. (But as he went, the people thronged him.)

43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

44 Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment; and immediately her issue of blood stanch'd,

45 And Jesus said, Who touch'd me? When all denied, Peter, and they that were with him, said, Master, the multitude throng thee, and press thee, and sayest thou

were exceeding glad to see him, and received him joyfully.

41 And whilst he continued in these parts, observe a very rare instance of a great man's faith in him, and public acknowledgment of him! *Jairus*, a noted person, and a ruler of the synagogue, hearing of Jesus, came to him; and prostrating himself before him, in the presence of all the people, humbly and earnestly begged, that he would please to go home with him and heal his child. (See the notes on *chap.* xiii. 14. and *Matth.* ix. 18.)

42 For his only daughter, of about twelve years old, was so exceeding weak, that when he left her, she lay at the very point of death; and as Jesus refused none that came to him with faith in his power and goodness, he readily consented to go along with this ruler, a great crowd of people accompanying him, some out of curiosity, and others out of affection to him.

43, 44 And as he was walking toward the house, there was a certain woman who had been sorely afflicted with a bloody-flux, for twelve years past, and had impoverished herself by her great expence in applying to physicians for relief, and all in vain, she growing rather worse than better, (*Mark* v. 26.); this woman had a mind to try for a cure from Jesus, who she believed was able to heal her, and certainly would do it, if she could but get so near him as to touch any part of his clothes, (*Matth.* ix. 21.): And therefore, with great modesty, humility, and privacy, she crept behind him in the crowd, and, without any of the company's observing her, touched the hem of his garment, in expectation of a cure by that means; and it was done for her according to her faith, she immediately finding a wonderful alteration in herself to a perfect recovery.

45 But Jesus knowing all that had pass'd, and designing to bring it to light, for the manifestation of his own and his Father's glory, for the encouragement of *Jairus's* faith, in what he was about to do for him, and for the comfort of this poor woman, who seemed to have stolen a cure from him, turned himself about and asked, Who had touch'd him, meaning with a design of deriving virtue from him? And when the people that were nearest him generally denied that any of them had done it, *Peter*, and some others of his disciples, supposing that he spoke of barely touching him, replied, Master, it is unavoidable, but that, in such a crowd, some or other of the people should come too near,

thou, Who touch-
ed me?

46 And Jesus
said, Somebody
hath touched me;
for I perceive that
virtue is gone out
of me.

47 And when
the woman saw
that she was not
hid, she came
trembling, and
falling down be-
fore him, she de-
clared unto him
before all the
people, for what
cure she had
touched him, and
how she was heal-
ed immediately.

48 And he said
unto her, Daugh-
ter, be of good
comfort; thy
faith hath made
thee whole; go
in peace.)

49 While he
yet spake, there
cometh one from
the ruler of the
synagogue's house,
saying to him,
Thy daughter is
dead; trouble not
the Master.

50 But when
Jesus heard it,
he answered him,
saying, Fear not;
believe only, and
she shall be made
whole.

51 And when
he came into the
house, he suffered
no man to go in,
save Peter, and
James,

near, and be thrust upon thee; we wonder therefore
that thou shouldst ask, Who touched me?

46 But (st) Jesus not willing to have the matter
stilled, said, with great earnestness, One of the com-
pany I am sure has touched me, out of the ordinary
way, with a design of getting a private cure from me;
for I am no stranger to the power that is gone forth
from my person, who have knowingly and willingly
communicated virtue for healing. (See the note on
Mark v. 30.)

47 Then the woman, finding that she could no long-
er be concealed, came trembling for fear of a rebuke;
and prostrating herself at his feet in the humblest man-
ner, made an open declaration, in the presence of the
whole multitude, that she had indeed touched him, in
hope of a cure from him, and that she had not failed
of her hope, but instantly found herself restored to
perfect health, though her case had been all along so
desperate before.

48 And as she thus put herself into Christ's hands,
to do with her what might further seem good in his
sight, he, to take off her fears, said, in the most ten-
der and affectionate manner, Daughter, let thy heart
rejoice in my favour and love; thy faith, which broke
through all difficulties and discouragements to honour
and derive mercy from me, has been owned and ho-
noured by me, to the healing of thy grievous disease:
Go home with satisfaction in thine own mind, and
fear no evil: I have blessed thee, and thou shalt be
blessed.

49 Whilst he was speaking in this comfortable man-
ner to her, messengers came to *Jairus*, having been
sent from his house, to tell him that his daughter was
actually dead, and that therefore it was now too late,
and would be to no manner of purpose, to give the
great Master of *Israel* the trouble of coming to her, or
to make any further applications to him about her.

50 But when Jesus heard this message, and saw how
the young damsel's father was affected with it, he
spoke comfortably to him, saying, Let not your heart
be troubled, neither be afraid, as if there were now
no hope; only believe that I am gracious and able to
raise her even from the dead, and she shall live and do
well.

51 And they going still forward till they came to
the house, Jesus, to avoid ostentation, ordered the
multitude to withdraw, and permitted no person to go
in with him, except three of his disciples, *viz. Peter,*
James,

James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 And all wept and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway; and he commanded to give her meat.

56 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

James, and John, and the parents of the child, that they, being present, might be eye-witnesses of the miracle he designed to perform.

52 At his entering into the room where the young creature lay, he found a company of people all in tears, bitterly lamenting her death, and preparing for her funeral: But he, applying himself to these busy mourners, said, There is no need of all this hurry and sorrow; for she is not so dead as to require preparations for her interment; but her present condition is rather to be accounted a sleep than a death, because she shall presently awake out of it in perfect health, as one does out of sleep.

53 But they being as sure as they could be of any such thing, that she was really dead, laughed at him with great derision, for talking so contrary to the plainest evidence, and, as they imagined, at such a whimsical rate.

54 However, he clearing the room of all this company, and having with him only the three fore-mentioned disciples, and the father and mother of the child, went up, and taking her by the hand, spoke to her with divine majesty and power, saying, Young damsel, I will, and command thee to get up.

55 And these words were attended with such vital energy, that her soul immediately returned into her body again, and she instantly got up in perfect health and strength, as if she had only awaked out of a comfortable and refreshing sleep; and to shew that she was raised to the same animal life which she had enjoyed before, and was as capable of feeding as if she had never been sick, he ordered that something should be given her to eat.

56 And her father and mother were filled with great amazement and joy at this miraculous recovery of their daughter, by a resurrection from the dead: But Jesus, not seeking his own glory, commanded them not to make any public noise of what he had done; and yet the fame of this miracle soon spread abroad. (*Matth. ix. 26.*)

RECOLLECTIONS.

O the deep humiliation and condescension of our blessed Lord, that he should stand in need of assistance, and accept of supplies, from such as had been the greatest of sinners! All sorts of persons were effectually wrought upon by the gospel, which brought forth fruit, more or less, in them severally; and wherever it fails of success, it is not from any defect in the good seed of the word, but from the criminal disorder of people's own hearts, which either resists its impression upon them, or soon loses it, through the subtilty of Satan, and the temptations of this world. With what serious concern should we seek grace to make

make our hearts good, and take heed how we hear, and how we improve our light for the benefit of others, as well as of our own souls! They that cordially embrace the gospel, are as dear to Christ as the nearest relations on earth can be to one another; and though he may suffer them to meet with many a threatening and surprising storm, yet his presence is their security and relief in all their troubles, frights, and dangers; and they ought to fly to him, trust in him, and adore him, as their God and Saviour, who is never unmindful of them, though sometimes, like one asleep, he may seem to neglect them.—But O what a malicious, cruel, and hateful enemy is Satan! Were he to have his will of us, he would make us the most miserable of all creatures; and none but Christ can rescue us out of his hand, or lay him under restraints: But he has such a complete dominion over him, that he can do it whenever he pleases. How foolish and wicked then are they who prefer any thing in this world to Christ, and who, under terrible apprehensions of sin and danger, have hard thoughts of him, and put him away from themselves! And how just is it in him to take them at their word and choice! But how wise and happy are they, who gladly receive him, and depend upon him; whose faith presses toward him through all discouragements and apprehensions of their own unworthiness! He is willing to receive, help, and save them; and, having his warrant for our faith, we should think that nothing can be too great for him to do for us. How like a God, did he, by virtue in himself, heal diseases, cast out devils, raise the dead, and call back their departed souls to animate their bodies again! And how should we glorify him, who sought not his own glory! In whatever he commands we should readily obey him, how self-denying soever it may be so to do. But, as gracious souls cannot but wish to be as near to Jesus as possible, and to abide with him, how desirable is it to be admitted to immediate attendances on him, when the circumstances of things admit of it! And how great is the blessedness of that world, where nothing will hinder our being ever with the Lord!

C H A P. IX.

Jesus sends forth the twelve apostles, 1,—6. Herod's perplexing thoughts about him, and desire to see him, 7,—9. He miraculously feeds five thousand, 10,—17. His discourse with his disciples concerning himself, and following him, 18,—27. His transfiguration, 28,—36. His casting the devil out of a youth, which the disciples had attempted without success, 37,—42. He foretells his own sufferings to death, 43,—45. Checks the ambition of his disciples, 46,—48. Reproves them for a party, selfish, and revengeful spirit, 49,—56. And shews the danger of delaying and of drawing back, 57,—62.

TEXT.

Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord having some time ago singled out twelve of his disciples, whom he designed for apostles, (*chap. vi. 13,—16.*) and who ever since had attended him, and been training up, as it were at his feet, for their office, he took an opportunity of calling them together: And that they might be thoroughly qualified for his service, he vested them with proper powers, which should be effectual, through his name, to cast out devils, and heal all manner of distempers.

1 And he sent them

2 Whereupon he sent them forth, with a commission,

them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats a-piece.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

7 Now Ho-rod

sion, to publish in several parts of *Judea*, (*Matth. x. 6, 7.*) that he would soon set up the kingdom of grace, which should be perfected in the kingdom of glory; and for the confirmation of their doctrine, and recommending it to the affections, as well as judgment of the people, he ordered them to heal the sick, and do other wonderful works, as occasions might offer, wherever they went.

3 And as, by this first mission, they were not to go very far, and were soon to return, he said to them, Do not trouble yourselves about making provision for your journey before-hand; but go forth depending upon the providence of God for protection, and for a supply of all the necessities of life; carry with you no staff for defence, but only that which you commonly use for walking; no bag for victuals, nor any food or money to buy it; nor any change of raiment.

4 Nor be ye solicitous about entertainment where ye go; but take up your quarters with the first sober family that is willing to receive you; and, to avoid all appearance of fickleness, curiosity, or daintiness, there continue, without changing your lodging till ye leave that town or city.

5 And whatsoever place ye come to, if, upon trial, the people make an uproar against you, or the civil magistrate will not suffer you to preach; when ye go away from thence, shake off the * dust of your feet, as a witness that the gospel of salvation was sent to them, and they, like hardened and ungrateful wretches, rejected it to their own perdition; and as a signal of your detesting their wickedness, and refusing to have any communion with them, and of God's shaking them off as contemptible and vile, like the dust of one's feet.

6 With these and such like instructions they went forth, according to Christ's command; and, travelling over the towns and cities of *Judea*, executed their commission, in preaching the gospel wherever they came; and both confirming and recommending it by miraculously healing the sick, and casting out devils, and the like.

7 Now this spread the fame of Jesus wider, and raised his character higher, than ever before; so that all the great things that were done by him in person, and

N O T E.

* Some have observed, that as the *Jews* thought the very dust of the *heathen* land to be polluted; so our Lord ordered his apostles to shake off the dust of their feet, as a

testimony that they, who refused the gospel, were to be looked upon, and treated like the *heathens*, to whom he had forbid them to preach it.

rod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead:

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things? and he desired to see him.

10 And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place, belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 And the people when they knew it, followed him; and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge and get victuals; for we are here in a desert place.

and by his apostles in his name, and by virtue derived from him, reached the ears of *Herod*, the tetrarch of *Galilee*, (see the note on *chap. iii. 1.*) who was exceedingly distressed with horror in his own conscience, for having beheaded *John the Baptist*, and with fear, lest now it should be avenged upon him; because it was reported by some that this wonderful person was no other than *John* appearing again, as risen from the dead.

8 But ^(sc) others imagined that *Jesus* was *Elias*, who the *Jews* thought would personally appear before the coming of the *Messiah*; and others fancied him to be one of the ancient prophets, raised to life again.

9 Amidst this variety of opinions, *Herod*, full of terrible anxieties, said, I have indeed beheaded *John*, but cannot tell what to think of this person, who, as I now hear, appears with extraordinary power, and works abundance of miracles, both by his own and his disciples hands. Is this *John the Baptist*? or if not, who can it be? And he earnestly wished for a sight of *Jesus*, hoping thereby to satisfy himself about it.

10 In the mean while, the twelve apostles, having executed their commission, came back to their Lord, and gave him an account (as all his servants must of their labours in the final judgment) how and where they had preached and wrought miracles; and what reception they had met with: Upon which he retired with them to a solitary part of the country, not far from the city of *Bethsaida*, that he might give them a little relaxation from their late labours and fatigues, and might further instruct and encourage them in what related to their work.

11 But ^(sc) the common people, knowing to what place he had withdrawn, followed him in great crowds thither: And though they broke in upon his measures for a little recess and refreshment, yet so great was his goodness, that he kindly received them; and, instead of sparing himself, preached the gospel of his kingdom to them, and healed such as were distempered, and came to him for a cure.

12 And when it grew toward night, his twelve apostles desired him to dismiss the people, that they might have time enough, while day-light lasted, to reach some of the nearest towns and villages, and get lodging and entertainment there: For, said they, we are here in a desolate, barren part of the country, where there are no accommodations for them; so that they

they must necessarily suffer great hardship, if they stay any longer.

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

13 But he replied, Give them something to eat before they go, lest, having had no refreshment so long, some of them should faint by the way: The apostles not considering how God fed *Israel* of old in the wilderness, nor how easily their Lord could do the same now, objected to this motion, saying, We have only a little of our common fare, five barley-loaves and two small fishes, just enough for a meal or two at most for ourselves; it would therefore be only to tantalize the people, were we to offer them an entertainment, unless we were to go to some neighbouring town, and buy provisions there for this vast multitude.

14 For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

14 The reason of their speaking after this manner was, because the number of men only, then present, was about five thousand: However Christ, having determined in himself what to do, commanded his apostles to desire all the company to sit down on the grass, and to place them by fifty in a rank.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

15 And the apostles, without any further disputing, obeyed their Lord's order, causing the people to sit down in that manner, by which means they might be the more easily numbered, and the food more readily distributed among them. (See the note on *Mark* vi. 40.)

16 Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

16 Then Jesus, having the five loaves and two fishes before him, took part of them into his hands; and, according to his exemplary custom at meals, asked a blessing upon them, turning his eyes upward toward heaven, from whence every good gift descends, (see the note on *Matth.* xiv. 19.): And then, dividing the food into pieces fit for distribution, he conveyed it, through the hands of his apostles, to all the people, as they sat in their several rows.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled, and there was taken up of fragments that remaine! to them, twelve baskets.

17 And by his creating power, he gave it such a surprising increase, that the whole company eat of it till they were fully satisfied: And, small as the quantity was before they began, there were no less than twelve baskets full left, after they had been so plentifully refreshed, and had quite done eating. (See the note on *Matth.* xiv. 20.)

18 And it came to pass as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him; and he asked

18 Having thus shewn his compassion both to the souls and bodies of this great multitude, he dismissed them, and retired to converse with God his Father, and with the disciples his friends, that he might open his heart freely in his petitions for them, and in his instructions to them; and when, like the master of his household,

ed them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

household, he had given them an example of family-prayer, he proceeded to a free and religious conversation with them concerning himself, saying, What is the general opinion that men have of me? Or whom do they take me to be?

19 They answering, said, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias: and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

19 The apostles answered, that people were much divided, and had very different notions about him; some fancying that he was *John the Baptist* come to life again, whilst others insisted that he was *Elijah the Tishbite*, appearing among them to anoint the Messiah, whom they were looking for; and others talked as if he were one or other of the ancient prophets come to them from the dead.

20 He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering, said, The Christ of God.

20 Then Jesus said to his disciples, But, amidst all these various conjectures and debates of the people, tell me the sense of your own hearts; Whom do ye believe me to be? *Peter* said in all their names, they consenting, Whatsoever others think of thee, we are satisfied that thou art the only true Messiah, and the eternal Son of God. (*Matth. xvi. 16.*)

21 And he strictly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing.

21 And though Christ highly approved of this confession of their faith in him, yet he strictly forbade their publishing it for the present, that the *Jews*, who expected the Messiah to be a temporal prince, might not raise a tumult on his account, either by contending for or against his being their king, and so attempting either to hinder or hasten his death out of its proper season; as also that the full manifestation of the glory of his character might be reserved till he should rise from the dead.

22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

22 Accordingly he took this opportunity to turn off their own expectations of temporal advantages from him, or of his immediately appearing in the glory even of his spiritual kingdom, saying, The Messiah, according to divine appointment and predictions, and for answering the great design of his coming into the world, must undergo many terrible sufferings and indignities; and particularly must be opposed, reviled, and condemned by the great council, consisting of the elders of the people, and of their chief priests and doctors; and at length must be put to a cruel death: And he added, for their comfort, that on the third day he must rise again, to shew that he is a divine person, and that his Father accepts and owns him in his work.

23 And he said to

23 And as his disciples, and *Peter* in particular, could not tell how to brook what he had said about his sufferings and death; and as by this time a multitude of people were come again to him, (*Mark viii. 32—*

to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it : but, whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away.

26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

27 But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing

34.) he said to them all in general, If any one would be my disciple, and share in the blessings I am come to bestow, he, after my example, must be contented to part with the riches, honours, and pleasures of this life, and submit to the heaviest hardships and sufferings day by day for my sake, even unto death; and must follow me with faith and patience, through much tribulation, till he arrives at my heavenly kingdom. (See the note on *Mark* viii. 34.)

24 For whoever declines these duties, to save his temporal life in this world, shall fall short of eternal happiness in the next, which is losing his life in the worst sense that possibly can be : But whoever is willing to put them into practice, even to the loss of this transitory life, for his faith in me and profession of my name, shall certainly obtain eternal life, which is the best that any one can enjoy.

25 For the soul of man is his life and his glory, his principal and immortal part; and, as it fares with that, he himself must be extremely happy or miserable for ever : What comparison then can there be between all this world and his own soul? or what advantage could he have, were he to gain the utmost grandeur and delights on earth, and, after all, were to be himself eternally lost or destroyed?

26 And yet this will be the dreadful condition of all those that refuse to take up their cross and follow me : For whoever is afraid or ashamed to own me and my gospel now, in the presence of men, lest they should persecute or reproach him, or laugh at him for it, him will the Messiah publicly refuse to own, and upon him will he pour the greatest contempt at the great day, when he shall appear in his own personal and mediatorial glory, as the eternal Son of God, and Judge of all, and in the glory of his heavenly Father, whose divine perfections, majesty, and authority, will then display themselves in him; and when he shall be attended with a pompous retinue of holy angels, to execute his commands and celebrate his praise *.

27 And (26) I solemnly assure you that it will not be long before a lively emblem of this shall appear : For some

N O T E.

* Here seems to be, according to Dr H'bitby's observation, an allusion to the *Sherkinah*, which was called the *glory of the God of Israel*, and the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord, their great Jehovah : And as it was the *Logos*, or the Son of God, who usually thus appeared, and who, after his ascension, was invested again with this glo-

ry, it was his glory as well as the Father's. And we may add, that the living creatures, and the cherubims, being also represented in several of those appearances, as the ministers of providence, and attendants on this glory, Christ seems to speak likewise, in the same allusion, of his coming in the glory of the holy angels. See *Ezek.* i. and x. chapters.

standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God.

some here present shall live to see the kingdom of the Messiah set up in the world with great glory, by his resurrection and exaltation at the Father's right hand, by the plentiful effusion of his Spirit, to glorify him, and spread his gospel with speedy and surprising success, and by his coming to take vengeance upon the incorrigible *Jews*, in the utter destruction of their city and nation; and here are some, who, in a few days, shall be eye-witnesses of an illustrious display of his glory. (See the note on *Matth. xvi. 28.*)

28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

28 About a week * after Christ had said these things, he, designing to give a little specimen of his future glory, singled out three of his disciples, *Peter, John, and James*, to be eye-witnesses of it, as they afterwards were to be of his agony in the garden, (*Matth. xxvi. 37.*); and taking these along with him, he went up an high hill, as he was wont, to spend some time in secret prayer.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glittering.

29 And while he was thus humbling himself in the form of a servant, his divine glory broke forth to give him an appearance in the form of God; so that, all on a sudden, a dazzling lustre flushed through his countenance, and a shining brightness through all his clothes, by which he appeared all over glorious, like the God, *who covers himself with light as with a garment.* (*Psal. civ. 2.* See the note on *Matth. xvii. 2.*)

30 And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias.

30, 31 There were likewise, at the same time, two of the greatest men that had ever lived upon earth, who came to own and honour him; one was *Moses*, the giver of the law; and the other was *Elias*, the restorer of it: These appeared in glorious forms, like persons that came from the blessed state and world above, and they conversed with Jesus about the nature and design of his sufferings and death, which he was shortly to undergo at *Jerusalem*.

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 But at the beginning of this wonderful scene, *Peter* and the other two disciples were so exceeding drowsy, that they could hardly attend to any thing about it; till, recovering themselves out of their sleepy fit, and being perfectly awake, they plainly saw the glorious appearance that Christ made, and took notice of *Moses and Elias*, who were with him.

32 But Peter, and they that were with him, were heavy with sleep; and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And

N O T E.

* In *Matth. xvii. 1.* and *Mark ix. 2.* this is said to be *six days* after the foregoing discourse, meaning only the days that passed between that and the day of Christ's transfiguration; but here it is said to be *about eight days* after it, inclusive both of the day of

Christ's saying these things, and the day of his going up to the mount, which, together with the six intermediate days, made up *about* eight days, though not eight complete.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; not knowing what he said,

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone: and they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

37 And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

38 And behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee look upon my son, for he is mine only child.

33 And while the disciples were filled with astonishment and delight at what they had seen and heard, *Peter*, observing that those two ancient prophets were about to withdraw, addressed himself to *Christ*, saying, Lord, how glorious and transporting is it to be here! and how happy would it be if we could always enjoy such heavenly manifestations, discourse, and company, as this! Suffer us to set up three tents; one for thee, the second for *Moses*, and the third for *Elias*, that we may all dwell together in this place: This he said in a sort of rapturous surprise, which made him incapable of duly considering whether it might be fit and proper, or not.

34 But at the very instant that he was uttering these words, the disciples found themselves covered with such an awful cloud, as was an emblem of the divine presence, (see the note on *Matth. xvii. 5.*); which, when it began to spread over them, not only deprived them of all further sight of *Moses* and *Elias*, (ver. 36.) but filled them with great fear, as not knowing what might be the consequence; though *Christ* being with them, there was no room to apprehend any danger.

35 And to shew that this cloud was a visible token of divine favour, and not of wrath, they immediately heard a voice from the eternal Father out of the cloud, saying, This is the Son of my highest love, in whose person, office, and performances, my soul delights, and by whom I will make the last revelation of my mind and will: Attend therefore to him, and obey him, in whatsoever he shall say unto you.

36 Immediately after this voice the whole vision closed; *Moses* and *Elias* were gone, the cloud of glory withdrew, the transfiguration was over, and Jesus was with them alone in his usual form: And they, according to his command, (*Matth. xvii. 9.*) kept counsel for the present, without discovering what they had seen to friend or foe, till after his resurrection, when it was much more easily credited than it would have been before.

37 Now (*v.*) when our Lord and the three disciples returned, on the morning of the next day, from the mountain, he found abundance of people, with the rest of his disciples, waiting for him below.

38 And as soon as he appeared, they flocked about him, and one of the people falling down at his feet, cried out with great earnestness, Lord, I humbly beg that thou wouldst look with an eye of compassion upon my son, and heal him; for he is a dear and only child,

child, for whom I cannot but be tenderly concerned in his present deplorable condition; which is this:

39 And lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out, and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him.

39 An evil spirit has taken possession of him, and distresses him in so terrible a manner, that sometimes he shrieks out all on a sudden, and talks like one frightened out of his wits; at other times he is racked and tortured, and thrown into violent convulsions; till he foams at the mouth, and seems to be quite senseless; at other times he falls down in an instant wherever he is, and receives abundance of hurt; and so cruel and malicious is the devil in tormenting him, that he hardly ever gives him any respite.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not.

40 Having therefore heard of thee, and of what wonderful works even thy disciples have done in thy name, I applied to them, while thou wert absent, begging that they would cast out this evil spirit: But, alas! they attempted it in vain; and now I come to see whether thou thyself canst do any thing to help him. (*Mark ix. 22.*)

41 And Jesus answering, said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

41 Hereupon Jesus severely reproved the father of the lad, together with the unbelieving multitude, and especially the *scribes*, who had run down his disciples because they could not work this cure, (*Mark ix. 14.*); and he said to them, O ye desperately incredulous, obstinate generation of men, how long shall I be working divine and merciful miracles among you? and how long must I nevertheless bear with your perverse diffidence, enmity, and opposition to me? Then speaking to the father, for the encouragement of his faith, and to the people, and particularly the *scribes*, (*Mark ix. 19.*) for the confuting of their unbelief, he said, Bring the child to me *.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare him: and Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

42 And as the youth was coming, the devil, who knew Christ's power better than the *scribes* did, was enraged at the thoughts that he must now be cast out; and to shew his furious inclination for doing all the mischief he could, he threw the poor young creature down with great violence, and shook him as if he would have torn him to pieces: But (†) Jesus spoke with sovereign power and authority to the evil spirit to depart; and immediately restored the child to perfect health, and delivered him back to his father safe and sound.

43 And they were all amazed at the mighty power

43 And the whole multitude were struck with great astonishment at so plain a demonstration of the truly divine

N O T E.

* See the notes on *Matth. xvii. 17.* and *Mark ix. 19.* where Christ speaks to the faithless generation to bring the child to him.

power of God : But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

divine power, which our blessed Lord exerted in performing this stupendious work, and thereby defeating the triumphs of his enemies. But while the people were admiring this and other miracles which Jesus had wrought, and he and his disciples were again got together alone, (*Matth. xvii. 19,—22.*) he, to guard them against entertaining any thoughts of his appearing in worldly power and grandeur, said,

44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears : for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

44 Take particular notice of what I have told you before, and am going to tell you again ; often think of it, reflect seriously upon it, and live in the daily belief and expectation of it, that ye may not be surprised and shocked when ye come to see it ; viz. That I, whom ye know and believe to be the Messiah, shall certainly be given up to the power of mine enemies, who will put me to death.

45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not : and they feared to ask him of that saying.

45 But how plainly soever he talked to them of these things, their heads were so full of notions about the Messiah's appearing with external pomp, that they could not tell how to understand his suffering and dying in a literal sense, nor could they imagine what he intended by such expressions : And yet, he having so often used them, and shewn his displeasure at the exceptions which *Peter* had lately offered against them, (*Matth. xvi. 21,—23.*) they were ashamed, and afraid to make any further inquiries about his meaning in them.

46 Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

46 And as Jesus was going with his disciples toward *Capernaum*, (*Mark ix. 33.*) they, lagging behind, entered into a warm debate, about which of them should have the pre-eminence in the temporal kingdom, which they still expected Christ would soon set up in the world, notwithstanding all that he had said to the contrary.

47 And Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him.

47 But Jesus, who knew what was in man, was perfectly acquainted with all their ambitious views, and with the whole of their vain dispute, though he was not corporally within hearing ; and therefore, as soon as they arrived together at *Capernaum*, he, calling for a young child, set it before them.

48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me : and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth

48 And then he said unto them, This child is a proper emblem of the true subjects of my kingdom, who, like him, should be disinterested, meek, and humble, free from all ambition, envy, and malice ; and whoever shall receive any persons of these holy dispositions into his affection, and shew kindness to them in obedience to my command, and for my sake, because they bear my image, and are in favour with me, shall be accounted of as if he had done it personally to myself ; and whoever shall receive me into his heart,

receiveth him that sent me; for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us, is for us.

51 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive him,

by a self-denying faith and love, for spiritual purposes, shall be esteemed as paying the same religious regard to my Father himself, who sent me into the world: For this is the rule of my kingdom, that he, who is most humble, condescending, and self-abased among you, shall be advanced to the greatest honours, and most highly favoured with my smiles and blessings.

49 Then the apostle *John*, desirous to know whether he had preserved this excellent temper on another occasion, said, Master, I and others of thy disciples, not long since, saw a certain man making use of thine authority in casting out devils; and we thought proper to rebuke him, and forbid his doing so any more, as supposing that he had no right to use thy name for such purposes, because he did not associate with us, or with any of thy constant followers.

50 But (xai) Jesus being displeased at such a peevish, narrow, unbecoming party-spirit, reproved *John* and his companions that joined with him in it, saying, Ye are much to blame for going about to hinder such an one in my work, and to rob me of my praise; for he who do not oppose us, and especially he who carries on the same design with us, can never be reckoned as an enemy; but should be esteemed, embraced, and encouraged as a friend; though for reasons which ye know not he may not think proper to join in company with you.

51 Now the time drawing on, when, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, our Lord Jesus was to pass through his last sufferings to glory, his heart was so fully set upon the redemption of the church, that he resolved, and set out to go to *Jerusalem*; nor would he hear of any persuasions to the contrary, though he knew the terrible things that would befall him there, by the righteous ordination of God, and the malicious, wicked, and cruel management of men and devils.

52 And as his direct road from *Galilee* to *Jerusalem* lay through *Samaria*, he, to give as little offence as possible, sent two of his disciples beforehand, to let the inhabitants know his design of passing through their country, and to prepare necessary entertainment in one of their towns for himself and company.

53 But, foolish and wicked creatures as these were, they would not receive this noble stranger, who would have borne his own charges, and, had they desired it, was ready as well as able to have blessed them; nor would they suffer him to enter into one of their villa-

him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For the Son

ges, to take the rest and the accommodations which were necessary for him and his followers on their journey, because they perceived that he was going to worship at *Jerusalem*, and thereby practically declared against the *Samaritans*, who warmly denied that to be the place appointed of God for his worship *.

54 Then the disciples *James* and *John* looking upon this to be, as indeed it was, a heinous indignity to their Lord and Master; their love to him, and zeal for his honour, so inflamed their passions against the *Samaritans*, that they were for revenging the affront upon them in the severest manner, supposing that they had power enough in their commission so to do; and yet, not daring to attempt it without his leave, they asked him to permit their ordering fire from heaven, to destroy these abusive wretches, in like manner as *Elijah* did of old for the destruction of the two captains and their fifties that came to offer violence to him †. (2 Kings i. 10, 12.)

55 But our blessed Lord turned quick upon them, and sharply rebuked them, saying, Alas! ye do not consider what sort of spirit it is that would push you upon these cruel measures; how much passion and revenge, pride, and effectation of temporal power, mingle with, and secretly govern, your love and zeal for me; nor do ye consider the different nature and design of the dispensations then and now.

56 For *Elijah* was the minister of the law, and came to display its terrors against the horrible abominations of those days, when vain idols were consulted, and set in competition with, yea preferred to, the living and true God: This was high treason against *Jehovah* as *Israel's* King, as well as flagrant idolatry in opposition to him as their God; and it was suitable to that state of things, and to the terror of the mount-*Sinai* dispensation, that *Elijah* should have a commission for bringing fire down from heaven, to vindicate the authority which God had given him, and to execute vengeance upon them. But the design of the dispensation

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* As the fame of Jesus was spread among the *Samaritans*, on account of what he had formerly done in their country, (*John* iv.) and he was looked upon as at least an eminent prophet; they were provoked to think that he should go to *Jerusalem* at this time, which seems to have been the feast of tabernacles, (*John* vii. 2.) and should thereby determine directly against them, that not mount *Gerizim*, but *Jerusalem*, was the

place where God should be worshipped: And therefore, full of all resentment, they would by no means entertain him.

† *Elijah* did this in *Samaria*, very near, if not at this particular place; and this might probably put it into the disciples heads to make such a furious motion now, rather than at any other time and place where Christ had received like affronts, as particularly among the *Nazaranes* and the *Gergesenes*.

Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.

tion of love and mercy which I the Messiah am come to set up, is not to destroy enemies by kindling flames of wrath to consume them, but to melt and win upon them by heaping coals of a better sort of fire on their heads, and to work such miracles for the establishment of my cause and interest, as are not of the revengeful, but merciful kind. And having said these things to pacify and instruct his disciples, he, with all meekness, turned aside with them from this place, and went to another town or village, whose inhabitants might not be so strongly prejudiced against him.

57 And it came to pass that as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whither-so-ever thou goest.

57 And as Jesus and his disciples were walking together * in the road to Jerusalem, where the Jews expected the Messiah would set up his throne and appear in his glory, a certain man came to him, and offered his service to attend upon him wherever he went, in hopes of getting great riches and honour under him.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head,

58 But Jesus, knowing the carnal design of his heart, said to him, I, the Messiah, am so far from coming with the magnificence of a prince to set up a temporal kingdom, that I have not so much as the conveniencies which are afforded even to the foxes and the fowls of the air, who have their places of abode and safety, retirement and rest; whereas I have neither house nor home of my own, nor can meet with common civility in my travels for lodging or entertainment: If therefore you expect great things in this world from me, you will meet with a sad disappointment.

59 And he said unto another, Follow me; But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

59 There was another person, to whom Christ made the first motion, saying, Come thou, and attend upon me and my service; and this man intimated that he would readily comply with his command, only he begged leave to defer it till he should have performed the last offices of duty and respect to his father in seeing him buried. (See the note on *Matth. viii. 21.*)

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their

60 But our Lord, who will admit of no excuses or delays, nor will suffer any to indulge them when he comes to work effectually upon them, replied, It is not for those that are alive unto God, and are called to devote themselves to him, to put off my service for these lower concerns. Let them who are * dead in sin,

N O T E S.

* This seems not to refer to the same case that is mentioned *Matth. viii. 19.* the circumstances of place and time being different, though the substance of the conversation was the same.

! We cannot make sense of this passage,

without supposing, that in the former clause our blessed Lord meant persons who were spiritually or morally dead, according to *Eph. ii. 1, 5.* *Col. ii. 13.* and *1 Tim. v. 6.* And this instance plainly shews, that the scripture notion of this sort of death is not to be

their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

sin, and dead to God, by a dissolution of the union which originally was between him and their souls, attend to the business of burying them that die corporally, by a dissolution of the union of their souls and bodies: I insist upon your going immediately, at my call, to preach the gospel of my kingdom for the salvation of lost sinners; and he was made willing in the day of Christ's power, without any further objection or delay *.

61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.

61 And there was a third person, who offered to be one of Christ's disciples, and a preacher of his gospel, saying, Lord, I would willingly give myself up to thee and thy work, only let me first go and take a decent leave of my relations and friends, and settle the affairs of my family at home, that neither my reputation nor my temporal interests may suffer.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

62 But (2^d) Jesus replied, in a way of sharp rebuke to him, As a ploughman must be always keeping his eye forward upon his work, and never be looking back, or else his hand cannot guide the plough to make regular furrows of a due and equal depth; so no person who takes upon him to be my disciple, or to preach my gospel, and looks wishfully back to the affairs of this life, as if he were loth to part with them, can be a meet subject for my kingdom, nor fit to be engaged in its service.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

With what authority does Christ commission his servants to preach the gospel; and with what faithfulness should they attend to their work, as knowing that they must give an account to him of all their behaviour in it! And O how much will it be to the joy or grief of their hearers, according as they either receive or reject them and their Lord! Happy are they who are not ashamed to own Christ; whatsoever sufferings or reproaches they may meet with for it; but such as are ashamed of him, his truths and ways, shall be disowned by him, to their utter confusion, and to the everlasting loss of their own souls, which can never be compensated by the greatest affluence of the good things of this world.—O the transporting pleasure of the divine presence! It is good for us to be there: The weakness of human nature, in its present state, would indeed soon be overset with its brightest manifestations on earth; but it admits of lively emblems of what will be seen in heaven, where all the saints shall appear with Christ in glory, and shine in robes of light like him. In the mean while, all that we do in religion must be under his direction and command, and all our hopes toward God must be only in and through him, in whom his Father is well pleased. Our Lord observes whether we have any true faith in him, and to what degree it prevails in us; what the disputes are which we most eagerly go into, and what

N O T E S.

confined to the *Gentiles*, as if it related only to their deplorable condition as such; for the persons here spoken of were *Jews*.

* Christ ordering him to go, and no more

being said of this man's continuing to object against it, intimates, that his heart was overcome by grace, and that he no longer insisted on his former excuse.

what manner of spirit we are of: And O how great are the defects, prejudices, pride, and passion, that remain with his own disciples! He highly disapproves of these things; but with what affection, tenderness, and applause does he treat meek and humble souls! And how wonderful is his condescension and grace to sinners, in bearing with them, in having resolutely undergone the greatest sufferings for them, and in taking the most endearing methods to overcome them! and yet upon what unworthy pretences do they reject him, or excuse themselves from embracing him! But whoever once begins to profess his name, or to engage in his work, should persist therein, and never look back with an hankering and insinuating affection to the business, pleasures, or honours of this present life, as ever he would share in the blessings and glories of Christ's kingdom here, and for ever hereafter.

C H A P. X.

Christ's commission to the Seventy, 1,—16. His discourse to them, and thanksgiving to his Father on their return, 17,—24. His discourse with a lawyer about the way of attaining eternal life, 25,—37. His reproof of Martha, and commendation of Mary, 38,—42.

TEXT.

AFTER these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways: Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

PARAPHRASE.

AS our Lord had about a year before sent forth twelve apostles, (*chap. vi. 12.* see the note there;) so he sent out seventy other disciples with the like commission, answerable to the seventy elders of *Israel*, who were partakers of the same spirit which was upon *Moses*, (*Numb. xi. 25.*): And, having chosen these to assist the apostles, he sent them likewise by pairs, to go, as his harbingers, to every town and city of the *Jews*, to which he himself designed afterwards to follow them.

2 And as he had a great harvest of souls to gather in to himself, by means of the gospel, first among the *Jews*, and afterwards among the *Gentiles*; he intimated, that, notwithstanding this addition of seventy to the twelve, the number of hands would still be very small, compared with what there would be occasion for; and therefore ordered them, as he had his disciples before, (*Matth. ix. 38.* see the note there) to apply earnestly to the great Lord and Proprietor of the harvest, that he would add still abundance of others, who should be skillful, faithful, and laborious preachers of the gospel.

3 And, says he, go ye forth, for the present, to the work to which I have called you: Observe who has sent you, and what sort of people I tell you beforehand ye will meet with: I have given you your warrant, and will afford you all needful protection and assistance, amidst the great dangers and discouragements ye will be exposed to, and unable to defend yourselves against; while

while ye, like timorous and helpless, as well as meek and inoffensive lambs, will be cast among enemies, who, like crafty and cruel, violent, and furious wolves, are seeking to harass and destroy you.

4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes; and salute no man by the way.

4 Commit yourselves by faith to the care of divine Providence, for a supply of such necessities of life as ye may have occasion for: And, in confidence that God will raise up friends to shew you kindness, do not trouble yourselves about carrying with you money, or food, or any other conveniencies, no, not so much as a pair of shoes more than ye have on your feet: And apply yourselves so diligently to your main work, as to lose no time in exchanging compliments, or entering into unnecessary discourse with any whom ye may meet with in your way.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.

5 And whenever ye go into any house for entertainment, express your hearty concern at your entrance into it, for the prosperity of all who dwell there, begging that God would abundantly bless them.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again.

6 If there are any who hereupon shew a friendly disposition toward you, a desire of peace with God, and a willingness to receive the gospel of peace, they shall be blessed in answer to your prayers for them: But if they discover an obstinate and prejudiced spirit against you and the gospel of salvation relating to the way of obtaining favour with God; though your prayer may not be answered for them, it shall return with double blessings upon your own heads.

7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give; for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

7 And take up your abode in the first family that ye go into and find disposed to entertain you, courteously accepting such provision as it affords, though it be the meanest fare, and freely eating and drinking what they set before you, without any uneasiness in your own minds as if ye were a burden to them: For as the labouring man has a lawful right to his wages, so, while ye are employed in the service of their souls, ye have a just claim to sustenance for your bodies, and so every one will think who receives any spiritual benefit by your labours: Do not therefore shift your quarters while ye have any work to do in the neighbourhood, that ye may not seem to be fickle or pamperers of your appetites, nor lose the opportunity of establishing friendship with your first acquaintance there.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you.

8 In like manner, whatsoever town or city ye go to, if its inhabitants shew any dispositions to hear your message, and to entertain you among them, do not be nice or curious about what sort of food they offer you, or in inquiries whether it be ceremonially clean or not;

but

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11 Even the very dust of your city which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you; notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

13 Wo unto thee Chorazin! wo unto thee Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon,

done

but eat heartily, like persons pleased with your fare.

9 And in return for their civilities, as well as in confirmation of the divine authority of the commission which I have given you, set yourselves to heal their sick, by miracles wrought in my name; and while ye are doing such kind and endearing works among them, tell them that the kingdom of the Messiah, with all its rich and glorious blessings, is brought near to them in the gospel, which ye are sent to preach, as his harbingers, who will soon follow you thither, and appear in person to receive all that come to him.

10 But if ye go into any town to perform miracles, and preach my word there, and the people resolutely set themselves against you, and will by no means suffer you to go on with your work, withdraw from thence; and as ye pass along the streets, enter a solemn and public protest against them, saying,

11 We shake off the very dust of your city, which sticks to our feet, in token of God's abhorring and rejecting you, and of our leaving you to his righteous judgment, for your obstinately and maliciously rejecting the means of grace which we were sent to bring to you: But, at the same time, charge it upon them to reflect upon the dreadful consequences of their despising this great mercy; since they shall certainly one day know, that the gracious dispensation by the long-expected Messiah was at last brought to their very doors, and freely tendered to them; and that there can be no other remedy for them, but that they must inevitably perish with a vengeance for their wilfully rejecting it.

12 And I assure you, their incorrigible wickedness and infidelity shall be so far from going unpunished, that the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* by fire and brimstone from heaven, shall be found, in the day of judgment, to have been incomparably less terrible than that which shall be brought upon them; and the guilt and miseries of the notoriously wicked inhabitants of those antient cities shall be far less, in that day, than these obstinate refusers of gospel-light and grace shall then be loaded with.

13 On this occasion our Lord said, The greatest of all woes hangs over your heads, ye impenitent and unbelieving inhabitants of *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, who have been most remarkably favoured with endearing means of grace, and yet have shut your ears and hearts against them: For if the impious heathen cities of *Tyre* and *Sidon* themselves had been indulged with so clear a revelation of Christ, and such numerous un-

questionable

done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell.

16 He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.

17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even

questionable miracles to confirm his divine authority, as have been vouchsafed to you; it is highly probable, that even they would long ere now have yielded to conviction, and expressed their humiliation and repentance in the most affecting tokens, like persons who cover themselves in days of the deepest mourning with sackcloth and ashes. (See the note on *Matth. xi. 21.*)

14 But your guilt is so highly aggravated, that when God shall come to execute vengeance in the great day of account, it shall fare better with the people of Tyre and Sidon than with you.

15 And as for thee, O Capernaum, who hast been as it were my head-quarters where I have chiefly resided, preached, and performed miraculous works, and who hast been exalted in gospel-privileges to the very gates of heaven, and art now proud and prosperous; thou shalt be cast down from all thy riches, privileges, and glory, and thy inhabitants shall be pressed, by the heaviest weight of God's wrath, to the very lowest and hottest place in hell.

16 However, Jesus, to encourage the seventy disciples in preaching the gospel wherever they could get opportunity for it, intimated, that their labour should not be altogether in vain; but that they should be owned and honoured among many, whatsoever might be the event as to others; saying, He who attends to you, and heartily embraces your message, does in effect pay all that respect to me; but he who slights and rejects you, and your preaching in my name, thereby, in reality, shews the greatest disregard to me; and he who treats me with negligence and scorn, pours all that contempt upon my heavenly Father himself, who sent me.

17 Upon this warrant, and these encouragements, the Seventy set out for their journey, to execute Christ's commission in several towns and cities where they could meet with any favourable reception: And, after some time, they returned to give an account of what they had done; and, having succeeded beyond their own expectation, all the fatigues, hardships, discouragements and dangers they met with, were as nothing to them; but their hearts were wonderfully lifted up, and they spoke to Christ with a sort of joyful surprise*, saying, Lord, we have not only healed diseases in confirmation of the doctrine we preached, but have even been enabled to cast

N O T E.

* Their joy seemed to be with a mixture of surprise, because this power was more

than, as far as appears, Christ had expressly mentioned in their commission, *ver. 9.*

even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that

cast out devils in thy name; so that nothing can stand before thy power which has been with us, and has subjected them to us.

18 Jesus replied, This is no more than I knew before-hand: For when I sent you forth to preach the gospel and confirm it with miracles, I saw the forces of hell falling before you all on a sudden, like lightning, which darts down in an instant from heaven; and this is but the presage and beginning of the speedy triumphs that my gospel shall make, with an amazing spread over the whole kingdom of darkness, in turning the hearts of sinners from the power of Satan to God.

19 And in order to the further advancement of this great end, behold I now renew and enlarge my former commission, and give you power, through my name, to subdue and triumph over your grand adversary the devil, and all his instruments, who are as subtle and mischievous as serpents and scorpions; and over all sorts of venomous creatures*, that none of them may be able to do you any harm.

20 Nevertheless, that they might not over-value themselves upon the powers they had already exercised, and now further received, he added this gracious caution, Let not your rejoicing terminate here, nor let it be your chief joy, that evil spirits themselves are put into subjection to you, and are dispossessed by the authority which I have given you; for all this honour might be conferred upon you for promoting my cause and kingdom in the world, and ye yourselves might notwithstanding eternally perish: But exult and triumph principally in this, that ye are enrolled in heaven, among the chosen and called of God, as persons whose names were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, (*Rev. xvii. 8.*) and who shall be adjudged and received to the everlasting inheritance.

21 While Jesus was thus directing his disciples to rejoice, above all things else, in God's free favour and love, relating to their eternal salvation, his own heart was so exceedingly delighted with this thought, that (*ὑπερῴησεν τῷ πνεύματι*) it even leaped for joy; and, in holy rapture, he said, I adore and bless thee, O my Father, thou great proprietor, disposer, and governor of all persons and things in heaven and earth, that

while

N O T E.

* Here seems to be an allusion to *Psal. xci. 13.* and this was literally fulfilled, *Acts xxviii. 3, 5.* And the power Christ here gave to the seventy against Satan and all his

instruments, was a remarkable instance of God's fulfilling the first promise, *Gen. iii. 15.* that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.

that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

while thou hast seen fit to † leave men of parts and learning to their own wilful blindness and prejudices, which hinder their discerning the truth, excellence, and importance of what they have heard concerning the mysteries of thy kingdom; thou hast, nevertheless, in the riches of thy grace, and to set it off with the more advantage, freely discovered them by thy spirit to persons of low capacity and mean figure in the world, and hast opened their hearts to embrace them: This is the way which thine infinite wisdom and good pleasure have taken to glorify thyself in their salvation, and it highly becometh thy greatness and goodness to dispose of thine own free favours in a sovereign manner.

22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

22 And, to shew his own full concurrence with his Father herein, he immediately added, As universal dominion, so all the persons whose names are written in heaven, and all things designed of God to be revealed and communicated to them, are committed to my management in my office-capacity: And there is such an entire intimacy and harmony between the Father and Son in their knowledge of one another, that none but the Father is thoroughly acquainted with the nature and will, design and work of the Son; nor does any one understand what these things are in the Father except the Son, and such other persons as, in their measure, receive them by revelation from him, whose sovereignty in revealing them is answerable to that of his Father in his eternal purposes about them.

23 And he turned him unto his disciples, and said privately, blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see.

23 Then, turning to his disciples, he pronounced them blessed, because he had made them so, saying to them in private, Ye are happy creatures indeed, who see the Messiah appearing in the flesh, and setting up his kingdom in the world; and who know these important things for yourselves, having been assured from my own mouth that your names are written in heaven, (ver. 20.)

24 For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and

24 For I assure you, that many prophets, holy men, and kings of Israel, who were beloved of God, and eminent for their religion, longed to see the glorious light, privileges, and blessings, of the Messiah's kingdom, and to share in them; but were never indulged with this favour, as ye are: And they would have been glad to hear the blessed tidings of salvation, with that clearness, pleasure and advantage, as ye have heard

N O T E.

† Christ rejoiced not in the destruction of the wise and prudent; but in the display of the riches, freeness, and sovereignty, of God's grace to others, in such a manner as

reserves to him the entire glory of our salvation, and hides pride from the eyes of man.

and have not heard them.

heard them, but never obtained this desire of their hearts. These things were hid from ages and generations past, in comparison with the plain discoveries which are now made to you.

25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

25 At another time, there was a remarkable conversation between our Lord and a certain scribe: This man came to Jesus with a design, if possible, to pose him, or get some advantage against him, saying, Master, as you profess to teach the way to eternal life, pray what is necessary for me or any other man to do to obtain it?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

26 Jesus knowing the captious temper with which he put this question, replied, Since you are a professed interpreter of the law, and expect salvation by it, what do you say are the terms which it proposes for life? What do you read there about it, and how do you understand the matter?

27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

27 The scribe readily answered, What the law insists on as the condition of life, is summarily comprehended in loving the Lord our God supremely, unreservedly and constantly, with the united concurrence of all the faculties of the soul; and in bearing such a sincere good-will to our neighbour, as to make the love of ourselves the rule or measure of our dispositions and behaviour to him, supposing he were in our circumstances, and we in his.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live.

28 Jesus owning this to be a just summary of what the moral law requires, and designing to convince the scribe of his own defects, replied, These are indeed the demands of the law for justification and salvation: See then that you fully come up to all this in your duty to God and your neighbour; and, on that condition, you shall inherit eternal life.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

29 But the scribe being desirous to shift off conviction, and support a good opinion of himself, slipped over what related to the love of God, and asked what was meant by our neighbour; imagining that it signified only one's friends and acquaintance, or persons of the same country and religion, and that a just and kind behaviour toward such sufficiently answered this demand of the law.

30 And Jesus answering, said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among

30 Then Jesus replied, You may form a good notion of what the word *neighbour* imports, by the following representation of a supposed case: A certain Jew, travelling from *Jerusalem* to * *Jericho*, fell into the

N O T E.

* *Jericho* was in the tribe of *Benjamin*, about eighteen or nineteen miles easterly from

Jerusalem; and Jewish writers tell us, that about twelve thousand stationary priests and Levites,

among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half-dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him he had compassion on him.

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and

the hands of wicked men, who having robbed, stripped, wounded, and barbarously abused him, left him wallowing in his blood, and almost dead.

31 Now Providence so ordered it, that the first person who passed that way was a certain priest, whose profession and public character ought to have engaged him to shew the utmost tenderness, compassion, and care, toward this poor miserable, helpless, and perishing object, especially he being one of his own religion and nation; and yet, as soon as he saw him, he turned off to the other side of the road, and pursued his journey without doing any thing toward his relief.

32 The next that came was a *Levite* †, whose office and profession likewise, one would have thought, might have moved his compassion toward so distressed a countryman and brother; and yet he hardened his heart against him, and only just looking upon him to gratify his curiosity, passed by at a distance on the other side of the way, without giving himself any trouble, or being at one farthing's charge to help him.

33 But at length a certain *Samaritan*, travelling on that road, came to the place where he lay: And though the enmity between that people and the *Jews* has been so extremely great, by means of their frequent bitter quarrels about religious and civil concerns, (see the note on *John* iv. 9.) yet, as soon as this *Samaritan* saw the poor *Jewish* stranger in all his distress, his eye moved his heart into compassion toward him:

34 And, going up to him, he washed, suppled, and dressed his wounds in the best manner he could; and then, helping him to mount his own beast, he carried him to a public house, where he might have better assistance, and took care that all proper means might be used immediately for his comfort and recovery there.

35 And, being obliged to proceed on his journey the next morning, he called the inn-keeper; and, paying him * what the wounded man's lodging and other necessities

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Levites dwelt there, who used to attend the service of the temple. The road therefore between those two cities, which lay through desert and rocky places, was much frequented by priests and *Levites*, and infested with thieves.

† By *Levites* were principally meant such descendants of *Levi* as were employed in the lower offices of the temple, in subordination to the priests, who likewise, being of the family of *Aaron*, descended from *Levi* by *Kebath*. 1 *Chron.* xxiii. 6, — 32.

* Two *Roman* pence amount to about fifteen pence of our money, which, according to the rate of provisions in that country, might answer the charge of a night's lodging, and of the little food that the poor man might be supposed to have eat: But some think that this is to be understood of money left in hand for future charges, with a promise of paying whatsoever they might amount to more; and others suppose, that here is a reference to the half shekel, which was to be paid for the ransom of a man's soul.

and said unto him, Take care of him : and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village ; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also

necessaries there came to, charged him to take all further requisite care of him ; and promised, that whatsoever the expence might be, he would defray it at his return †

36 Now, said our Lord to the scribe, which of these three men do you think might justly be deemed the neighbour of this poor, stripped and wounded man ? Was it the priest or the Levite, who shut up the bowels of their compassion against him, and did nothing for him ? or was it the Samaritan, who, though a stranger, and of a different religion, took such tender care of him, and did such kind offices for him ?

37 The scribe replied, He who was so compassionate and kind most certainly best deserved this character *. Then our Lord said unto him, See that, in imitation of this Samaritan, you maintain a like benevolent and merciful regard, not only to your friends and acquaintance, and persons of your own religion and party, but likewise to such as are strangers and enemies, before you pretend to have perfectly kept the law, or to claim a title to eternal life for your obedience to it.

38 At another time, Christ and his disciples, being on their travels, went to a town called *Bethany*, near two miles from *Jerusalem*, (*John xi. 18.*) : And as *Martha*, the sister of *Lazarus*, lived there, Jesus went to her house, who, with the rest of the family, gladly took in this noble Guest, and all his attendants for his sake.

39 And as upon entering the house, he, according to his usual way, began to preach the glad tidings of salvation, there was a sister of hers named *Mary*, who, being

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soul or life, *Exod. xxx. 12, 13.* two pence making that sum.

† Pious men have considered this parable as a fit representation of the miserable state of mankind by nature. Sin and Satan have wounded us to death, and we are utterly unable to help ourselves. The law, like the priest and Levite, the ministers of it, shews no compassion to us, nor is it in its nature to help us ; it curses us as transgressors, but cannot bless us, or afford any relief in our deplorable perishing circumstances. But our Lord Jesus, like the good Samaritan, has had compassion upon us. Though we have been enemies to him, have dishonoured and provoked him, and never can make him amends for any favour he shews us ; yet, of his own infinite love, his eye has pitied us,

and he takes care of us at the expence of his own precious blood. He binds up our wounded spirits ; heals the broken in heart, and pours into them the virtue of his blood, and the consolations of his Spirit, which are infinitely better than oil and wine. But how apt and beautiful soever the similitude may be to illustrate the endearing love and compassion of Christ to poor, wounded, and perishing souls, yet the immediate view of our Lord in this parable is far instruction in important points of another kind, as appears by his own application of it in the following verses.

* He could not for shame say otherwise, though he thereby unavoidably condemned himself, and overthrew his own false notion of the neighbour to whom our love is due.

so sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things;

42 But one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.

being a great lover of Christ, took this opportunity to place herself, with all humbleness of mind, like a learner, at his feet, that she might attend unto, and receive instruction, by the gracious words which proceeded out of his lips.

40 In the mean while, *Martha*, being desirous to shew the best respect she was capable of to her Lord, was mighty busy in preparing a suitable entertainment for him; and, finding that *Mary* was unwilling to be called off from hearing his discourse, she went and complained of her to him, saying, Lord, I cheerfully take all the pains I can to provide for thee and thy disciples, but the work is really more than I am well able to manage by myself: Dost thou not think it reasonable that my sister should take her part with me in it? Pray be pleased to order her to give me her assistance, and not sit still to hear till our hurry is over, when she may have a fitter opportunity for it.

41 But, contrary to her expectation, Jesus replied with great earnestness, O *Martha, Martha*, you are over-solicitous, and too much employed about things which are not worth such anxiety: I do not need or require, nor do I like, that you should spend so much thought, time, and pains, about entertaining me, who came not to be ministered to, but to minister; and, though it be intended as a token of respect, you distract and encumber yourself about every thing's being done in the handsomest manner, beyond what is proper for the occasion of my coming hither.

42 But let me tell you, One point is necessary, which your many other things ought to give way unto as infinitely more important; and that is the saving knowledge of myself, and of the true doctrine of eternal life which I am come to preach: *Mary* has had such an affecting sense of the excellence of this, as to make it her choice, in preference to all things else; and she has herein chosen the greatest good, which no powers of earth or hell shall ever be able to deprive her of.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How great are the difficulties on one hand, and the assistances on the other, that attend the servants of Christ, whom he employs, like labourers in a harvest, to gather souls to himself! But O how much work is there of this sort to be done; and how few are the laborious, skilful, and faithful agents, under Christ, that are engaged in it! We had need be daily praying to the Lord of the harvest, to furnish out good ministers for his service; and should remember, that as all their authority, qualifications, and assistances, so all their success depends entirely upon him. How great is the joy of being instrumental in advancing

his interest, and overthrowing the kingdom of Satan ! But how much happier still is it for ourselves to be found enrolled, as God's special favourites, among his children and the heirs of glory ! And how should they, that are so, magnify the riches of his sovereign grace to them, who, notwithstanding all external revelations of God's mind in his word, would never have been made wise to salvation unless Christ had been pleased to render them effectual by the internal light and energy of his Spirit ! But the worst of all woes belong to such as wilfully reject him and his gospel : And as for those that desire to be under the law as a covenant for life, let them hear its high demands, to confute their vain hopes of being justified by their own obedience to it ; and yet let every one regard it as an everlasting rule of righteousness, summarily comprehended in the great command of perfect love, in heart and behaviour, toward God, and towards all men, whether they be friends or enemies, acquaintances or strangers, of the same religion with one's self or not. But how should all inquiries after eternal life and salvation be made with a serious, and not with a curious or captious temper, as ever we would be directed into the right way of obtaining them ! And as the concerns of our souls are of the greatest importance above all others, how should we take heed that no secular affairs interfere with them ! Christ will graciously encourage, countenance, and secure, the happiness of those that are more solicitous about a saving acquaintance with himself, than about outward testimonies of respect to him which he never required, or about any business relating to this present life. May we be helped to chuse that good part which shall never be taken from us !

C H A P. XI.

Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray, 1,—13. Casts out a dumb devil, and proves that he did it not by any power of devils, 14,—26. Shews that the doers of the word are blessed, 27,—28. Reproves the perverseness and obstinacy of the Jews, 29,—36.; and the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and scribes, and denounces woes against them for it, 37,—54.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When

PARAPHRASE.

AT a certain season, Jesus having been at prayer, as he was wont, one of his disciples took occasion to apply to him, on behalf of himself and his brethren, saying, Lord, we humbly beg that thou wouldst please to direct us how to pray, as *John the Baptist** did his disciples.

2 In answer to which he said, As to the matter of prayer, let your petitions be for such things as may principally be summed up in the following address :

“ O

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* How *John the Baptist* taught his disciples to pray, cannot be determined with certainty, either by scripture or any remains of antiquity : but it seems, that, as the Jews went chiefly into thanksgivings and doxologies in their prayers, so *John* gave his disciples a summary of petitions, which should go into theirs, suitable to the nature of the dispensation they were then under. Accordingly one of Christ's disciples, probably one of the Seventy, who was not present

at his sermon on the mount, (*Matth. vi.*) asked him to tell them, What requests they should make, suitable to the dispensation which was now further advanced under him ; and he leaving out the doxology, reminded them of those which, in that sermon some time before, he had taught them to offer, (*Matth. vi. 9. &c.* see the notes there ;) and then added further instructions concerning the manner in which they should perform that duty.

ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven; hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

“ O thou common Father of all mankind by creation, and our God and Father by covenant, whose throne is in the heavens; We, encouraged by thy power and goodness, humbly intreat, that thou wouldest display the glory of thy perfections, by thy Spirit, works, and word; and wouldest enable us and others to reverence and adore thee, and to shew forth thy praise. May the Messiah be exalted; his word run, and be glorified; and many souls, through faith in him, be brought into thy kingdom of grace, and made more and more partakers of its blessings till all shall be perfected in glory! And O that we, and all around us on earth, may be enabled to imitate the blessed inhabitants of the heavenly world, in a cheerful and universal compliance with, approbation of, submission and obedience to, thy will, in whatsoever instances thou mayst make it known to us!

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

3 “ Bestow upon us, if it seem good in thy sight, the necessary and convenient provisions of the present day, and so on from day to day; and add such a blessing to them as shall sanctify them to our use, and refresh us by them that we may be fitted for all the duties to which thou callest us while we continue in the body.

4 And forgive us our sins: for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

4 “ And graciously pardon all our sins, of every kind, that have been committed against thee, as thou hast commanded and inclined us to forgive those who have wronged or offended us: And we earnestly beseech thee, that for the future thou wouldest either not suffer us to be tempted to any unlawful thing, or not leave us to the power of any temptation whatsoever; but that thou wouldest seasonably strengthen us against, and give us victory over, the corruption of our own hearts, and over that evil-one, the devil, together with all his wicked instruments, and thereby prevent our dishonouring thy name, and bringing trouble and ruin upon ourselves.”

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to

5, 6 And our Lord further said to his disciples, As to the manner in which ye are to present such petitions as these that they may be heard and answered, it should be with great earnestness and frequency, and with believing importunity and perseverance till ye obtain the blessings ye pray for; as may be illustrated by the following similitude: Suppose any of you had a friend, and should go to him, in the dead of the night, to beg a supply of such necessary provisions as you want, telling him that another friend of your's, being on a journey,

to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed, I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet, because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

journey, is just come to you for refreshment, and that you have no manner of food to give him.

7 And suppose that the friend you apply to should at first so far discourage you, as to call from within his house, and desire you not to give him so unreasonable a trouble, telling you, that, it being late, his doors were fastened up, and he and all his family were got to bed, and therefore he must be excused from rising to answer your request.

8 If a man in these circumstances were still to continue insisting on the urgency of the case, and to repeat his pleas with him, like one who hoped in his goodness, and would not take a denial; I tell you, that at length he would be prevailed upon, by such pressing importunity, to rise and let him have all that he wants, though he would not do it merely in consideration of the friendship that had been between them.

9 Now, to apply this: If one, who shewed so much backwardness to grant the request of his friend, was overcome at last by his repeated intreaties; how much more will your heavenly Father, who has the kindest heart toward you, and never thinks you troublesome or unreasonable in your addresses to him, suffer himself to be prevailed upon by your fervent importunity, though he may not immediately answer your prayers, but at first may seem to refuse you. I therefore say unto you, Whatsoever mercies ye stand in need of, ask them of God in faith, according to his word, and he will freely grant them: Seek to him with earnestness, and ye shall obtain them: Be importunate for them, like one knocking, and continuing to knock, as at the door of his mercy, and he will give you a gracious answer.

10 For every one who applies to God in prayer, with faith in his power and goodness, and in his promise through the mediator of his appointment, and with persevering earnestness like one heartily concerned for the blessings he asks, shall surely be answered, in God's way and time, either in the very thing he prays for, or in what Infinite Wisdom knows will be as good or better for him.

11, 12 And, further to illustrate and enforce this, our Lord added another similitude, saying, Suppose any of you, who is an earthly parent, had a son that should ask for necessary food, such as bread, fish, an egg, or the like; would you deny him, and, instead thereof, give him what you know would be as useless and injurious to him as a stone, a serpent, or a scorpion?

on *? Let any one, who has the heart of a father, consult his own bowels, and think whether he could do so unnatural and cruel a thing to his own son.

12 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?

13 If therefore ye yourselves, who are under the influence of irregular passions and various humours, would nevertheless, merely from natural affection to your own offspring, hear their cries, and give them what ye know to be necessary and proper for them; how much more will the infinitely perfect Father of mercies give such things as he knows to be for the safety and happiness of his children? (*Matth. vii. 11.*) Yea, how certainly will he bestow that best and most necessary of all blessings, his holy Spirit, upon them who, relying on his grace, earnestly seek to him in prayer for it?

14 And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass, when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake, and the people wondered.

14 At another time, our blessed Lord undertook the casting out of a devil, who had utterly deprived the possessed man of his speech: and, as soon as Satan was forced to depart, the dumb man spoke, thereby making it known to all the company that he was effectually released. And the generality of the spectators were amazed, that one who made so low a figure, contrary to what they expected from the Messiah, should exert such godlike authority over devils, and heal the poor distressed creature in an instant.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils.

15 But the envious *Pharisees*, and some of the people under their management, gave a malicious and wicked turn to this miracle, privately insinuating one to another, that he cast out devils, not by the power of God, but in concert with, and under the influence of, the prince of devils, called *Beelzebub* †, who made underlings yield to his superior authority over them.

16 And others, tempting him, sought of him a sign from heaven.

16 Others took a more artful way to discredit Christ among the people, demanding some extraordinary sign from heaven as a demonstration of his being the Messiah; thereby intimating, as if all the miraculous works he performed upon earth, might possibly be by the black-art, and so proved nothing in his favour.

17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto

17 But Jesus, knowing their evil intent in all this, and particularly what some privately muttered among themselves about his casting out devils by the prince of devils,

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* A scorpion is a small blackish creature of the serpent kind, and is exceeding venomous and mischievous.

† The name *Beelzebub* signifies the god of flies; and was given to the heathen *Jupiter*, whom his worshippers accounted the chief of their gods, but whom they meanly represented as employed in driving away flies

from their temples and sacrifices. The *Philistines* worshipped a deity under this title, as the god of *Ehren*, (*2 Kings i. 6.*) From hence it is probable that the *Jews* took the name, and applied it to the chief or prince of the devils, who was supposed to have some rule and dominion over the rest of the kingdom of darkness.

unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house divided against a house falleth.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace,

devils, replied first of all to that monstrous calumny, saying, It cannot reasonably be supposed that any communities should seek an establishment of themselves, or that their interests should really be promoted and secured, by the head and members being divided in their designs and actions one against another in what relates to their common cause. On the other hand, every one must think, and all observation and experience proves, that such measures tend to, and, if pursued, must end, in their utter desolation, whether they be kingdoms or families, or any other societies whatsoever.

18 If therefore Satan were to assist in restraining and confounding his own agents, and that in confirmation of a doctrine so good and holy as mine, how is it possible that his kingdom should subsist? This would be the direct way to ruin, instead of strengthening and establishing it; and since it cannot be thought that he is so foolish and stupid as not to know this, it is malicious and absurd to the last degree for you to say that I defeat devils by any power derived from him.

19 And, to retort the invidious charge, he further said, If ye suggest that I cast out devils in confederacy with their chief, pray what do ye say to your own disciples, who cast them out in the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Ye never ventured to talk thus of them. And what do you think of your own honest, plain, undesigning countrymen, who do the like in thy name? Ye have no room to imagine that such as these are in league with the devil, (see the note on *Matth. xii. 27.*): They therefore shall witness against you, and condemn you for your partiality, rashness, and injustice, in ascribing what I do of the same kind to the power of Satan.

20 But if, contrary to your blasphemous insinuations, I cast out devils by the power of God *, as I evidently do, ye cannot deny but that I am come from him to set up his kingdom of grace among you; and by opposing me, ye are the greatest enemies to yourselves, sinning against your own mercy to your utter confusion.

21, 22 And still further to shew that what he did herein was really a destruction of the devil's power, he illustrated it by this similitude, saying, When an armed and mighty man is in possession of his house, he rules

N O T E.

* The finger of God seems to be an allusion to what the magicians said, when they found themselves out-done by Moses, (*Exod.*

viii. 19.), and it is called the Spirit of God, (*Matth. xii. 28.*)

palace, his goods are in peace.

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest: and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

25 And, when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first.

rules without controul, and thinks himself secure; but when one still more powerful breaks in upon him and gets the mastery over him, he disarms him and takes all his goods into his own hands. So when Satan has got possession of the souls and bodies of men and by his wiles and strength keeps them under his own dominion, there are no mutinies against him, and he thinks himself able to hold them fast; but when I come upon him with superior strength, and exercise my authority over him, I break to pieces all his power by which he before detained them, raise an opposition against him in those who before were tamely subject to his tyranny, and deliver the prey of the terrible one out of his hands that I may use it for myself.

23 His interest and mine are so directly opposite, that it is impossible we should agree in the same designs: He therefore cannot approve of my doctrine, and of the works which I perform to confirm it for the destruction of his power and kingdom; nor can he side with me, but will ever do his utmost to oppose me therein; and so do all those of you that deny my operations to be the effect of the power of God: There is no neuter in this cause; but every one, who will not allow my doctrine and miracles to be truly divine, is really an enemy to me.

24, 25, 26 And your lamentable condition, O ye hypocritical and cavilling *Jews*, may be illustrated in the following manner: When an evil spirit is cast out of a man, he discontentedly wanders about seeking a settlement elsewhere: But, meeting with perpetual disappointments, he returns to attempt a recovery of his old habitation; and, upon trial, finds nothing to oppose him, but every thing ready to entertain him. Upon which he enters again, and gets faster hold of the same man than ever, bringing many other more malignant spirits than himself to take possession with him: And by this means the case of that man is much more deplorable than it was before. So when the power of Satan is shaken by what I do among you of this wicked generation, he, being forced to retire against his will, roves about among the *Gentiles*, to carry on his empire there: But at length the gospel, attended with the power of miracles, and with internal operations of the Spirit, following him thither, to overthrow his interest among them, by vanquishing their idols, and captivating the souls of multitudes to the obedience of faith, he will return to make another trial upon the *Jews*; and, finding them destitute of the grace of God, and unreclaimed

unreclaimed under their high pretences, to religion, he will enter again among them with greater power and prevalence: And they thereby will become more vile and wicked than ever, to their utter destruction both in this world and the next. And thus it is with all in whom there has been only a temporary work: Satan returning again to see how things stand with them, and finding that they are only cleansed from some former gross sins, and garnished with some false appearances of goodness, but are void of all true principles of religion, he takes possession of them again, and works in them with more malignity and power than ever before; so that they prove utter apostates, turn to be the worst of men, and are brought to the most dreadful condemnation and ruin.

27 And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

27 Whilst our Lord was discoursing in this excellent and awful manner, a certain woman was so mightily affected with it, that, in a rapture of admiration and joy, she interrupted him, crying out aloud among the people, What a wonderful person is this! with what authority does he command devils, and with what wisdom does he confute men! O happy woman who bore and brought thee up! what would I have given to have been the mother of such a Son! All generations will rise up and call her blessed.

28 But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

28 But he replied, Do you think it such an honour and privilege to have conceived, brought forth, and suckled me? a much greater dignity and happiness than this shall be conferred on those who hear my gospel, and receive the love of the truth that they may be saved. It is this that leads the way to real blessedness and glory, and is inexpressibly better than the nearest relation to me according to the flesh.

29 And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign, and there shall

29 The people, being alarmed at this surprising incident, ran together, crowding up still nearer to him; and then resuming his discourse, he proceeded by way of reply to those that had demanded a sign from heaven, (*ver. 16.*) saying, The men of this degenerate age are exceeding obstinate and perverse. Notwithstanding all the unquestionable miracles I have wrought, still they unreasonably insist on proofs of my divine commission, by some extraordinary visible appearance in the heavens*: But their wilful, and incorrigible infidelity shall

N O T E.

* The time was not yet come to give them a sign from heaven: 'This was not to be till after Christ's ascension, first at the overthrow of Jerusalem, which would be the destruction of the then present generation; and afterwards at Christ's second glorious appearing to judge the world: And therefore he would

not so far humour their unreasonable obstinacy and unbelief, as to give them such signs as they insisted upon then; but at another time he told them, (*Matth. xxvi. 64.*) Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them; for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here.

32 The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas is here.

shall not be gratified by any other sort of wonders, for the present, than I have already wrought; except such an one as resembles that of the prophet *Jonah*, which will close my appearance among them on earth, and will leave them altogether without excuse.

30 For as the miraculous deliverance of *Jonah* from death, on the third day, after he had been buried in the belly of a great fish in the sea, was an evidence to the *Ninevites* that God sent them to warn them of their approaching destruction unless they should repent; so I, who am truly man, shall be demonstrated to this generation to be the Son of God with power, by my rising from the dead, on the third day, after I shall have been crucified, and buried in a sepulchre; and if, after this proof that my message to them is from heaven, they continue in unbelief, destruction shall come upon them to the uttermost.

31 And our Lord foreseeing that this grand evidence of his being the Messiah would likewise be rejected by the bulk of the *Jewish* nation, said, 'The example of the Queen of *Sheba*, (who dwelt in that part of *Arabia* which was called *Sabaa*, and lay southerly from *Jerusalem*,) will turn to the confusion and reproach of this unbelieving and hardened generation of men in the day of judgment: For she, though a great woman, and a stranger to the common-wealth of *Israel*, took a long journey from the most distant part of the continent, to satisfy herself about what she had heard of *Solomon's* wisdom; and, upon seeing some specimens of it, she was convinced, and struck with admiration at it. But observe the perverseness of the professing people of this age! one of incomparably greater dignity, wisdom, and glory, than *Solomon*, now appears among them at their own doors, and that with much higher evidence of the divine excellence of his person and doctrine; and yet they reject and vilify him.

32 The behaviour of the *Ninevites* shall likewise testify against the obstinate perverseness of the people of this age, to aggravate their condemnation in the great day of account: For though they were heathens, and the prophet *Jonah* was a stranger, and a man of like sinful passions with themselves; and though he preached to them but three days, in which he denounced nothing but destruction, and wrought no miracle in their sight; yet they believed, and were influenced by his message, to go into a general humiliation and repentance. But observe the difference! a much greater prophet, even the Messiah himself, is now come among

mong you: And though he is one of your own nation sent of God to you as a people visibly in covenant with him; though he has, year after year, preached the glad tidings of salvation through faith in himself, as well as denounced the righteous vengeance of God which will certainly come upon you in case ye continue impenitent and unbelieving; and though he has multiplied miracles of various kinds before your eyes, to confirm his character and his doctrine; yet ye harden yourselves in your wickedness, and will not believe in him.

33 No man when he hath lighted a candle putterh it in a secret place, neither under a bushel; but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

33 These are awful truths. But as no man lights a candle to conceal it or to hide it under a vessel, but to set it up in a candlestick that all in the room may see by it: So, whether ye will receive my doctrine or not, I must go on to publish it, and it will visibly turn to your advantage or confusion according to your entertaining or rejecting it; a further illustration of which, ye may take in the following similitude.

34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

34 As it is a man's eye that lets in the light of this world; and therefore, if this valuable organ be free from cataracts and all vicious humours, his whole body has the benefit of the light for its direction and comfort; but if his eye be perished, or its sight be lost, how clearly soever the beams of the sun itself were to surround him, he can have no advantage by it, but is as incurably dark as if no light shone upon him: So it is a man's understanding that lets in spiritual light; and therefore, if his judgment be free from the influence of pride and covetousness, carnality and unbelief, his whole soul is enlightened with the glorious things of the gospel, approves of them, takes pleasure in them, and is directed and profited by them; but if his judgment be corrupted by any depraved affections, how brightly soever the evidence of gospel-truths may be set before him, his whole soul is as full of darkness, confusion, and misery, and is as effectually deprived of guidance and influence to salvation, as if no external revelation were made to him.

35 Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

35 Let every one therefore take care that the eye of his mind, which ought to receive the light of my doctrine, be not shut up under the power of lusts and prejudices: For this will be the worst of all darkness; and will certainly mislead the soul to ruin, instead of its being directed into the way to everlasting blessedness.

36 If thy whole body therefore be full

36 But, on the contrary, if the judgment be enlightened, and, together with this, the will and affections be renewed and sanctified, the whole man will be filled

full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give the light.

37 And, as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him : and he went in, and sat down to meat.

38 And, when the Pharisees saw it, he marvelled, that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter : but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also ?

41 But rather give alms of such things as you have : and behold

led with the light of truth, holiness, and comfort ; and the gospel, which is as a light shining in a dark place, will, like the clear burning of a candle in a dark room, shed its light into all the powers and faculties of the soul, for its direction in the way of life and peace to eternal glory.

37 Whilst our Lord was engaged in this discourse to the people, a certain *Pharisee* civilly invited him to take a dinner at his house ; and as Jesus was affable and courteous, and took pleasure in opportunities of instructing all sorts of men, he readily accepted the invitation, and sat down to eat with him.

38 But (¹⁴) the *Pharisee*, like the rest of his superstitious sect, holding it to be sinful and defiling, according to their traditions, to eat a common meal without washing one's hands immediately before it, thought it strange that a prophet of so much sanctity as Christ professed to be should begin to eat without having first performed that rite.

39 And our Lord observing this, reproved him and his brethren for their folly and hypocrisy, saying, Ye *Pharisees* are like persons, who, to get a reputation for cleanliness, take a great deal of pains to scour the outside of their cups and dishes ; but, at the same time, leave them very filthy and nauseous within : So ye are superstitiously nice and exact in external washings and cleansings, that ye may appear with a face of strict holiness in the eyes of men, while your minds and consciences are defiled, being full of rapine and extortion, cruelty and covetousness, and all manner of vile affections, which render you abominable in God's sight.

40 What a silly as well as hypocritical part do ye herein act, as if ye could impose upon the all-seeing and heart-searching God, who desires truth in the inward parts ! Did not he create the soul as well as the body ? and can ye suppose, that he is pleased with your ceremonious washings of the flesh, and takes no notice of the impurity of your spirits ?

41 But there is a better way of having an allowed and sanctified use of your common food ; and that is, by liberal distributions out of your worldly substance to refresh the bowels of the poor, according to God's ordinance, for a holy enjoyment of creature-comforts, and of his blessing upon them, (*Deut.* xxvi. 12,—15.) And as the duties of mercy and charity are of moral obligation, and are proper fruits of true repentance, especially when persons have been guilty of extortion and oppression, ye should be much more solicitous about

hold all things
as clean unto
you.

41 But wo unto you Pharisees: for ye tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment, and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

43 Wo unto you Pharisees: for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets.

44 Wo unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye are as graves which appear not, and the

about these than about external washings, that all things may be clean to you, as they are to him who is clean, (Tit. i. 15.)

42 But the greatest of all woes hangs over your heads, ye hypocritical *Pharisees*! for, under pretence of extraordinary piety, ye are wonderfully exact in paying tithes of the most inconsiderable parts of your increase, such as mint, anise, rue and cummin, and all sorts of herbs, which are of little value, that ye may gain the admiration of the people, ingratiate yourselves with the priests, and make a merit of it with God; and, at the same time, ye shamefully neglect the plainest duties of the moral law, such as the practice of justice and righteousness in your dealings with men, and a sincere affection to God: Whereas ye ought to have attended to these duties in the first place, as of chief importance and eternal obligation, though not to the neglect of such ritual performances as are of divine institution.

43 The heaviest vengeance is coming upon you, O ye hypocritical *Pharisees*! for ye are excessively fond of appearing in seats of distinguishing and superior honour in places of public worship, where there ought to be the most humble sentiments and behaviour as in the presence of God; and your ambition is so extravagant, that ye are eagerly desirous of, and mightily pleased with, the highest compliments and homage from the people in all places of common resort, as if ye were holier than others, and were the lords of their faith and obedience.

44 I likewise pronounce you to be extremely miserable, O ye *scribes* and *Pharisees*, who play the hypocrite with God and man! For as the * graves of dead men are full of rottenness and corruption; but, lying level with the ground, and being overgrown with grass, are not easily distinguished; and they that walk over them, not being aware of them, are ceremonially defiled by touching them, (*Numb. xix. 16*): In like manner your outward appearances are so specious, that men cannot easily discover your hypocrisy; but ye are full

N O T E.

* Some graves or sepulchres were whited with chalk or lime, that people might know and avoid them, to prevent being defiled by them. These are mentioned, *Matth. xxiii. 27*. as full of all loathsomeness within, notwithstanding the beauty of their outward appearance. But others were overgrown with herbs or grass, which hindered their being known to be graves. These are referred to here, to represent the danger of per-

sons being unawares defiled by them, because they could not be distinguished. And in both these considerations our Lord might speak of them as fit emblems of the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, in different discourses, as these were; for this was in the house of a *Pharisee*, ver. 37; but the other was some time after, in the temple, in the hearing of the disciples and multitude, *Matth. xxiii. 28*. and *xxiv. 1*.

the men that walk over them are not aware of them.

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Wo unto you also, ye lawyers, for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

47 Wo unto you: for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers; for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

of all uncleanness within; and they that converse with you are infected, and drawn into sin, by your corrupt doctrines and manners, before they are aware.

45 At these words, a certain doctor of the law then present was highly offended; and, interrupting Christ's discourse, said, Master, you not only have been reflecting on the *Pharisees* in general, but now you make too free with our character in particular, considering the eminence of our function*.

46 But (*sc*) Jesus, who was no respecter of persons, nor afraid of the faces of men, replied, Ye also are exceeding guilty before God, and exposed to his dreadful wrath, O ye expounders of the law! for, in your interpretations of it, ye stretch such things as may be most burdensome to the people beyond what God ever intended, and ye furthermore add many severe and expensive precepts of human invention; and all these ye enjoin with the utmost rigour upon others, without the least abatement: But ye yourselves live in the neglect of the most important things, which it is your office to teach and enforce upon them, how strict soever ye may be in some rituals that cost you little charge or trouble and may recommend you to the reverence and applauses of men.

47 Wo unto you, ye hypocritical boasters! for ye shew abundance of zeal to keep up, repair, and beautify, the sepulchres of the holy prophets that were persecuted to death for their faithfulness, and to garnish their tombs, under pretence of your having all possible veneration and respect for their memory; but (*sc*) your fathers were the persons that so cruelly destroyed them.

48 And ye are the inheritors of their wickedness, and practically approve of what they did, being as truly their offspring in your temper, disposition, and behaviour, as by natural descent. For it is indeed true that they were the murderers of the Lord's prophets, and that ye take care to keep their tombs in good repair: But this is so far from being, as ye would have it thought, an evidence of your piety, that it is really a perpetuating the memory of that malignant spirit in your ancestors who put them to death; which reigns with greater fury, and will discover itself with still higher aggravations, in yourselves.

49 There-

N O T E.

* The scribes or lawyers, which are terms of the same import, were by their office interpreters of the law, and were commonly judges in the *Jewish* sanhedrim, and teachers in their schools and synagogues; and

therefore they assumed to themselves an air of great gravity, and valued themselves upon the dignity of their stations; and they were mostly of the sect of the *Pharisees*.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute;

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

51 From the blood of Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple; verily, I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

52 Wo unto you lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

49 Therefore the Son of God †, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and by whom their brightest glory is displayed, proceeded to deal still more plainly with them, saying, I will send, among you of this age, divinely inspired prophets, and extraordinary messengers, to publish my gospel; and some of these ye will barbarously destroy, and others of them ye will persecute with reproaches, imprisonments, scourges, and other cruelties.

50 Hereby ye will far exceed your fathers in extensive and outrageous instances of wickedness, which God will suffer you to commit, in defiance of greater mercies and more evident means of conviction than they ever enjoyed, that ye may bring upon the present generation of the Jews all the terrible wrath threatened and due for national guilt in shedding the blood of the servants of God in former ages from the beginning of the world.

51 Even from the blood of righteous Abel, which was shed by Cain on account of religion, and which cried aloud to heaven for vengeance before the giving of the law, unto the blood of that well-known Zacharias, under the law, whom your predecessors stoned to death, for reproving their idolatry, in the court between the altar of burnt-offering and the temple, and who, when he died, said, *The Lord look upon it, and require it*, (2 Chron. xxiv. 20,—22. see the note on Matth. xxiii. 35.); I assuredly tell you, that God, in his righteous judgment, will revenge all this blood upon the men of this generation, for their still more flagrant iniquity of the same kind, in the utter destruction of their city, temple, and nation.

52 Wo unto you, in particular, ye perverse interpreters of the law! for, instead of faithfully discharging the duty of your office, ye mislead the people*, and will not suffer them to take the scriptures in any other sense than ye think fit to impose upon them; and so ye not only refuse to enter into the gospel-kingdom yourselves, but likewise keep them in ignorance who seem inclined to put in for its benefits, and do all ye can

N O T E S.

† If, as some suppose, Christ himself here spoke of that divine perfection which we call the wisdom of God, it is difficult to make any tolerable sense of this verse, unless the things here mentioned, as said by the wisdom of God, were to be found in the Old Testament, which I think is silent about them. And therefore I take this phrase to be the evangelist's appellation of Christ, who is expressly said to have spoken these things,

(Matth. xxiii. 34.); and who was represented under the character of Wisdom, in Prov. viii.; and is called the wisdom of God, 1 Cor. i. 24.

* The key of knowledge, as some think, is an allusion to the custom of the ancient Jews, who, at the ordination of a Rabbi, or teacher of the law, gave him a key, to intimate that he was to open the scriptures to the people.

can to hinder them by the false glosses which ye give to the word of God, and by hiding from them its plainest references to the Messiah.

53 And, as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things.

53 Whilst our Lord was thus freely exposing and improving the wickedness and hypocrisy of the scribes, they, together with the Pharisees, were enraged at it; and therefore pressed him with many captious questions, to try whether they could not provoke him to drop some unguarded expression, which might one way or other be turned to his disadvantage:

54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

54 They, at the same time, critically observing every thing he said, and endeavouring to put an invidious construction upon it, that might give them a plausible pretence, either of prejudicing the people against him as an enemy to their law, or of prosecuting him as an enemy to the *Roman* government.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What need have we that Christ should teach us to pray unto God, as our heavenly Father, for all temporal, and especially spiritual blessings, with holy adoration and reverence, importunity, faith, and fervour, and with a charitable and forgiving frame of spirit, that God in all things may be glorified! And what encouragement have we to hope for a gracious answer, when we are enabled in this manner, and with an eye to the great Mediator, as discovered in the clearer light of the gospel, to pour out our hearts before the Lord! But while some are desirous of Christ's teaching them to pray, how are others left to blaspheme, instead of receiving him, who is the only destroyer of Satan's power, and deliverer of his miserable captives! And though some are more desperately wicked than others, there are no neutrals in religion, but all are really either friends or enemies to the only Saviour; and many, who seem to be reformed, and freed from the power of the devil, may turn the vilest apostates, and be more than ever subject to his tyranny over them. But O happy souls that believe and observe the word of God! They are dearer to our Lord than his nearest kindred according to the flesh; whilst others, whose unbelief will not submit to the clearest evidence, fall under his severe rebukes: Even heathen nations will rise up in judgment against them. What a miserable case is it to be blinded with sinful prejudices in the midst of gospel-light! But their folly and wickedness is most aggravated of all others who pervert and abuse the means of grace, under the power of a superstitious, hypocritical, and persecuting temper: They prefer external forms and ceremonies to the substantial duties of love and obedience; they take up with fair shews of religion, whilst all manner of impurities are indulged and reign within; and they are inveterate enemies to Christ, his gospel, and his followers, while they pretend to condemn others of a like temper in former ages. But God will take the heaviest vengeance upon them, if not in this world, in that which is to come; and national sins must issue in national reformation, or national ruin. Blessed be God for the free use of the Scriptures: May none of us incur the wo of taking them out of the hands of the common people, or of imposing our own sense of them upon their consciences! And may none of us be ever so impatient of reproof, as to have heart-risings against Christ and his word for condemning our faults, instead of taking conviction of them!

C H A P. XII.

Christ cautions his disciples against hypocrisy and cowardice in their profession and preaching, 1,—12.; and against covetousness, 13,—21. Directs them to cast all their care upon God, and to make religion their chief business, 22,—34. Shows them the necessity of watchfulness, 35,—48. Bids them expect persecution, 49,—53. And warns the people of the danger of neglects and delays, 54,—59.

TEXT.

IN the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, inasmuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples, first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

1 For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known.

3 Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light: and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.

4 And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid

PARAPHRASE.

WHILST our Lord was discoursing with the scribes and Pharisees, a vast multitude of the people crowded about him, and were ready to trample one another under foot in pressing forward to get near enough to hear him: Then, in the audience of all the people, he turned his discourse particularly to his disciples, saying, Take heed, (*ὑποκριται*) above all things else, of hypocrisy, which is the reigning sin of the Pharisees, and, like leaven, puffs them up, sours and corrupts their spirits, spreads its infection through all their professions, words and actions, and utterly spoils their specious pretences to religion. Be not ye like them:

2 For how close and artful soever your hypocrisy may be, it cannot be so secret, but that, as it is always known to God, it shall one day be manifested to others; nor can it be so disguised, but that, sooner or latter, it shall be exposed in its true light to public view, sometimes to the confounding of its own design even in this world, and certainly in the day of judgment.

3 Your most concealed transactions therefore with one another shall hereafter be made manifest; and what private instructions soever I have communicated to you, and ye have hitherto talked over only among yourselves, like persons whispering in the dark or in a closet, ye shall publish them in the plainest manner wherever ye go, that they may be seen like the light at noon-day, and may be heard like a proclamation from the battlements of an house, by all about you *: Remember that it shall appear at last whether ye have been sincere and faithful in all these things or not.

4 And let me caution you, my disciples, whom I esteem and am concerned for as my dearest friends, not to be discouraged in, or turned aside from, the way of your

NOTE.

* It seems, by comparing this with *Matth. x. 26, 27.* (see the note there) and *Mark iv. 21, 22.* that our Lord spoke it with relation to his disciples publishing the gospel; and

yet, as it is here brought in by way of caution against hypocrisy, I have also had a regard to the discovery of secret transactions in the day of judgment.

afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

5 But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: Fear him which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows.

8 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.

your duty, by fears of provoking the *Pharisees* or any man whatsoever: For the utmost that their malice and power can do against you, is only to destroy the life of the body, which would quickly die of itself; they after all can neither deprive the soul of its life and happiness, nor hinder the body's rising again to eternal life.

5 But I will tell you, whom ye ought to regard as the object of religious fear, and to be afraid of offending by the omission of any duty or commission of any sin; and that is the great God, who is able to kill the body whenever he pleases, and afterwards to make both soul and body for ever miserable in the torments of hell; but, without whose permission, the worst of your enemies can do you no harm: It is, I say, your highest wisdom and interest, as well as duty, to be governed by a holy fear of him.

6 Are not sparrows of so little worth, that five of them are usually sold for two farthings? and yet the all-governing providence of God so carefully watches even over them, that not one of them dies or is killed without his cognizance and leave. (*Matth. x. 29.* see the note there.)

7 But there is still a more special care of providence exercised about you, insomuch that all your minutest concerns, even to the hairs of your head, are under God's exact inspection and disposal; none of them can suffer injury, much less can your lives be destroyed or hurt, without his knowledge and will. Be not therefore afraid of what man can do unto you: For ye as men, and especially as God's servants and children, are in the rank of creatures, and in his account of much greater value than ever so many sparrows; and he who does forget them, ye may be sure, will never be unmindful of you.

8 And, for your further encouragement and caution, I assure you, that, whether God shall see fit to protect you from the fury of your enemies in this world or not, your being courageous and faithful, or timorous and men-pleasing, in your profession and preaching, will be of the greatest consequence in the world to come: For whoever shall boldly own and profess his faith in me here, and shall stand up for my honour, truths, and ways, in the face of all opposition, reproach, and persecution from men; I, the Messiah, will hereafter publicly own and honour him as one of my disciples, and pass a sentence of eternal blessedness upon him, in the presence of my Father, (*Matth. x. 32.*) and his holy angels.

8 But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.

9 But whoever, through fear or shame, in days of terror and calumny, for my sake, shall refuse an honourable testimony to me, and shall decline or cast off an open profession of my name, to the gratification of mine enemies and disheartening of my friends, in this life; he shall certainly be disowned by me, and exposed to public shame, before God (*Matth. x. 33.*) and angels, as one whom I never approved of, and shall be condemned to eternal misery and confusion in the day of judgment.

10 And whoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

10 And while ye make a due profession and declaration of my gospel to others, If any among them, in my present state of humiliation, shall speak lightly of me, and even dispute against my being the Christ of God, through their own ignorance and prejudices, occasioned by the meanness of my appearance, and the greatness of my sufferings, contrary to their expectations about the Messiah; they may obtain repentance and remission of these sins, through the Spirit's influence, and my mediation: But whoever, after my resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, and pouring down of the Holy Ghost, shall speak maliciously against him in his extraordinary gifts and operations for the confirmation of my character, imputing them to the agency of the devil, as some of the Pharisees do the miraculous works which I now perform; the guilt of their sin will be so great, and so directly against the last and only means of conviction and salvation, that no repentance or forgiveness of it shall ever be granted.

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

11 But (¹¹) whatever be the event to others, and how much soever any may be enraged against you for the testimony ye bear to me, even though they should carry you to ecclesiastical courts of judicature, held in the synagogues, to be tried, judged, and condemned by the *Jewish* rulers, or should bring you before magistrates and governors among the *Gentiles*, to answer for the doctrine which ye profess and preach; yet fear none of their faces; nor be over-solicitous, much less anxiously and distrustfully careful, about what defence ye shall make for yourselves and for the truth.

12 For the holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

12 For, as the cause is mine more than yours, I will stand by you; and the Holy Ghost shall be at that instant a spirit of wisdom and courage to you, that ye may know what to answer, and how to behave, as may be most for my glory and interest in the world, and most becoming yourselves as my servants.

13 And one of the company said unto

13 Whilst our Lord was discoursing in this manner to his disciples, one of the standers-by, a worldly-minded

unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully.

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will

ed man, broke in upon him, saying, Sir, as you are a person of an extraordinary character, and set up for the Messiah, I beg that you would be so good as to decide a controversy between my brother and me about an hereditary estate, and order him to do me justice.

14 But (3c) Jesus replied, Friend, whatsoever your notions of the Messiah's temporal power may be, I make no pretences to interpose in an affair of this nature; my business lies in spiritual things, relating to the inheritance of eternal life, and not in secular concerns relating to the inheritances of this world: And, were I to meddle with them, no doubt but some would say to me, as the *Egyptian* did to *Moses*, in a way of resentment and reproach, *Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?* (Exod. ii. 14.)

15 Christ, having in this manner waved interesting himself in temporal affairs, took occasion from the unseasonable motion that had been made to him about them, to say to his disciples and the rest of the company, Be watchful over your own hearts, and stand upon your guard, lest the sin of covetousness insensibly ensnare, defile, and ruin you. Do not give way to a fondness for the good things of this world, to an oversolicitude about them and eager pursuit after them, or to an unwillingness on proper occasions to part with them: For as a little will suffice for the necessities, conveniencies, and comforts of the body; so the happiness of the present life, and satisfaction of the soul, does not consist in an affluence of earthly possessions, which usually brings incumbrances and snares rather than contentment and advantage, and is rather an hindrance than furtherance of a man's using and leaving this world with decency and exchanging it for a better.

16 To illustrate and confirm this, our blessed Lord added a supposed instance of a rich man, who was far from being an happy one, saying, A certain man possessed and occupied a very large estate in land, which yielded so great an increase of fruits, that he had not stowage sufficient to hold them.

17 Hereupon, instead of contriving what he should render to the Lord for all his benefits, and how he might best improve them for his glory and the good of others, his mind was full of solicitous concern how to secure and dispose of all this abundance for his own use.

18 And at length the resolution he came to was this: I will even pull down my old barns, and build new ones more commodious and capacious than the present; and will

will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, Thou soul, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.

22 And he said unto his disciples, There-

will put my vast increase into them, that I may keep it in store, and use it for my pleasure.

19 And, having so much treasure heaped together, he vainly congratulated himself, as if nothing more were necessary for his safety and comfort, saying, O, my soul, thou hast now enough to regale thyself with, to the utmost of thy inclinations and appetites, for a great many years to come; fear no evil, and spare no cost on any account whatsoever, but indulge thyself in all the indolence and pleasure, luxury and merriment, that heart can wish for.

20 But just as he was thus laying out his scheme, without any thought of death or danger, God broke all his measures in an instant, by an awful summons, saying, O vain, inconsiderate creature, who imagine yourself to be lord and sole proprietor of all this plenty, as if you neither received nor held it of me, nor were accountable to me for it; and who are grown so self-sufficient, as to fancy that these uncertain riches would secure long life and pleasure, and make up an entire satisfaction to your immortal soul itself: 'Tis your way is your folly; that soul of yours shall this very night be stripped of all these possessions, and be required to give an account of itself and them at my tribunal; and surrounding devils will demand it for their own, that it may be tormented with them for ever: And then, who will inherit the treasures which you with care and toil have scraped together? How do you know whether they will fall into the hands of friends and relations, or of strangers and enemies, of wise men or fools, of niggards or spendthrifts? but whoever may be the possessor, they will be no longer your's; you can carry none of them away with you; and they will be so far from profiting in the day of wrath, that they will rise up in judgment against you for your abuses of them.

21 Such a fool as this is every earthly-minded covetous man, who sets his heart upon, and seeks after, the riches of this world, as if his chief happiness lay in affluent circumstances, and in making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof; and who is not rich in faith, hope, and holiness, nor is seriously concerned about a share in the treasures that are incorruptible, undefiled, and never fade away, and from which he himself shall never die.

22 But (as) as Christ's disciples, being generally poor, might be apt to think that they had little or no concern in what he had said about the rich, he proceeded more

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

24 Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have store-house nor barn; and God feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you, with taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the

particularly to warn them against such solicitude of mind about the *necessaries* of life, as their low and exposed circumstances were the greatest temptations to, saying, Take heed of being anxiously careful, and disquieting yourselves with unbelieving fears, even about those enjoyments of this world that are requisite to the support and the ordinary comfort of your lives, such as food and raiment, and accommodations of that kind; but depend on the providence of God, in the way of your duty, for such things as may be needful and convenient for you.

23 For as the human life and body are more valuable than food and clothes, which are only the *means* of their sustenance and comfort; so God having already brought you into being without your own concern about it or contribution toward it, he will much more give you a sufficiency for continued subsistence, without your perplexing thoughtfulness about it, as long as he designs you to live, or has any work for you to do in the body.

24 As to *food*, observe what care God in his providence takes of the fowls of the air, even of the most hungry and voracious among them, such as the ravens; he constantly supplies them with the provisions of the day, though they can do nothing to prepare it, nor have foresight enough to lay up for time to come: And are not ye a much more noble part of God's creation as men, and much dearer to him as his children? surely then, he, who feeds and takes care of ravens, will not starve and neglect you.

25 And your carking thoughts about these things are as foolish, as they are needless. To convince you of this, consider, that ye insensibly grew up to that determinate stature and age (*ἡλικία*) of the body which God has appointed to you respectively: And who among you can by any contrivance, art, or management, make it one degree taller, or stretch out its life one moment longer, than God pleases? It, after all, must be just as he sees fit to order it.

26 If therefore it is impossible, by your utmost anxiety, to do so trivial a thing as adding ever so little to that stature of the body, or that time of its life, which God has set for it; How much less can ye do all things that are necessary for the support of its whole frame, and lengthening out its age to any number of years? Why then should ye distress yourselves about them?

27 And as to *raiment*, there is as little reason to be over-solicitous about this: For do but observe how the flowers

the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock, for it is

flowers of the field, and particularly the lilies or tulips, are arrayed, without their own weaving, or spinning, or taking any pains to provide for themselves: And yet I tell you, that God in his providence adorns them with a beautiful clothing, of various colours, vastly superior in their paint to the richest robes of Solomon and his courtiers when on high days he appeared in all his splendor.

28 If then God puts such exquisitely fine and curious ornaments on these short-lived flowers of the grass, which one day flourish in the field, and the next either fade of themselves, or are mowed down and consumed in heating an oven; Can ye suppose that he will not much more give you at least necessary apparel, till ye be cut down by death, and your bodies be consumed in the grave? Surely your faith is low indeed, if ye distrust the care of Providence to clothe you.

29 Be not therefore perplexingly thoughtful about, and eager in your pursuits after, the things of the present life, such as meat, drink, and raiment, whether ye shall be provided with them, or whether they shall be of the more ordinary or of the more delicate or sumptuous kind; nor give way to a distracting, unsettled, fluctuating, and distrustful temper about them, (*μη μετὰ τὴν σὸν*) as if God would not supply you with such things as are proper for you.

30 Such a temper as this is very unbecoming you, my disciples; For this is to behave just like the heathen, who are ignorant of God and his providence, and live without hope of a blessed life to come; and who, for want of knowing better, are carking and caring about the concerns of this world, as if their happiness lay in them, and nothing more than their own industry were requisite to secure them. But (*ὅτι*) as all things are under the management of your heavenly Father, and he knows that some of them are necessary to your subsistence and comfort, ye may well trust in him for seasonable supplies.

31 But let your principal care, desires, and pursuits, be after the more important, spiritual, and eternal blessings that belong to the kingdom of grace and glory; seek these, rather than even the necessities of the present life; seek them first and principally, before and above all things else; and if ye are but partakers of these, ye may be sure that he who has given the greater, will not withhold the less, but will add all such temporal things as he knows are fittest for you.

32 Fear no want of any good thing, O ye my dear property

is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

property and charge, who, compared with the numerous herds of the wicked, are like a small flock of sheep and lambs: For your heavenly Father, by a sovereign, gracious act of his mere good pleasure, has appointed and provided for you, has given you a right and title to, and will bring you to the possession of, all the riches, honours, and delights of the kingdom of glory; how much more will he give you all the necessities of this life?

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may

33 Instead therefore of following the chase of this world, or being anxiously thoughtful about food and raiment; be ready to part with even what ye have, when God in his providence calls you to resign it for his glory and the relief of the poor: And let your principal concern be about the heavenly inheritance, that all things here may be managed in a due subservience to this; which is like a treasure put into bags that will never rot or decay; nor will it ever waste, or be spent, or stolen from you by fraud or violence; nor be moth eaten, like garments for the body; but will endure incorruptibly, and make you happy without abatement or end.

34 For whatsoever ye esteem as your chief treasure, will command and govern your hearts and affections, desires and hopes, cares and fears, whether it be any thing in this world, or the glory and blessedness of that which is to come.

35, 36 And as the best of treasures are to be enjoyed or lost when your Lord shall come to judgment, the time of which is unknown and uncertain; be ye like servants that are continually waiting * with their loins girt, and lights burning, in all readiness to receive their master, at the first notice of his returning home from a wedding. See that ye live in a daily exercise of grace, and performance of duty: Labour to keep your evidences clear for heaven, and to spread the knowledge of spiritual things all around you, that ye may be continually prepared in your frame and employment, as well as in your state, and may be waiting with expectation and hope for your Lord, whenever he shall appear in his glory to take up the church to heaven, which he has espoused to himself by the ministry of the gospel on earth: And be always circumspect, that, as soon as ever the alarm shall be given of his being just at hand, ye may

N O T E.

* Here is a manifest allusion to the long garments that used to be worn by the eastern nations down to their feet, and to be girded about the loins when any service was

to be attended to; as also to the lights that servants were wont to carry at weddings, which were usually in the night.

may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching; verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then

may be in no surprise; but may be ready to bid him welcome, and to enter with him into his joy.

37 Those faithful servants are happy beyond expression, whom their Lord, at his second appearing, shall find to be thus diligently waiting in expectation of it: I assuredly tell you, that he will shew the greatest condescension to them*, and put the highest marks of honour upon them, in admitting them to his glory, and entertaining them with all the delights of the heavenly world.

38 And, whether he shall appear sooner or later, at the beginning of their expectation, or after they have long waited for him, Every one who shall be found ready in this manner to receive him, shall be truly and for ever blessed with him.

39 And as the coming of your Lord will, for its surprising suddenness, and sad consequences to the unwatchful and unprepared, be like that of a thief in the night, observe what I say in the following parable: If any house-keeper certainly knew before-hand the exact time when thieves would attempt his dwelling, he could not be so stupid and careless as not to be on his watch just then to prevent them: But every wise and prudent man will do more than this; he will take care that his house be always in a state of good security, lest it should be assaulted at unawares.

40 In like manner therefore, see that ye defer not your preparation for the coming of your Lord to judgment, till the surprising hour overtakes you; but that ye be always in such a state, and frame, and course of life, as ye would wish to be found in, whenever it may be; for the Messiah will certainly and suddenly appear, to your confusion, or joy, at a time when ye may least of all expect it.

41 Then Peter said to Jesus, Lord, is this awakening parable spoken to us only, who are thy servants in the work of the ministry; or dost thou intend that it should be applied in common to all that hear it?

42 Our Saviour replied, 'Tho' all in general are concerned in it, I spoke it more directly to you: For who, think

N O T E.

* We are not to suppose that this is to be understood literally, as if our Lord, at his second glorious appearing, will put himself into such an abject form, and minister to his saints in such an humble manner, as he did when he girded himself and washed his disciples' feet on earth. But these expressions are to be taken in a figurative sense, alluding to the practice at some feasts a-

mong the ancients, and particularly among the Romans at their *Saturnalia*, or feasts dedicated to *Saturn*; where servants had the honour of sitting at table, and their masters waited upon them to serve them; as it is customary among some of our nation, in the present age, for the bridegroom to wait at table, like a servant, on his wedding-day.

then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh, shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants, and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken,

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten

think ye, but such as, like good stewards, are faithful in improving their various talents, will be highly advanced in their lord's house, to have the management of his affairs according to his will, and to make such distributions in proper time and season as are suitable to the respective states and circumstances of all under their charge?

43 Such and such only are happy servants, whatever their station may be, who shall be found faithfully discharging the trusts committed to them whenever their Lord shall come to call them to an account.

44 I assuredly tell you, that he will own and accept them in their work and labour of fidelity, faith, and love, and will raise them * to the highest dignity and glory, when he shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom.

45 But if, on the other hand, any one, who professes to be my disciple and servant, shall give way to unbelieving thoughts, as if his great Lord and Master would never come again to call him to an account, because he sees no present appearances of it; and if, under the power of this practical infidelity, he shall grow remiss and careless, and shall thereupon give himself liberty to revile, insult, abuse and persecute others of his fellow-servants, and to be luxurious and intemperate in his sensual appetites, as well as outrageous in his passions;

46 His Lord will surprise him in the midst of all his unbelief and wickedness, when he little thinks of it; and will cut him off by death from all his vain and flattering imaginations, from all his comforts here, and from all hope and happiness hereafter: He will separate his soul from his body, and separate them both from God and blessedness; and sentence him to everlasting destruction, which is the portion of unbelievers.

47 Only there will be this difference: As under the law a distinction was made between sins of ignorance and presumptuous sins, (*Num. xv. 29, 30.*) and criminals were to be beaten with a number of stripes, more or less, according to the degrees and aggravations of their faults, (*Deut. xxv. 2, 3*); so he who had a clear knowledge of what his Lord requires and may reasonably expect from him under all his advantages and opportunities, and yet neglects his duty, and sins against the light and convictions of his own conscience, shall be

N O T E.

* Christ here alludes to the further honours and trusts that masters use to confer on those servants who have approved them-

selves to be prudent and faithful, as *Paul* dealt with *Joseph*, *Gen. xli. 40.*

beaten with many stripes.

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

49 I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled.

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I threatened till it be accomplished!

51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three

be proportionably punished with the heaviest strokes of divine vengeance.

48 But he who, though he had proper means of being acquainted with his Lord's will, did not understand it, and so acted contrary to his commands, shall be punished with less severity than the other: For, according to the universal law of equity among men, the greater capacities, opportunities, and advantages, any servant has for discharging a trust committed to him, the higher will be his Master's expectations and demands from him; and the more he is intrusted with, the greater will his guilt and punishment be, if on any account whatsoever, he prove negligent and unfaithful.

49 I am come to establish a doctrine so contrary to the pride and prejudices of men, that it will incense them against me and my disciples, and be the occasion of great animosities, contentions, and persecutions in the world: And as these fiery trials are already begun in the opposition and rage of the *scribes* and *Pharisees* and others on this account, what shall I say, or do, or wish for, with respect thereunto? Shall I desist from my design of publishing my gospel? No; it is too important for the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners, to be declined, how much soever I and my followers may suffer for it upon earth.

50 For my part, I know that the first and heaviest storm will fall upon myself in the most terrible ignominious sufferings and death; so that I shall be solemnly consecrated to my priestly and kingly offices by the baptism of my own blood, as I have been to my prophetic office by the baptism of water and of the Holy Ghost: But I am so far from refusing the distress, that, like a woman in travail, who longs for her pains to increase upon her that she may bring forth her child, I am exceeding desirous of going through it, that I may see my seed, and the pleasure of the Lord may prosper in my hand.

51 And as for you, my apostles and disciples, Do ye imagine that the design of my coming into the world is to settle temporal peace and prosperity? Alas! that is a very great mistake, I assure you, the event will be so far from this, that, on the contrary, ye will find it turn to greater strifes and divisions, miseries and confusions, than ye ever knew before.

52, 53 For though my gospel is full of love and goodness, and directly suired and designed to promote friendship, kindness, and social affection, and will have this happy

three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father: the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother: the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

54 And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when ye see the south-wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth; but how is it, that ye do not discern this time?

57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

happy effect on those that cordially embrace it; yet, through the corruptions, enmity, and opposition of others, it will henceforward prove an occasion of fierce contentions, and cruel persecutions: So that, when some in the same house shall receive and others reject me, as suppose, in a family consisting of five persons, there be two of one sort and three of the other, they who continue in unbelief will be so enraged at the converted, that even father and son, mother and daughter, every rank and degree of relations, according to the flesh, will cast off all the tender sentiments and obligations of natural affection, and be the most implacable persecutors of one another.

54, 55 Then Jesus, turning to the unbelieving multitude, reproveth them for their stupidity and folly in rejecting him, notwithstanding the plain evidences he had given of his being the true Messiah; saying, If at any time a cloud appears toward the sea, which lies west of *Judea*, ye immediately conclude that there will be a shower of rain; and if ye observe that the wind blows south, from the hot country of *Africa*, ye reasonably expect that the weather will be hot and sultry, and, generally speaking, ye are not mistaken.

56 O ye hypocritical people, what blindness, obstinacy, and prejudices, are ye under, with respect to your spiritual concerns? ye are sagacious enough in observing the motions of the wind and clouds, and prognosticating the weather from thence, that ye may order your affairs accordingly; but ye take no notice of the much plainer and surer tokens of the present day of merciful visitation, which is of infinitely higher importance to you. Ye may see that the Old-Testament prophecies of the Messiah are fulfilled in my birth, tribe, and family, in the place where I was born, in *John the Baptist* as my forerunner, and in the manner of my life and doctrine; and ye may see that all my pretensions to that character are confirmed by numerous miracles. How is it, then, that ye do not discern this time, that it is indeed a day of grace, in which I appear as a Saviour among you?

57 Yea, why do not ye take example from yourselves? (*ἑαυτοῦν*) In the instance but now mentioned ye are skilful and diligent observers, and act with prudence according to your observations: Why then should ye not be excited, by what ye do in those lesser things, to take the same care, and use as much observation and prudence, with respect to the greater things that relate

to your eternal peace? and why do not ye act in this affair as the common prudence of a man would suggest to be right in temporal concerns? *

58 When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

58, 59 Suppose any of you were going to a court of judicature with an adversary who has an action of debt against you, which, if prosecuted, would be your utter ruin; common sense would tell you, that all possible means should be used for a timely compromise with him, lest he should get judgment and execution against you, to your imprisonment all the days of your life. In like manner, as sin has brought you into a state of enmity with God, and were he to mark iniquity you could not stand; it is your highest wisdom now, while you are in the way of mercy, to fall down at his feet, acknowledging your transgressions, and to seek peace and reconciliation with him, thro' faith in the Messiah, that you may be delivered from the hands of his vindictive justice; lest he bring you into judgment for rejecting the only Saviour and for your other innumerable sins, and the Judge of all should condemn you, and deliver you over to the executioners of his righteous vengeance, and they should cast you into the prison of hell. I assure you, that if once, through your own impenitence and unbelief, this becomes your case, you must be held there in eternal torments, because you will never be able to satisfy divine justice, or pay the debt of sufferings, which is due for your iniquities.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

What a senseless sin is hypocrisy, since our most secret thoughts ly open to the omniscient eye of that God who will bring them all to light! And how preposterous is it to fear man more than him; since we have immortal souls which cannot be killed with the body, and men cannot hurt the body itself without God's permission, but he can make both soul and body for ever miserable in hell; and since Christ will certainly own or reject them in the other world who own or reject him in this! But there is forgiveness with God for all sorts of sins except that against the Holy Ghost, which none that have any serious desires after the gospel-salvation can be guilty of. And O with what satisfaction may true believers commit all the concerns of this life to that God, whose Providence takes care of all his creatures, and extends to the minutest affairs! And with what humble confidence may they commit the concerns of their souls to Christ, who was eagerly desirous of dying the worst of deaths to redeem them; and to the God of all grace, whose good pleasure it is to give them a kingdom of glory! That kingdom consists of riches infinitely preferable to all the possessions of this world; and therefore they should be sought before, and above all things else, as they will be by those who really esteem them as their chief treasure: This is the way to all true happiness here, and especially hereafter; but covetous and anxious cares about the things of the present life are the bane of religion, and the riches of this world are often the ruin of carnal minds.—Quarrels and confusions

N O T E.

* If we connect this verse with the foregoing, both these interpretations may stand; but if it be connected with the following verse, the latter is to be preferred.

fusions will indeed arise among men, on account of Christ and his gospel, as long as the lusts, passions, and prejudices of multitudes lie in opposition to them: But distinguishing grace makes a difference in others, and that in the same families; and if we are hated and persecuted for Christ's sake, and do not bear a guilty part in religious quarrels, he will enable us to make a just defence of his cause, and of ourselves for our profession of it. How careful should ministers of the gospel be to imitate their great Lord in keeping to their own province, and not intermeddling as umpires in secular affairs, nor assuming to themselves civil powers! And how apt should they and all others be to take every word of Christ to themselves, that they may be always ready to meet him in death and judgment, not knowing how soon he may summon them to appear before him! But O what a source of stupidity, sensuality, and wickedness, is unbelief! And how are secure sinners in perpetual danger of being surprised into utter destruction! Their ignorance and inobservance of what they ought to know and consider, is no just excuse for their sin; and yet sinning against light and conviction is attended with still higher aggravations, and shall be more severely punished. How perverse are the hearts of men that set themselves against the only Saviour, and the only way of salvation by him! and how much more careful and prudent are the generality of them about their temporal, than about their spiritual concerns! But as their natural state is a state of enmity with God, and exposes them to the utmost danger of falling into the hands of his justice; so, unless they seek and obtain peace and reconciliation with him now, through faith in his Son, while there are means and hopes of it, their misery will be unavoidable, insupportable, and without end.

C H A P. XIII.

Christ's remarks upon the destruction that fell on the Galileans and others, 1,—5. His parable of the barren fig-tree, 6,—9. His healing a crooked woman on the sabbath-day, 10,—17. His parables of a grain of mustard-seed, and of leaven, 18,—21. His preaching, and answer to the question whether few shall be saved, 22,—30. His slighting Herod's threatenings, and lamenting over Jerusalem, 31,—35.

TEXT.

There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

PARAPHRASE.

WHILST our blessed Lord was speaking of the importance of being in a state of peace and friendship with God, some of the company took occasion to mention to him the sudden tragical slaughter of certain Galileans, whose blood Pilate, the Roman governor, had shed, by sending soldiers to cut them in pieces, even while they were offering their sacrifices at Jerusalem; because, being followers of Judas of Galilee*, they persuaded the Jews that they were a free people, and ought not to be subject to a foreign government or to pay tribute to Caesar.

2 And

N O T E.

* These seem to have been some of that faction which Gamaliel referred to when he said, (Acts v. 37.) After this man (viz. Theudas, a noted impostor,) rose up Judas of Ga-

lilee, and drew away much people after him; he also perished, and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

3 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

4 Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwell in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

2 And as the persons who made this report would thereby seem to intimate as if these must needs be uncommonly wicked people, and very unprepared to die, since vengeance so remarkably fell upon them in the midst of their external devotions; Jesus, to guard against this uncharitable censure, replied, Do ye conclude from the time and manner of these *Galileans* being thus barbarously murdered, that they were more notorious sinners than all the rest of their countrymen?

3 I assure you that no such inference can be justly drawn from thence: But as these men are only examples in providence of the miseries that every sinner deserves and is in danger of; so, unless ye repent of your infidelity and wickedness, your whole nation shall as certainly be destroyed, and your blood shall be mingled with your sacrifices in as dreadful a manner, by the sword, as theirs was †; and all impenitent sinners shall perish by the righteous judgment of God, if not in this world, yet inevitably in the next.

4 Or, to remind you of another awful providence, which ye know befel some among yourselves nearer home, Do you imagine that the eighteen persons who were killed, without the immediate hand of men, in the fall of the tower of *Siloam**, were more flagitious sinners than all the rest of the people of *Jerusalem*?

5 Whatsoever ye may think of the matter, I tell you, No such censure ought to be passed upon them, since all things relating to the present life come alike to all: But this is likewise a sample of the dreadful calamities which are coming upon all the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, who, unless they are brought to repentance, shall perish in the ruins of the whole city, as those persons did by the fall of that tower; and the guilt of every one of you is so great, that, if ye persist in impenitence and unbelief, ye shall certainly be punished with everlasting destruction in the world to come, whether ye fall by any remarkable judgment here or not.

6 And

N O T E S.

† This was literally fulfilled, according to *Josephus's* account, that many thousands of the *Jews* were slaughtered in the temple, and round about it, at the feast of the pass-over, because of their opposition to the *Roman* yoke: and so their blood was mingled with their sacrifices by the *Roman* sword, and that for the same cause, as the blood of these *Galileans* had been by *Pilate*. Vid. *Joseph Bell*, *Jud. l. vi. c. 11. & l. vii. c. 17. & Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. iii. c. 5.*

* Dr *Lightfoot* supposes that this was a tower by the pool of *Siloam*, which was the same with, or at least communicated its

water to, the pool of *Bethesda*: That it belonged to one of the porches, where the impotent people lay watching for the moving of the waters; and that some of them, or some others, who came thither to purify themselves for the temple-service, were killed by the sudden fall of that tower. But when or how this tower fell, or where it stood, is uncertain to us, we having, as far as I can learn, no other account of it, either in sacred or civil history, than what is here said about it, where our Lord speaks of its fall as a remarkable well-known fact in these days.

6 He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?

8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall

6 And still further to enforce this solemn warning, and shew the danger and aggravations of their iniquities under the rich advantages they enjoyed, our Lord added the following similitude: "There was (said he) a certain owner who had planted a fig-tree in his vineyard, and coming at the proper season with an expectation of gathering fruit from it, he found none."—So God, whose vineyard is his church, gave his peculiar people, the *Jews*, all the spiritual privileges of that sacred inclosure; and when it might be reasonably expected that they should bring forth fruits of righteousness to his glory, he found that they had only the leaves of an outward formal profession, and continued to be carnal and sensual, impenitent and unbelieving: And this is the case of all obstinate sinners, and hypocritical professors, under the means of grace.

7 "Then the owner said to his vine-dresser, See how long I have waited, even three years past, in vain, and still this fig-tree is entirely barren: Cut it down; why should it any longer take up the place of better plants, and draw away the fructifying juices of my ground, that might be profitable to other trees (*ὡςτις καὶ τὸ γῆρας καταργεῖ*)"—So God, having exercised much patience, and bestowed many spiritual advantages upon the hardened unbelieving *Jews*, said to his son, and to his servants who laboured in the ministry under him, Behold, I have with great long-suffering borne with this incorrigible people year after year*, while there was any room to expect fruit from them; take no further pains with them, but deliver them up to speedy executions of wrath: For to what purpose should my care and kindness be any longer abused by them, who, like cumberers of the ground, do more harm than good, misimprove the means of grace, and fill up the room of others that might profit by them? And in like manner he speaks of all that continue obstinate and unfruitful under the preaching of the gospel.

8, 9 "But (st) the vine-dresser answered the owner, Sir, I beg that you would bear with the fig-tree one year longer, till I have tried some further methods of

N O T E.

* The three years of God's patience are supposed by some to relate to the three years of Christ's personal ministry. But the one year of further trial, mentioned afterwards, does not suit this literal construction; since it was between thirty and forty years after the death of Christ, before the *Jewish* church and nation were destroyed. The conjecture of *Grotius* seems less liable to exception; which is, That these three years are mentioned with a reference to the nature of some *flowers* in that country, which did not use

cultivation, to bear longer than three years before they began to bear: Therefore, till that time there was a reasonable ground of expectation that they might bring forth fruit; but if they bore none then, there was little room to hope for it afterwards. But be this as it will, there seems to be a direct reference in this parable to what the prophet said of the church of *Israel*, (*Isa. v. 1.—7.*) and much light may be received from thence to explain it.

shall dig about it, and dung it.

9 And if it bear fruit, *well*; and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

11 And behold there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath-day, and said unto the people,

cultivation, such as digging about it and dunging it: If by these means it shall become fruitful, all will be well; but if not, do with it as you please."—So Christ, in the greatness of his compassion, intreated for sparing mercy to be extended a little longer to the *Jewish* church; as he likewise does for others under the gospel; and that some further means of conviction might be used with them, before God should utterly cut them off†: And his servants are earnestly desirous and importunate with God, that their obstinate hearers may be spared some time longer, and tried with further means of grace, in hopes that he may give them repentance. If at length they shall be effectually changed, the patience and pains bestowed upon them will have a happy issue, to the glory of God, to the joy of Christ and his servants, and to the salvation of those souls themselves: But if, after all, they still continue stupid, hardened, and carnal, neither Christ nor his servants will offer any thing in their favour; but will leave them, as utterly inexcusable, to the executions of God's righteous wrath.

10, 11. Now as Jesus, according to his custom, was preaching on a certain sabbath in one of the synagogues, behold, a lamentable object presented to his notice. There was a poor woman, whose body had been convulsed to such a degree, for eighteen years together, by the power of Satan who had been permitted to afflict her, (*ver.* 16.) that she could by no means raise her head, or stand upright,

12 And, as she came with great difficulty to public worship, Christ looked with compassion upon her; and, calling her to him, said, Woman, I command that you be now delivered from your disease, by which you have been bowed down so many years.

13 And, whilst he was speaking, he laid his hands upon her; and so powerful were his authoritative word and touch, that in an instant her body was restored to its proper stature and straightness: And she, feeling such a sudden and surprising cure, blessed God for it with great joy before all the people.

14 But the ruler of the synagogue, (see the note on *Matth.* ix. 18.) envying Christ the glory of this undoubted miracle, cavilled at it because it was wrought on the sabbath; and, intimating to the people as if it were a profanation of that holy day, he severely reprimanded them

N O T E.

† These further means seem most immediately to refer to the higher evidences that should be given of the truth and excellence of Christianity after the resurrection of

Christ and effusion of his Spirit, and the solemn exhortations that were to be made with them by the apostles on this foot.

people, There are six days on which men ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath-day.

15 The Lord then answered him and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard-seed which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree, and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

them, saying, God has appointed six days in the week for doing all manner of works; and therefore, if ye want to be healed of any distempers, ye ought to come on those days for it, and not on the sabbath which God has appropriated to his own immediate service.

15 Then the Lord Jesus himself, taking up the cause, replied, O hypocritical pretender to a mighty zeal for the sanctification of the sabbath, that you may defame the divine and merciful work which I have wrought in this cure! Is it not an universal and allowed practice among you, to untie and let out your ox, your ass, or other cattle, and to lead them abroad to a watering place on the sabbath-day?

16 If this is done without any scruple for the relief of a beast, that it may not suffer so much as one day's thirst, is it not still more evidently and unquestionably lawful for me, merely by a word and touch, to set a woman at liberty, on the sabbath-day, from a much sorer distress, which she had been afflicted with for eighteen years together; especially considering that she is not only a rational creature, but a descendant from your father Abraham, and a daughter of the covenant, to whom the promise of Abraham's blessing belongs; and that what was done for her, was rescuing her out of Satan's hands who had so long and so cruelly oppressed her?

17 The force of this answer was so exceeding plain and convincing, that all his enemies were entirely baffled, and were ashamed that any of them had made such a weak and frivolous cavil as could by no means be supported with the least shew of argument: And, on the contrary, there was a general rejoicing among the common people, who were much affected at the glorious appearance of Christ's wisdom, power, and mercy, in what he had done and spoken on this occasion.

18 Then said our Lord, By what fit emblem shall I represent the rise and progress of the kingdom of God, as it relates both to the gospel in the world, and the work of grace in the heart? Or by what similitude shall I illustrate it to you?

19 "It may be compared to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man sowed in his garden, and which, though it is one of the least of all seeds, grew up to a tree, whose branches were large enough for the birds of the air to lodge and build their nests in them"—So the gospel of the kingdom, which in the first preaching of it is confined to a corner, and is received but by very few, shall, in due time, spread through the world of Jews and Gentiles, and be the power of God to the salvation

of vast multitudes; and the work of grace in the hearts which is at first so very small as to be hardly perceivable, shall gradually increase and flourish, to the joy and encouragement of others, as well as to the benefit of the soul itself in which it is planted, till it shall be perfected in heaven,

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

20 Again he said, By what further similitude shall I represent the silent, secret, and efficacious power of the gospel, and of the grace of my kingdom, as one is the means of conveying and propagating the other?

21 "It may be compared to the nature of leaven, which, when it is put, as it usually is by women, into a great quantity of meal or dough, ferments and diffuses its virtue through the whole mass."—So the doctrine of the gospel comes not with outward pomp or show, or human authority; but secretly and effectually makes its way in the world, and into the hearts of men, by a divine evidence and power; and the grace, which it is the means of begetting in the soul, secretly and effectually operates there, till it makes a thorough change in the heart and life; so that old things pass away, and all things become new, and grace at length is perfected in glory.

22 And he went through the cities and villages teaching, and journeying towards Jerusalem.

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

22 After this, our blessed Lord, who was indefatigable in his labours, travelled through many cities, towns, and villages, directing his course toward *Jerusalem*, and preaching, as opportunities offered, in every place where he came.

23 And a certain person said to him, Lord, are there but few of mankind that shall be saved? but (²) Jesus, perfectly knowing with what temper of mind this question was put, waved a direct and positive answer, that he might neither gratify curiosity, nor give a captious hearer any advantage against him; and, turning to the people, took this occasion to say to them,

24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto

24 Instead of making curious inquiries whether few or more shall be saved, let it be your chief concern that ye yourselves may be of the happy number of those who shall get into the way to eternal life, the entrance into which is indeed exceeding strait and difficult: Be diligent in your attendance on the ministry of the word; seek after an experimental acquaintance with the only true way of salvation through the Messiah; wrestle earnestly with God for his Spirit to teach and assist you, to change your hearts, and to give you faith and repentance; and, in a dependance on him, spare no time or pains, which, by his grace, may subserve your arrival to everlasting happiness. For I assure you, that

to you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are:

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are: depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

many, who would willingly go to heaven, seek after it, either in such a formal, cold, and slothful manner, or by such mistaken methods which their own ignorance and carnality, pride and prejudices, suggest to them, that they will never be able to obtain it.

25 And if ye rest short of, or turn aside from, the true way to that blessed state now, it will quickly be too late to hope for admission thither: For though at present a door of mercy is opened before you in the gospel, and there are rich encouragements for striving to enter into it by faith; yet, as soon as ever the great Lord of his house shall shut up this door at death and judgment, it will then be too late for you to find mercy, how earnest and importunate soever ye may be for it, or how confidently soever ye may expect it: For he will turn a deaf ear to all your cries, and tell you, to your everlasting confusion, that he never owned or approved of you as his real disciples.

26 Then, full of consternation at your miserable repulse, ye will begin to plead various privileges which ye rested in here as if they would be your passport to heaven hereafter: Some will be ready to urge, that they had frequent conversation with the Lord himself upon earth, were admitted into his company, and freely eat and drank with him, and heard him preach in their streets; and others will think to make a merit of their having often attended upon sermons and prayers, and gone to the Lord's table, and made a strict profession of his name.

27 But alas! he will nevertheless reject you, saying, with awful and tremendous majesty, I tell you that I never looked upon or esteemed you as my true disciples: What signified all your external privileges and professions, while, under the power of unbelief, ye continued to be in love with one or another sin, and to go on in the practice of it? Depart, all ye habitual impenitent sinners, from my blessed and holy presence; and be gone to your own company, to share with them in everlasting torments.

28 Then anguish and despair, the bitterest lamentation and horror, will seize you, like persons howling and grating their teeth for vexation and envy, when ye shall behold the famous patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and all the holy men and servants of God, triumphing amidst the exalted honours and delights of the heavenly world; and at the same time shall find that all your hopes and pleas are defeated, and that ye are violently pushed back with indignation, though ye were a people

people visibly in covenant with God, the natural seed of glorified saints, and the children of the promise.

29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

29 And what will still further add to your consternation and envy, O ye unbelieving *Jews*, will be, that while ye are thus disappointed and rejected for your obstinacy and wickedness, great multitudes of the *Gentiles*, being made by faith the spiritual children of *Abraham*, and walking in his steps, shall come from all parts and nations of the earth, and be admitted to a state of rest, blessedness, and glory, with your own renowned and godly ancestors.

30 And he hold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

30 So that, O ye depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! the *Gentiles*, who for many ages were not his people, shall be favoured with the rich blessings of the gospel; and the *Jews*, who formerly were his people, shall be rejected for their impenitence and unbelief: And it shall appear at the day of judgment, that they who seemed in human view to be at the utmost distance from heaven and least likely to get thither, shall at length obtain it through faith in the Saviour of *Israel*; and they who seem to stand fairest for heaven, shall, for their iniquities, fall short of it.

31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence; for Herod will kill thee.

31 The same day came some of the *Pharisees*, Christ's most inveterate and implacable enemies, who envied his growing reputation among the people, and wanted to get rid of him; and they, hoping to scare him out of *Galilee*, told him, It would be his wisest way to hasten out of *Herod's* jurisdiction, because he had formed a design against his life, and was seeking an opportunity to apprehend and put him to death, as he did *John the Baptist*.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day, and to-morrow,

32 But our Lord was so far from being intimidated by this malicious and artful insinuation, that he boldly replied, Ye may go, if ye please, to that subtle contriver *, who, like a crafty fox, thinks to remove me from his neighbourhood by stratagem, whilst he dare not attempt my life; and ye may tell him from me, that, let him do his worst, I am not afraid of him. but shall go on with my work for some time still: My triumph over devils in casting them out, my compassion to the sick

N O T E.

* Though this dishonourable appellation of a prince from a private person might be thought opprobrious language, and a reviling of the rulers of the people, contrary to God's law; yet it was not so in Christ, who herein acted under the character of a prophet; and so, by virtue of his office,

had liberty and commission to reprove, and that sharply, the greatest princes upon earth, according to what God said to *Jeremiah*, (ch. i 17, 18.); and the name which Christ gave *Herod* most fitly agreed to his crafty character and conduct, particularly on this occasion.

morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

sick in healing them, and my preaching to the people, must be carried on * a little longer: And at the time appointed of my Father, which is very near approaching, I shall finish the work that he gave me to do on earth, shall be perfectly qualified for, and consecrated to, the remainder of my office, by my sufferings and death, and shall be as willing to die, a sacrifice for sin, as *Herod* can be to kill me.

33 Nevertheless, I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of *Jerusalem*.

33 However, in the mean while, be his designs or threatnings what they will, they are all vain and impotent: I must, according to divine appointment, pursue my journey, (ver. 22) and go on a little longer in my Father's business; and I shall not fall by *Herod's* hands in *Galilee*: For as God has fore-ordained the place, as well as the time, of my death; so no prophet can be tried and executed, under pretence of law, in any other place than *Jerusalem*, where the great council sit, who claim the power of judging about the Lord's prophets, and, by long prescription, have exercised it in murdering them.

34 O *Jerusalem*, *Jerusalem*, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee: how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not;

34 Hereupon our blessed Lord, as a holy man and affectionate minister, took occasion to lament over *Jerusalem*, saying, with a most tender, earnest, and moving pathos, O *Jerusalem*, *Jerusalem*, who once wert the holy and beloved city, but now art become desperately and incorrigibly wicked, even unto the murdering of the prophets of the Lord, and cruelly persecuting his messengers of peace; in which you will go on, to fill up the measure of your iniquity, by putting me and my followers to death! How often have I instructed, cautioned, reprov'd, encouraged, and expostulated with your inhabitants, and used all manner of convincing and engaging methods to bring them into myself, that they like chickens under the wings of an hen, might be secured from the destruction which would otherwise come upon them, and might be cherished and comforted with my mercy and salvation! But alas! they would not come to me that they might have life, nor would they that I should reign over them; and ye, their teach-

ers

N O T E.

* To-day, to-morrow, and the third day, must be understood to signify a little time, and not precisely such a number of days: For in the next verse Christ speaks of his continuing to walk on the day after the morrow; whereas here he speaks of his being perfected on the third day, which relates to his finishing the work of redemption, and being consecrated by death to his office, as our great High-Priest and Captain

of salvation, according to the common use of this word *τελειωμαι*, as particularly in *Heb.* ii. 10. & v. 8, 9, 10, & vii. 27, 28.; and it is the same word which is used in the Septuagint to signify the consecration of *Aaron* and the legal priests to their office. But it was many days after Christ spoke this, that he continued to work, before he was crucified.

ers and rulers, would neither go into my kingdom yourselves, nor suffer your disciples and dependents to enter into it.

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and, verily, I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

35 Behold therefore now with dread and astonishment, and know for certainty, that your temple and city, the house of God, and your own houses, are consigned over to final and utter destruction, which shall quickly lay them desolate: And I assuredly tell you, that the time hastens apace, (see the note on *Matth. xxiii. 39.*) when I will visit *Jerusalem* in mercy no more; and ye shall never see me again, till, as an emblem of my last awful and glorious appearing, I shall come to destroy it: Then ye will have quite other thoughts of me than ye now have, and be forced to own that I am the blessed one and the sent of God, whom ye treated as an impostor, and loaded with a curse: and then ye would be glad to be found among those who shall bid me welcome and embrace me as their Saviour.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How should we guard against uncharitable censures of others, with respect to the judgments of God falling upon them! And how much rather should we go into a humbling sense of our own iniquities and obnoxiousness to his wrath, whose exact retributions of justice are reserved for the world to come! In the mean while, he takes notice of all the seasons and means of grace that we enjoy, and of all our unprofitableness under them: But as long as, through the mediation of Christ, the gospel is continued to us, there is room for hope of others; and wherever it is received in truth, and is the means of producing a principle of grace in the soul, it shall flourish and prevail to a thorough change in heart and life, like the growth of a grain of mustard-seed, and the efficacy of leaven in meal. But God's patience will not always last towards incorrigible sinners; their abuses of gospel-opportunities will, sooner or later, turn to their righteous and utter ruin: Then they would be glad of the salvation which they before neglected; but all their cries for mercy then will be in vain; all their hopes and pleas from external privileges, and pretences to religion, will be defeated; and there will be none to intercede for them: This will be the awful condition of vast multitudes. But of how much greater is it to us, to seek in good earnest after our own salvation, than to indulge curious questions about the fewness of them that shall be saved! And yet, to quicken our diligence and dependance upon God's grace, and to raise our admiration and praise, if we are made partakers of it, we should remember that the number of these is very small, compared with those who will be lost; and that God maintains such a wise and holy sovereignty in bestowing his favours, that the least likely, in human account, many times freely receive them in his way, whilst others, more likely, fall short of them. And O what rich encouragement have we to hope and try for mercy, while we are in the way of it, and such an almighty gracious Saviour as Christ is set before us! How godlike was his power and goodness, in his miraculous cures, to prove his divine character; and what a lively emblem did he therein give of his tender compassion to those that are, and have been, long bowed down in spirit, under the power of sin and Satan! He prevents them with his grace, and commands their deliverance.—How indefatigable was he in his labours and preaching! What an honour did he put upon public worship, and sabbath solemnities! And with what wisdom did he settle the law of God's holy-day, that works of piety and mercy may be attended to thereon! How did he despise the terrors of men; and how willingly did he give himself up to the

the worst of deaths, to make atonement for sin! But till his time was come, no powers on earth were able to destroy him. What long-suffering and bowels of compassion did he shew to sinners; what a variety of endearing methods did he use to win upon them! And who can think of such as are finally obstinate and impenitent, and not, like the tender-hearted Jesus, mourn over them, in that they wilfully reject him and his gospel, and resolutely persist in their sins with high aggravations, for which their destruction at last will be insupportable and unavoidable.

C H A P. XIV.

Christ cures a dropsy, and vindicates his doing it on the sabbath-day, 1,—6. His lesson of humility, 7,—11. Of charity to the poor, 12,—14. The parable of the guests invited to a great supper, 15,—24. A description of true discipleship, 25,—33. And the difference between good and bad ministers and professors, 34, 35.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees, to eat bread on the sabbath-day, that they watched him.

1 And behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-day?

4 And they held their peace. And he took him and healed him, and let him go.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord being invited (ver. 12.) on a certain sabbath-day to a necessary refreshment, at the house of a great man *, who was a Pharisee; he countercourously accepted the invitation, and went in to take a meal with him: But some of that sect, and several doctors of the law, being present, narrowly watched him, as usual, (*Mark iii. 2.*) to see if he would do any thing contrary to their rules about the sabbath, that they might take an occasion to accuse and reproach him.

2 And a remarkable opportunity offered to try him, For at that time there was present † a poor miserable man, who was grievously afflicted with the dropsy:

3 And as Christ, in his wounded compassion, determined to heal him, but knew the captious designs of the scribes and Pharisees, he, answering to their inmost thoughts, asked them, Whether it were contrary to the law of God to do such an act of mercy and charity, as to heal a diseased man on the sabbath-day?

4 They not knowing how to make a defensible reply, consistent with their superstitious rites about the observation of the sabbath, chose to be silent: And therefore Christ, without more ado, took the dropsical man aside, to avoid ostentation, and laying his hand upon him, (*ἐπιλαβόμενος*;) reduced his swollen body to its proper shape and bulk in an instant; and then sent him away in perfect health, that the Pharisees might not quarrel with him for suffering himself to be cured on that day.

5 Then

NOTES.

* He seems to have been one of the Jewish sanhedrim, and a chief ruler in the synagogue.

† He probably came there, hoping for a cure; or perhaps was one of the family.

1 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath-day.

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him, come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But, when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room, that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher; then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

5 Then Jesus, turning again to the *Pharisees*, said, Who is there of you all, that, if his ox or his ass were fallen into a pit, would make any scruple even of taking great pains to pull it out, on the sabbath-day? none of you would refuse to do this, or think there were any harm in it. Ye cannot therefore, without the greatest partiality and injustice, count me guilty of any crime, in only stretching forth my hand to heal a poor distressed man, in danger of his life, on the sabbath-day?

6 And there was such undeniable evidence in this way of reasoning, that they were all confounded, and could not reply a word against it.

7 Our Lord observing, that when the invited guests, especially those of the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, came to place themselves at the table, every one strove for the upper hand, endeavouring to get the highest seat, he took occasion from thence, as from a proper similitude, to reprove their pride, and recommend the excellence and advantage of humility, saying,

8, 9 When any of you are invited to a wedding, or other public feast, do not put forward for the highest place, vainly conceiting yourself to be worthy of it; lest there should be some other guest of higher rank, by his age, station, or qualifications, and thereupon the master of the feast should, out of due respect to him, come and desire you to let him take your seat; and so you should be exposed to contempt before all the company, and be forced with confusion and disgrace to remove lower.

10 But, on the other hand, whenever you have such an invitation, chuse to set yourself in one of the lowest seats, with a due sense of your own unworthiness, and with a preference of others; that when the master of the house observes it, he may desire you, in a respectful manner, to remove to a more honourable place: This will procure you much esteem and reputation among all that shall be at table with you. And as in this, so in all other actions of life, let your behaviour toward God and man be with all humbleness of mind and becoming modesty.

11 For whosoever is wise and deserving in his own conceit, and would take honour to himself before the Divine Majesty, or fellow-creatures, shall certainly have contempt poured upon him; God will abhor and bring him low; and men will despise and disdain him: But whoever is of an humble spirit, abasing himself at the foot of God under a sense of his own nothingness and vileness, and preferring others to himself, he shall be highly honoured of God and man. (*Prov.* xxix. 23.)

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind.

14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompence thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

12 Then Jesus, observing what sort of guests were at table with him, turned to the *Pharisee* who invited him, and said, When you design to make an entertainment, if you would have it pleasing to God, and really advantageous to yourself, do not confine it to your friends and nearest kindred, nor to your rich neighbours and acquaintance, exclusive of others, to the wasting of your substance, and hindering your liberality, where it may be needed; nor be fond of making sumptuous and costly feasts, that your great and wealthy friends and relations may honour your table, and admire its elegance; lest they retaliate your bounty, by feasting you with their dainties again, and that be the whole of your reward: For all this is only feeding your own selfishness, pride, and luxury.

13 But when you make a feast, let it ordinarily be of good, wholesome, and less costly food; and invite or send portions of it to those (*Neh. viii. 10.*) that are really in want, such as the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind; who are objects of great compassion, and unable to provide for themselves.

14 And though it is not in the power of these to return the same sort of kindness to you, ye shall nevertheless be blessed in the best manner, for they will bless God for you; and, being sensible that they have no other way to make you amends, will pray for his blessing upon you, (*Job xxix. 13.*): And, you being found among the righteous, he will own and honour these charities, and graciously reward them, if not in this world, yet with rich advantage at the general judgment. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy,* (*Mat. v. 7.*)

15 Now one of them who sat at table seemed to be much affected with this discourse; and, breaking out in a sort of ecstacy, said to Jesus, They are blessed indeed that shall * share in the privileges and pleasures of the Messiah's kingdom on earth, and shall be admitted to all the delightful entertainments of the heavenly world at the resurrection of the just.

16 To

N O T E.

* To eat bread was a usual phrase for a whole meal, whether of common, or delicious provisions, (*1 Sam. ix. 7. and xii. 17. and Prov. ix. 5.*) And as the company were now at table, and Christ's discourse had turned upon spiritual subjects, in allusion to a feast: the advantages of religion here, and the blessedness of heaven hereafter, are

very seasonably expressed by the metaphor, of eating bread in the kingdom of God: Though, as some tell us, this was a saying common among the *Rabbins* from *Ezra's* days; and it is probable, that this man had carnal notions about the honours of the Messiah's kingdom, when he used it.

14 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

16 To this our Lord replied, What you say is very true; my kingdom is full of blessings, though many despise and reject them; as may be represented in the following parable. A certain man made a great feast, which, as usual, was at supper, and invited many guests. So Christ, now in the end of the world, has made plentiful provisions of gospel-grace for spiritual refreshment and perfect happiness, that sinners may be holy here and blessed for ever; and he freely invites all that hear the gospel, beginning with the *Jewish* nation, to accept those rich provisions for their present relief and comfort, and for their eternal salvation.

17 And sent his servant at supper-time, to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

17 And when the feast was fully prepared, and but few of the guests were come in, the master sent his servant again to them who had been invited, to let them know that all things were now ready for their entertainment, and to bid them come without any further delay. So Christ having called the *Jews* by his personal ministry and by the preaching of his servants, whom he sent to the cities of *Judea*, with little success, he commissioned the apostles and evangelists, after his resurrection, to renew his gracious invitation, and to assure them that now all things were thoroughly prepared, that the work of redemption was actually finished, that the Spirit was poured out from on high to bear witness and give efficacy to it, and that he was still willing to receive every one who should come by faith to him. And this is the language of the gospel, wherever it is preached*.

18 And they all with one consent began to make excuse, The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

18, 19, 20 And yet the invited guests, as it were by common consent, put off their coming, upon various pretences: One alledged, that he had lately bought a piece of ground, and must needs go to see how the bargain was like to prove; and therefore begged to be excused: Another pleaded, that he had just bought five yoke of oxen, and must go to try whether they were fit for his business; and therefore desired that he might be excused: And another insisted, that he was lately married; and therefore peremptorily declared, he could not come. So the *Jews* in general, and the *scribes* and *Pharisees* in particular, and many others that sit under the gospel, reject its gracious invitations, upon frivolous and carnal pretences; some preferring their worldly gains and advantages, and others their sensual ease and pleasure, to Christ and the blessings of eternal life; and

all

N O T E.

* Though this parable primarily relates to the calling of the *Jews*, and afterwards of the *Gentiles*, yet it is applicable to all

persons in all ages of the world to whom Christ sends his gospel.

all unbelievers are for shifting off a present attention to his calls, which carries in it a real denial, though they are ashamed in plain terms to avow it.

20 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

21 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

22 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the high-ways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

21 The servant, returning to his lord, reported the several excuses they had made: And the master of the feast, being provoked at their ingratitude and contempt, ordered him to go immediately into the public parts of the city, and invite the poor, the maimed, the halt and blind whom he might meet with there. So the ministers of Christ give him an account, with grief, in their prayers, of the unsuccessfulness of their labours, saying, Lord we are a savour of death unto death to many; they will not hear and receive our message: And he, being highly offended with those first refusers of his grace, sent his servants to the dispersed *Jews* and the *Gentile* proselytes, to preach the gospel to them, and even to the most despicable people, who make but little figure in the world, and are remarkably ignorant, impotent, and miserable.

22 And when the servant had executed this commission with some success, he said to his master, Lord, thy orders have been obeyed, and some are come in, and yet there is room. So upon preaching the gospel to those *Jews* and proselytes, many of them believed; and the servants of Christ rejoice to tell him of the success of their ministry, whenever, by his grace, their preaching is made a savour of life to life; and this revives their hearts, and encourages their pleas, that still there is room for more in the church, and in the heavenly mansions, which are not yet full, and in the grace of God and merit of the Redeemer, which are not yet exhausted.

23 Then the lord of the feast ordered his servant to go into the high roads and hedges without the city, and to be very earnest with even the beggars, and the country people there, to come in, that his house might be filled. So the Lord Jesus sent his gospel to the ignorant and idolatrous *Gentiles*, who were afar off, (*Eph. ii. 12,—17.*) and to the most notorious sinners; and he made it effectual among them, who flocked in multitudes to him and his church, like persons constrained to it, not by force of arms, but of arguments attended with the Divine Spirit, who persuades, encourages, convinces, and sweetly overcomes the hearts of the disobedient, and draws them with cords of a man, with bands of love, that they may be a willing people in the day of Christ's power, (*Hos. xi. 4. and Psal. cx. 3.*)

24 And

24 For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

25 And there went great multitudes with him; and he turned, and said unto them,

26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down

24 And the reason why the master of the feast would send no more to the resolute refusers, was, because, being angry with them, he declared not one of them should ever taste of his rich entertainment. So Christ, being provoked at the ingratitude and obstinate infidelity of the *Jews*, ordered his apostles to make no further proposals of the gospel to them; but to turn to the *Gentiles*, (*Acts* xiii. 46.): And God has sworn in his wrath against them who believe not, that they shall not enter into his rest. (*Heb.* iii. 18.)

25 After this, a great multitude attended our blessed Lord to *Jerusalem*; and that they might not pretend to be his followers in expectation of secular advantages, he, turning to them, said,

26 It is not so easy a thing to be my disciples, nor so consistent with, much less so subservient to, your carnal pleasure, and worldly safety and interests, as ye may imagine; do not deceive yourselves in a matter of such consequence as this: For if any one would come by faith to me, would make a profession of my name, and cleave to me for the blessings of my kingdom, he must go into such acts of self-denial, and submit to such hardships and persecutions for my sake, as shew that he prefers me to all the dearest comforts and relations of life, such as parents, wives, children, brethren, and sisters; and must be as ready to part with them, and to be separated from them at my call, as if he really hated them; and must be indeed averse to them, and to his own enjoyment of them, so far as they would hinder his faith, and love, and faithfulness to me: Yea, he must have the same self-denying temper of spirit, with regard to his own life too, being as willing to resign that also for my glory, when they stand in competition; or else he cannot be a true disciple to me, nor share in my blessings.

27 And whosoever is not willing and resolved, by the grace of God before-hand, to submit to reproaches, injuries, and cruelties, even unto death, if he should be called to endure them, for my sake, and after my example, that he may maintain his fidelity to me, cannot be in truth one of my disciples, nor will I own him as such: Think therefore of these things seriously and deliberately now, as ever ye would be Christians indeed; lest, in a time of sore trial, ye be discouraged, and all your profession and hopes come to nothing. Thus men use to do in other cases of importance.

28, 29, 30 For who is there among you, that, designing to build an house, would not, before he begins the

down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

29 Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,

30 Saying . This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth, whether he be able, with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

the work, sit down and carefully compute the whole charge, and consider whether he is able to go through with it? lest, after he has inconsiderately begun the building, he be forced to desist for want of a sufficient stock of money to defray the necessary expence; and so should expose himself to the derision of all that know him, for having foolishly attempted what he had no reasonable prospect of ever being able to finish.

31, 32 Or, to give you another instance of prudence among men; What king, of common thought or conduct, who is in danger of being engaged in a war with some other potentate, would not, before he ventures a battle, deliberate seriously with himself, whether he be able, with only ten thousand, to encounter twenty thousand of his enemy's forces? and if he thinks he is no match for him, what man in his senses would not rather send ambassadors, while the enemy is at a distance, and sue for a treaty of peace upon any tolerable terms, than rashly give him battle, to the apparent hazard of a total defeat, and entire loss of all his dominions, and even of his own life? Surely every thoughtful prince would do this.

33 It is therefore of much greater necessity and importance for those of you, who would engage in a profession of my name, and entertain hopes from me, to sit down and thoroughly count the cost, reckoning upon the very worst, as well as the best, that ye may expect to meet with for my sake. And then it behoves you to think seriously with yourselves, whether ye set out upon such a foundation as will support your hopes and views for eternal life, and carry you through all the difficulties that lye in the way to it; whether, though ye cannot go on in your work and go out against your enemies in your own strength, my grace be not sufficient for you; and whether ye find your hearts engaged thereby to run all risques and encounter all opposition from Satan, the flesh, and the world, rather than abandon me? for I have already told you, that unless ye come to a point in the spiritual dispositions and settled purposes of your souls about these things, even to the loss of all this world, if need be, ye cannot be really my disciples, owning me, and owned by me.

34, 35 My doctrine, and a holy profession of it, are, like salt*, very valuable and serviceable; and truly gracious and holy Christians, and especially sound and faith-

ful

N O T E.

* By salt may be meant either the doctrine of Christ, and a profession of his name, (Mark ix. 50.) or good Christians,

and especially good ministers, whom Christ calls *the salt of the earth*. (Mat. v. 13.)

but if the salt has lost its flavour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghills but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

ful ministers, are the excellent of the earth, and of great use to spread the favour of the knowledge of God, to prevent corruption, and improve all company, where they come: But if my doctrines be debased; or a profession become loose and lifeless, and professors and ministers themselves degenerate, and prove carnal, graceless, destitute of the power of religion in their hearts and lives, and so sink under the difficulties and discouragements they meet with for my sake; they become like tasteless, spiritless salt, which has lost all its virtue and relish †; and no other principles or means can ever recover such persons from their depravity and apostacy: And as insipid salt is neither fit for so much as to manure land, or to make dung; so error is mischievous; and such persons are rather injurious, than serviceable to any the least valuable purposes whatsoever; and are to be utterly abandoned and rejected, to be cast out of the church in this world, and shut out from the kingdom of heaven in the next: Attend therefore to, and deliberate carefully upon, what I have said, as a matter of the highest moment to yourselves, if ye would be indeed my disciples.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How careful should we be to observe the law of the sabbath, free from the extremes of superstition on one hand, and of profanation on the other! Happy is he who does not allow himself in that which he condemns in others: Nature requires proper repairs on the Lord's day, and religion demands such acts of mercy and goodness as are suitable to present circumstances; but our chief employment, discourse, and table-talk, like our blessed Lord's, should be of a religious strain—How amiable and exalting is true humility; but how odious and debasing is pride, both in the sight of God and man, and in its different events, relating to this world and that which is to come! And how little is the highest honour and esteem among great men and friends on earth, to be compared with the glorious recompence which shall be made at the resurrection of the just! In order to the obtaining of this, behold the rich provisions of gospel-grace, and its free invitation to all sorts of sinners, even the most unworthy! And behold its victorious power in bringing them in to Christ! None shall be excluded, who do not by unbelief exclude themselves; and yet, alas! how many are there that make light of its blessings, prefer this world to them, excuse themselves by trifling pretences from embracing them, and provokingly refuse them, to their own eternal loss and ruin! But, blessed be God, there is yet room; and as all things are now ready, they shall not be utterly lost: The whole human race shall not be suffered to reject the gospel; but sovereign grace will make it effectual to many, even to sinners of the *Gentiles*, and to the most unlikely in human view, till Christ's house be filled. Ministers must give an account to him of their labours and success, in their prayers here, and at the day of judgment hereafter; and whilst he accepts them in the faithful discharge of their office, he will be angry with the obstinate refusers of his grace, and never allow them to partake of its saving benefits: But he will make all those heartily welcome who by faith receive him. How should he have the preference, in our hearts, to life itself, and all its dearest relations and comforts! and how concerned should we be to enter

N O T E.

† This tasteless salt is such as the chymists call after distillation, *Caput martium*.

enter upon a profession of his name, on such principles as will carry us through the worst that can befall us for his sake ! We should sit down and count what our religion will cost us, and what blessed assistances, encouragements, and comforts, are to be found in Christ, to support us under tribulation, over-balance it, and crown us with victory and triumph over it : And O how excellent is his doctrine, and how effectual, when maintained in its purity, and the heart is seasoned with grace ! We then are blessed, and make blessings. But how pernicious is error ; and how useless and injurious at present, and miserable at last, will loose and carnal, corrupt and careless professors and ministers be ! They shall be rejected of God as contemptible and vile. With what attention and concern should we think on these things, that we may not be of them that draw back to perdition ; but of them that believe to the saving of our souls !

C H A P. XV.

The Pharisees offended at Christ's conversing with, and preaching to, publicans and sinners, 1, 2. He vindicates himself in the parable of the lost sheep, 3,—7. ; and of the lost piece of money, 8,—10. ; and of the prodigal son, 11,—32.

TEXT.

Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

PARAPHRASE.

AS Christ was preaching in a certain place*, there were present a company of men who collected the tribute which the Romans demanded of the Jews, and were mostly persons of ill character ; these, with abundance of other infamous sinners, came to hear and receive instruction from him, under a conviction of their sin ; and with a desire to learn the way of recovery and salvation.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave

2 Upon this, the scribes and Pharisees, a superstitious, self-conceited people, took offence, quarrelled with Jesus, and reproached him, as if he could not be a good and holy man because he preached to such despicable and abandoned wretches as these, and suffered them to come so near him, and even sometimes to eat with him. (*Chap. v. 29, 30.*)

3 But (21) our Lord, to vindicate his own conduct for the recovery of lost sinners, and to shew the condescension and the riches of Divine grace to the chief of them, Gentiles as well as Jews, illustrated his design in the following similitudes †, saying,

4 Suppose any of you had an hundred sheep, and one of them, going astray, were lost in the wilderness, and in danger of being destroyed, Would he not leave

all

N O T E S.

* It seems that our Lord was now in Galilee of the Gentiles, beyond Jordan, from whence he afterward went to Jerusalem, chap. xvii. 11. ; and that the sinners here mentioned so emphatically, were sinners of the Gentiles, which best agrees with the scope of the following parables.

† Here are three parables of like import, the two first of which represent the grace of God in searching his people out, chiefly among the Gentiles ; and the other in receiving them with great kindness, upon their return to him ; and all of them represent the great pleasure he has in their salvation.

leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And, when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing.

6 And, when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.

all the rest of his flock, which were visibly in safer circumstances, and go in search after that which was lost, till he should find it?

5 And when he meets with it, he would certainly take it up, and carry it back upon his shoulders, with more than ordinary pleasure, in the thought that he had recovered and saved it from ruin.

6 And, as soon as he gets home, he would express greater joy among his friends, neighbours, and acquaintance, and expect them to rejoice with him more, at his finding and bringing back this lost sheep, than on account of all the rest which were not so exposed to danger.

7 In like manner, I tell you, that I have sheep among the greatest of sinners, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, who are gone astray from God, have lost their way to heaven and happiness, and are running headlong to destruction; and who are lost to the service and honour of God, and to their own safety and comfort: And wherever they are scattered, or into whatsoever lengths of sin and danger they have run, I will follow them by my word, providence, and Spirit, to search and find them out, and bring them into my fold: And when my grace becomes effectual for bringing them to repentance unto life, this is matter of rejoicing to my Father and me, who delight in mercy; and to the holy angels, who rejoice in our glory, and in their happiness: Yea, speaking according to the usual workings of mens' passions upon obtaining what was much desired, and yet seemed past recovery, There is more joy in the conversion of a sinner of human race, than in the confirmation of the angels, who never sinned; in the conversion of the *Gentiles*, than in the preservation of the *Jewish* church, whose covenant-relation supposes them to be already turned to God: in the conversion of notorious sinners, than of those who have always been so civilized as not to need such a visible change; and there is undoubtedly more joy in the conversion of all ranks and degrees of sinners, than in the pretended religion of such self-righteous persons as think themselves too good to need any repentance. And if, on these occasions, there is such joy in heaven, it should surely be matter of high approbation, and not of murmuring on earth.

8 Again, Suppose a woman had ten pieces of money, and out of her little stock had lost one of them in her house, Would she not light a candle, and look about for it, sweep the room, and narrowly search every creek and corner till she should find it?

8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it?

9 And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons.

12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

13 And, not many days after, the younger son gathered all together,

9 And, as soon as she finds it, she would naturally express more abundant joy to her friends and neighbours, and expect them to be more pleased on that occasion, than if she had never lost it.

10 In like manner, I tell you, that all who belong to God, and are in a lost state of sin and misery among the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, are of high account with him, who will search till he finds them out, and will suffer none of them to be lost for ever: And, upon the conversion or true repentance of any one of them, such is the joy of God therein, that he will discover it among his holy angels in heaven; and they will rejoice in it more than if this penitent had never sinned and exposed himself to the damnation of hell.

11 Then, still more directly to convince the *Jews* in general, and the *scribes* and *Pharisees* in particular, of their pride and wickedness, in being envious at his shewing favour to publicans and sinners, and that even among the *Gentiles*, he added another similitude, saying, Ye may easily conceive of a certain man, as having two sons. So God, as the Creator and Preserver, Benefactor and Governor of all mankind, is the common Father both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who, in their original state, had a fullness of all things as his offspring: And, since the apostacy, he has sons of both these sorts, by gracious choice and adoption; the elder being the *Jews*, whom he calls his first-born, (*Exod.* iv. 22.) because first taken into his covenant, and the younger being the *Gentiles*. And the like may be said of all those who have long been visibly in covenant with God, and of others, who, having gone on a great while in a course of sin, are at length turned to him.

12 Now the younger of the sons not caring to be under his father's eye, and imagining he could improve a stock to the best advantage, partly demanded his portion: And his father made a proper division to them both. So the *Gentiles*, and all mankind by nature, and young people in particular, chuse to be at their own dispose, without controul; and being conceited of their own abilities, are apt to challenge good things as their due: And God, in the bountiful dispensations of his providence, giving them all, and more than they have any just claim to, righteously leaves them, at least for a while, to follow the way of their own hearts, in managing his gifts and talents, that they may see what their own conduct will bring them to.

13 And soon after the younger son had received his portion, he turned it into ready money; went with his

ther, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

his whole stock, from his father's presence, into a distant country, and there spent it all in riotousness, looseness, and debaucheries. So it was with the *Gentiles*: Soon after they were left to natural light, and some traditions of the earliest revelations of God to man, they corrupted their notions and their way, fell into idolatry, superstition, sensuality, and profaneness, misapplied all their talents, and became vain in their imaginations: And so it is with particular sinners, who, being left to themselves, abuse their mercies, run into every kind of excess and wickedness, and lose all sense of God and religion.

14 And, when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 And, when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough, and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

14, 15, 16 But after some time, when the young man had spent all his substance, there was a great famine in the country where he dwelt; and he began to want all the necessaries of life: And finding himself reduced to the utmost straits, without any friend to help him, he was obliged to hire himself, for mere sustenance, to one in those parts who employed him in the mean drudgery of looking after the swine, and so stinted him in his wages, as not to allow him to eat to the full, even of the very husks which the hogs themselves lived upon; though, if he might, he would have been glad to satisfy his hunger with them: So the *Gentiles* in general, after they had departed from God, defaced the small remains of religion that were formerly found among them, and yielded themselves up to the will of Satan, who ruled with tyranny over them, carried them into the worship of devils and many superstitious and cruel rites, and into the most absurd methods of seeking peace and happiness, in which they could never find the satisfaction they sought for: And so all sinners, being far from God, and having sinned away their light and mercies, give themselves up to the meanest and worst of servitude, to the lusts of their own hearts, to Satan and the world, and seek their happiness in the empty, unsatisfying enjoyments, and sinful, sordid pleasures of this life, in which they can never find it, till at length they are reduced to the utmost perplexity and want.

17, 18, 19 At last, the youth's pinching necessity and extreme distress, even to a despair of relief in that far country, brought him to his senses; and put him upon thinking with himself, What have I done, in running away from my father's house, where the poorest of his hired servants are daily eating to the full, and leave enough for the satisfaction of many others, whilst I am just ready to starve by means of my extravagancies?

18 I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants,

cies! hereupon he resolved to go to his Father, with humble confession of his high offences, and with earnest supplication, that, though he was unworthy to be put among his children, he might nevertheless be received into his family, among the meanest of his servants, to have their fare and do their work. So sinners, who, in the days of their unregeneracy and departure from God, acted directly contrary to all true principles of reason and religion, are at length brought to their right mind when God comes to work effectually upon them: He by his word and Spirit, and oftentimes by means of disappointing and distressing providences, lays a sense of guilt and danger upon their consciences, shews them what madness and folly they have been guilty of, in running away from him, and betaking themselves to creature-comforts for happiness, and that there is no possible relief for them, but in the rich provisions which he has discovered as made in Christ for the household of faith. Hereupon a sense of necessity brings the awakened sinner to say, Whatever the event may be, I am resolved, in the strength of divine grace, to depart from sin and Satan, and from all dependance on self and the world, and to go to God, as a Father of mercies in Christ; I will humbly confess mine iniquity to him, saying, "I have heinously sinned against thee, the God of heaven, before thy face, and under thine eye; I therefore own myself to be utterly unworthy of being received and dealt with as a son, and shall think it wonderful condescension and grace if I may but be admitted to have the privilege of only a door-keeper in thy house, and in serving thee in whatsoever thou shalt command me all the remaining days of my life." Thus it was with the heathens, when they turned from idols to serve the living and true God, (1 Thess. i. 9.); and thus it was with every sinner, when God is bringing him home to himself by converting grace.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But, when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him.

20 Accordingly the young penitent set out between hope and fear for a return to his father: But whilst he was yet at a great distance, his father was quick-sighted to discover him; and, his howels being moved toward him, he ran with all speed to meet him, and in a most affectionate manner embraced and kissed him. So the sinner, under a true sense of sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, sets about returning to him from all iniquity in good earnest, and without delay: And whilst he is full of doubts and fears lest so vile a wretch as himself should never find acceptance,

acceptance, God observes him in all his distress, and in the very first motions of his soul toward him; and, being full of compassion, prevents him with the blessings of his goodness, makes haste to relieve his fears, and manifests his love to him, with great endearments, and in most affectionate expressions, to shew that he is reconciled. Thus God graciously dealt with the *Gentiles*, when he granted them repentance unto life; and thus every returning sinner is accepted of him in the Beloved.

41 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

21 Upon this discovery of the father's kindness, the young prodigal's heart was melted, and encouraged to claim relation to him, and to cast himself upon his mercy, with ingenuous confessions of his aggravated offences, and of his utter unworthiness ever to be owned and received as his son. So God's manifesting his favour to the *Gentiles* wrought on them, and emboldened their humble hopes toward him: And an awakened sinner's heart is much affected with the discoveries of God's condescending, free, and pardoning grace, and is thereby encouraged to plead with him as a father, and to hope in his mercy, through Jesus Christ, for all salvation; and a sense of forgiving love is so far from making him think the lighter of sin, that it humbles him the more for it, and makes him the more ashamed of it, and the more ready to confess, with the greatest contrition, that God might justly have disowned and abandoned him for ever.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet.

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry.

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry.

22, 23, 24. But instead of the father's rebuking the recovered prodigal, he seemed to stop him short in his submissions, as if he should say, It is enough that thou art thus deeply sensible of thine own unworthiness; I will be better to thee than all thy deserts, and all thy hopes: And he ordered his servants to bring out the very best garment in his wardrobe, and clothe him with it: to put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and to kill the fatted calf, and make a feast for him, that they might eat and rejoice together; because his son, whom he had looked upon as dead, and had given up for lost, was now alive, and returned to him in safety: Accordingly they, and the whole family then present, began to express great joy on this happy occasion. So when sinners come in to God through Christ, the more they loathe and condemn themselves for their iniquities, the less will he shew any tokens of displeasure; and, for the glory of his own grace, he will not only make them servants, but sons; and do exceedingly abundantly more for them than they are able to ask or

think : As they come to him in filthy garments, he gives them change of raiment, clothing them with the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness, and with the rich dress of heavenly graces : As they come poor and destitute, he gives them a pledge and earnest of the everlasting inheritance by the Holy Spirit of promise : As they come lame and wounded, like cripples unable to go, he furnishes them with the preparation of the gospel of peace, that they may walk with ease and cheerfulness, and may hold on and hold out in his ways : As they come in a starving condition, he sets before them a feast of fat things in the gospel, and gives them the bread of life, that they may eat and be satisfied, and may be nourished unto eternal life : And as they were in great distress and sorrow of heart before, he rejoices to comfort them, and to make them glad with the light of his countenance ; and all his family in heaven and earth exceedingly rejoice with them, upon information, that they who were dead in trespasses and sins are now made alive to God ; and that they who were in a lost condition are now recovered to a state of safety, usefulness, and blessedness. Thus when God called the *Gentiles*, he freely admitted them, not only to all the external privileges of the gospel state, but to the saving and eternal blessings of his covenant ; whereupon they and the believing *Jews* rejoiced, (*Acts* xi. 18. and xiii. 48.) ; and the holy angels rejoice in this great joy to all people, to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, (*Luke* ii. 10, 13, 4.) : And thus when any, especially notorious sinners, are converted, Christ is made to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption ; and there is great rejoicing in heaven and earth.

25 Now his elder son was in the field : and as he came, and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come : and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in : therefore came his Father out and intreated him.

25, 26, 27, 28 Now the elder son returning from the fields, and hearing an unusual sound of extraordinary rejoicing in the house, inquired of one of the servants what might be the meaning of it : The servant told him that his younger brother was returned home, beyond all expectation ; and his father was so exceedingly affected with it, that he had killed the fatted calf to entertain him, and express his joy ; because he had received him, not only in health of body, but also as a thorough penitent, and in his right mind : But the elder brother, instead of being pleased, as he ought to have been, was highly offended at his father's favour to the young prodigal, and resolved not to go in : Whereupon the father himself went out, and with great condescension and kindness, intreated him to come and partake of the entertainment and joy. So the *Jews* in general, and the *scribes* and

Pharisees

Pharisees in particular, were highly offended and enraged when they heard of God's shewing mercy to the *Gentiles*, and making them partakers of the richest privileges and blessings of the gospel*. And so great was their envy at this, that they, through unbelief, refused and shut themselves out from its benefits: Nevertheless, God did not immediately cast them off; but, bearing long with them, came in the ministry of Christ and his servants, preaching peace to them. In like manner †, many of a Pharisaical spirit, that have lived soberly, and made a profession of religion, are offended at the doctrines of God's free and sovereign grace to the vilest and unworthiest of sinners; and this is such an offence to some of them, that, through their own pride and envy, it proves an occasion of their rejecting Christ and the gospel to their own perdition: And yet God does not take their first refusal, but continues beseeching them to be reconciled to him,

29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee: neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

29, 30. But (30) the elder son still continuing obstinate and refusing to go in, talked very pertly, saying, As for me, I have always been your obedient son, have lived like a servant in your family, and never offended you in any instance whatsoever; and yet so cool and unkind have you been to me, that you never so much as gave me a kid to entertain my friends, that they might rejoice with me: But no sooner was this vile wretch, your son, come, whom I am ashamed to own as a brother, and who has profusely squandered away all the portion which you gave him, in rioting, luxury, and debaucheries, but immediately the fatted calf must be killed to entertain him and make merry with him. So the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, and the generality of the *Jews*, notwithstanding the repeated gracious invitations of the gospel, continued obstinately to refuse coming in to Christ, and behaved insolently toward God: They boasted of their own exact regularity and obedience, as if they had never offended him; they thought themselves so worthy of his favour, that all the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom ought to be confined to them; they

N O T E S.

* They were filled with such envy on this occasion that they spoke against the things Paul preached to them, contradicting and blaspheming, (*Acts* xiii. 45.) And when he was afterwards making his defence to them, as soon as he spoke of Christ's *senting him to the Gentiles*, they lost all patience, and said, *Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live: And they cried out against him, and cast off their clothes,*

as ready to stone him, and threw dust into the air, to shew their indignation against him, (*Acts* xxii. 21, 22, 23.)

† Something like this was the case even of the unbelieving *Jews* themselves, who contended with Peter for going in to the *Gentiles*, and discovered their displeasure at it, till he cleared up that dispensation of God's grace to them, (*Acts* xi. 3.—18.)

they looked with indignation and disdain upon the *Gentiles* as the most despicable wretches, that ought not to be owned as their brethren; and could not bear the thought that they should be equalled to themselves, much less that they should be preferred before them: And thus it is with self-righteous professors of Christ's name, who are apt saucily to arraign the dispensations of God's grace, notwithstanding the continued overtures that are made of it to themselves.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost and is found.

31, 32 But his father replied, Son, what room is there for all this discontent, and all these murmuring complaints? you have constantly eat at my table, which has been supplied with rich provisions every day, and have continually lived in my presence, under the tokens of my favour, who have hitherto confined them to you: and I have still enough for you: But here is a fit occasion for expressing more than ordinary joy, in that your brother, whom I love, and you ought to love too, and who was given up for dead and lost, is now returned alive and well, deeply sensible of, humbled for, and reclaimed from, his extravagant wickedness and folly, and is now a dutiful son to me. So God vindicates the free dispensations of his grace to the *Gentiles*, and to the most infamous sinners, against all the dissatisfaction and murmurings of its enemies: He had been exceeding liberal to the *Jews*, confining his covenant-mercy for many ages to them, among whom he had pitched his tabernacle with the special tokens of his presence, (*Rom. ix. 4, 5.*); and if they should not cut themselves off by unbelief, all would still be theirs, he having enough for them and others too. But the conversion of the *Gentiles*, and of remarkable sinners, is the quickening of them who were most evidently dead in trespasses and sins, and a bringing them home who were far from God in a perishing state: And this cannot but be a just occasion of exceeding great joy, in the account of God and angels and all good men*.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How dreadful is a state of sin and apostacy from God! It is a lost, perishing, and enslaved state; injurious to the author of our beings, to ourselves, and others;

N O T E.

* The elder son's making no reply to this, may intimate either that those *Jews*, who persisted in their infidelity, still retained their prejudices against the gospel on this account, being enemies to it for the *Gentiles* sakes, *Rom. xi. 28.* Or it may intimate, that those *Jews* who believed were satisfied with this account of the *Gentiles* being made fellow-heirs with them, and had nothing to reply a-

gainst it, according to *Mt. xi. 19.* And the same may be said of false and formal professors of Christ on one hand, and of some real believers on the other, with respect to the inveterate prejudices of the one, and the weak and ignorant murmurings of the other, against the riches of divine grace to the world of sinners,

thers; destitute of all that is honourable and comfortable; involved in disappointments and perplexity, want and misery; and exposed to utter ruin. But behold the riches of divine grace to the worst of sinners and young prodigals! God searches after his lost sheep, finds them out, and brings them home to himself, and his heart and arms are open to receive every humble penitent; he observes all their groanings and distress, all the workings of their consciences and solicitous thoughts about their wretched condition, all the first and distant motions of their hearts toward him, all their desires, fears, and hopes, and all their purposes and attempts of coming to him; his bowels move toward them, and he prevents them with his mercy, secretly draws them, that they may run after him, helps them against their discouragements, melts their hearts into ingenious repentance for sin, and emboldens their trust and hope in his mercy through the Lord Jesus; and he graciously accepts them in their returns to him, forgives all their sins, takes them into his family, manifests himself to them as he does not unto the world, sheds abroad his love in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, supplies all their wants, and enriches them with the blessings of grace and glory, as if they had never offended him. And O what a happy change does his grace make upon them! They, who before were beside themselves, are then brought to their right mind, and made wise to salvation; they that were proud and self-sufficient, and had run great lengths in sin, are made humble, and brought back again to God; they that were lost to all that is good, and to their own or others power to work effectually upon them, are recovered to every thing that is happy and glorious; and they that were dead in trespasses and sins are made alive to God, to glorify him here, and enjoy him for ever: And, on this occasion, what exceeding great joy is there, in their own souls, and among the saints and servants of Christ upon earth: Yea, in the heart of the blessed God himself, and among the angels in heaven! But O how naturally perverse is the sinner's heart, that, notwithstanding all this, he will try to make any shift, rather than return to God through Christ; and that nothing but a sense of absolute necessity will ever bring him in! And how monstrously wicked are they, who, from a high conceit of themselves, rise up with prejudices against the freeness and sovereignty of God's grace, and would hinder or murmur at the happiness of sinners in their conversion to him! And yet how patient and unexceptionably kind are the overtures of mercy in the gospel, even to the most forward in heart! Happy for them, who at length are overcome by it! But woe to them, who after all continue obstinately to reject it.

C H A P. XVI.

The right use of worldly enjoyments represented in the parable of the unjust steward, 1,—13. A reproof of the Pharisees for their covetousness and hypocrisy, 14,—18. And the danger of setting one's heart on earthly treasures illustrated in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, 19,—31.

TEXT.

AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, having reprov'd the scribes and Pharisees for their pride and envy, proceeded to instruct his disciples, in a parable, about the right use of worldly enjoyments, saying, A certain great man committed the management of his estate to a steward*; and, after some time, an accusation was brought against him, that he

NOTE.

* The rich man in this parable represents one who is entrusted with the bounties of providence; and the steward represents those that abuse them.

unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship: for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto them, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, An hundred measure of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy oil, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, and how much owest thou? and he said, An hundred of measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

he had wronged his master, and misapplied his goods. So it may justly be charged upon the men of this world, that through unfaithfulness and neglect, they have abused the bounties of providence, and applied them to other purposes than those for which God bestowed them.

2 Thereupon the lord of the steward summoned him to appear before him, and said, What a sad report do I hear of your treachery? deliver up your accounts of all that I have entrusted you with; for now I will turn you out of your office. So the cry of their iniquity who abuse the goodness of providence, is, like the sin Sodom, great against them, (*Gen. xviii. 20.*): And the time is coming, when God will say to them, as he did to Cain, *What hast thou done?* (*Gen. iv. 10.*) And as he then will suffer them to have no further use of his bounties, so he gives them warning before-hand in their own consciences and in his word, that *every one of them shall give an account of himself to God.* (*Rom. xiv. 12.*)

3, 4 Upon this notice from his lord, the steward reasoned in himself after this manner, I shall soon be dismissed from my master's service, and reduced to the utmost necessity: What shall I do for a subsistence, who have never been brought up to labour, and am ashamed to go a-begging? but at length he resolved upon a project, to secure friends to himself among his lord's debtors, that, when he should be discharged from his stewardship, he might find entertainment with them. So sloth, and pride, and unrighteous ways of living, having brought the spendthrift to distress, and to expectations of utter ruin, he is at his wit's ends, and is full of inquiries after a provision for time to come, till he has encouraging prospects of obtaining it: And the sinner, who is truly brought to see his danger by sin, will dread the consequence, and never rest till he hath hopes of eternal happiness.

5, 6, 7 Now the policy of this steward, to provide for himself, was this, he sent for all his lord's debtors, and having taken their just accounts, ordered one of them, in all haste, to deduct half, and another a fifth part out of the bill, which was to be given to his lord; and so abated every one a greater, or less proportion of his debt, that he might secure a retreat when his master should put him out of his place. So the men of this world are full of subtle contrivances, and neglect no means, though ever so unjust, to retrieve their desperate affairs: And the sinner ought to consult, in a better manner, what he shall do to be saved.

8 And

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely; for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

8 And when his lord heard how artfully this man had managed, he owned that it was a politic scheme for securing a supply when he should be reduced to extremity *. So, though the dishonesty of such a servant is detestable; yet his foresight, care, and contrivance about the interests of this life deserve an imitation, with regard to the more important affairs of another, and condemn the inconsiderateness and stupidity of those that are less thoughtful about them: For worldly wise men, who place their chief happiness in what relates to the body, are, generally speaking, more sagacious and industrious, in their way, to form and compass their designs for temporal advantages, than the professors of religion, who have the light of the gospel, are for the concerns of their souls and eternity, though they know that in a little time they must die, and give an account of themselves to God: And even true believers do not ordinarily contrive and lay out themselves so much about spiritual, as the men of this world do about temporal things.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

9 I therefore advise and charge you to use as much, foresight and diligence about the concerns of eternity, as worldly-minded men do about the things of time. Instead of employing † uncertain riches in any unrighteous way, use them in acts of piety and charity, with a subservience to real and everlasting happiness; that, when flesh and heart, and all these enjoyments fail, and ye come to die, (ἐλθόντες) God may receive you, as faithful stewards, to eternal mansions in the heavens, the holy angels may take charge of your souls to conduct them to glory, and the poor members of Christ may receive you with joy in the other world, whose bowels ye refreshed, and whose prayers were offered for a blessing to come upon you, in this.

10 It may generally be observed, that a man who is found faithful or unfaithful in a small trust will prove to be so in a greater; accordingly it is usual to advance an honest diligent servant from a lower to an higher post: But no prudent person will ever venture to do this by one that is treacherous.

10 He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.

11 If

N O T E S.

* Some suppose that the Lord here intendeth is Christ himself, who passed this judgment upon the steward's conduct.

† *Mammon* signifies riches; and, according to the heathen theology, was the god of piosity: And all the treasures of this world are here called the mammon or riches of unrighteousness, in opposition to (ἀληθινόν) the true riches, ver. 11. because they are

empty and unsatisfying, precarious and disappointing to the expectations of those that place their happiness in them. And yet they may likewise be so called, because they are often unjustly obtained and possessed, abused and made the means of corrupting many, and are the only portion of unrighteous men.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.

11 If therefore you are so unfaithful, as not to improve the mean and perishing enjoyments of this world for the great ends for which God committed them to your charge, how can ye expect that he should ever intrust you with the more important and substantial riches, that relate to the heavenly world?

12 And if ye act the part of dishonest stewards in the management of the good things of this life, which are not your own, but which God has committed to you, as a trust, to be employed for his glory, and the good of others, and which, in a little while, ye must leave to ye know not whom, how can ye expect that he should enrich you with those better treasures, which, when once they are bestowed upon you, are that good part, which, by the constitution of his covenant, shall never be taken from you?

13 Add to all this, that it is impossible for any one to be heartily engaged in the interests of two masters, whose demands are directly opposite: For if he loves one of them, and lays himself out in his service, he must of necessity be averse to the other, and chuse to neglect his affairs. Thus it is with respect to God, and the riches of this world: the man, who supremely loves God, as his chief good, will despise all earthly treasures, when they come in competition with him, and will use them to honour and please him; but the man, who has an inordinate affection to this world, will disregard and neglect the service of God, and make religion itself subservient to his secular views. (See *Jam. iv. 4.*)

14 Some of the *Pharisees*, a covetous, hypocritical set of men, being present, heard this discourse, and treated Christ with contempt for it; because, though they could not confute it, they were resolved to comply with directions, which lay so entirely opposite to their darling lusts.

15 But, though he knew how to despise the shame, he reproveth them for their sin, saying, Ye indeed verbally disclaim every charge of iniquity; and by your outward shews of uncommon devotion, and great exactness in ceremonial observances, pass for extraordinary saints in the eyes of men: But God sees through the inmost pride, covetousness, and hypocrisy of your hearts; and so ye stand quite otherwise in his account than in theirs: for your high pretences to holiness and piety among men, who can only see your outward appearances and professions, are detestable in the judgment of God, who sees you as ye are, and beholds all the secret and governing vileness of your hearts; and he will reject

jeal you, and admit others to his favour in your room, notwithstanding your high conceit of yourselves, and contempt of them, as well as of me and my doctrine.

16 The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

16 For the Old Testament-dispensation, which prefigured and prophesied of the Messiah, continued till John appeared to point him out unto the people; and, as that dispensation was in a manner confined to the Jews, ye have an high opinion of yourselves, on account of your external compliances with it: But, from the time of John the Baptist, a dispensation of much greater light and grace began to be published; and now multitudes of persons, of what nation or character soever, even publicans, and sinners of the Gentiles, are earnestly desirous of hearing and embracing the gospel, are putting in by faith for an interest in its blessings, and are admitted to them, though they are no observers of the rites and ceremonies of the law.

17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

17 And yet the law is not hereby made void; the prophecies, types, and shadows of the Old Testament are fully accomplished, and the moral law is honoured and confirmed, by the gospel; its precepts are explained by my doctrine, and are exemplified and fulfilled by my obedience; it is established as an essential law of my kingdom and as an eternal and unchangeable rule of righteousness; its obligations are enforced, and the practice of it is secured upon the most effectual principles; So that the heavens and the earth shall sooner fail, and the whole frame of them be dissolved, than any precept of this law shall be disannulled by the New Testament-dispensation, which is designed to vindicate it from all corruptions, to restore it to its primitive purity, and to discountenance all depraved affections that lye in opposition to it, as appears (among other instances) in that which relates to the original law of marriage.

18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marryeth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marryeth her that is put away from her husband, committeth

18- Moses indeed permitted a man, in various cases, to give his wife a bill of divorce, and put her away, for the preventing of greater mischief, which, through the perverseness of your hearts, might have ensued, (*Matth. xix. 4, 8.*) but to strike at the root of all iniquity, and reduce this ordinance to its primitive institution, which was most suitable to the state of human nature, I declare that this shall be permitted no longer; but that whosoever shall divorce his wife, and marry another, except it be on account of his first wife's having been guilty of adultery, (see the note on *Matth. v. 32.*) he himself shall be accounted an adulterer; and whosoever shall marry the divorced woman shall be accounted an adulterer

mitteth adultery.

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and sated sumptuously every day.

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's

terer too, he having no lawful claim to her, whilst her first husband is alive.

19 Our blessed Lord having thus reproved the *Pharisees* for their pride, covetousness, and hypocrisy, returned to his discourse about the right use of temporal riches, and represented the great danger of perverting them into selfish, sensual and licentious purposes, in the following parable, saying, There was a man of a very large estate, who indulged himself to the utmost in the enjoyment of it: He was arrayed in the richest and finest apparel, with purple robes, like a nobleman or a prince, and feasted on the most delicious rarities, and elegant dainties every day. So many of the rich men of this world, spend all their treasures upon themselves, to appear gay and great, to gain the admiration of others, and to gratify their own sensual appetites in all the luxuries of life that wealth and art can provide.

20, 21 At the same time there was a certain man, fitly named *Lazarus**, who, being reduced to perfect beggary, and (*αλεωμένος*) all over-spread with ulcers, was laid at the rich epicure's gate, where he begged for the broken meat or scraps, yea, rather than fail, for the very crumbs, that the dogs used to pick up under the table: But this profuse and unnatural man hardened his heart against his miseries and his cries, and would take no notice of him, to order him the least relief; and yet (*αλλὰ καὶ*) his sores were so grievous, that the very dogs got about him, and, shewing more pity than their cruel master, licked them. So many of God's own children are among the poor of this world, and afflicted with distempers, pains, and sores, as well as others; in these circumstances they are sometimes cast, by providence, in the way of rich and sensual men, who have ability, but no hearts to relieve them, and will rather waste their superfluities upon their dogs, than refresh the bowels of these poor saints with them, and are more unnatural and unmerciful than the brutes themselves.

22, 23 But (*καὶ*) in a little while the poor distressed beggar was dismissed, by death, from all his afflictive, wretched, and necessitous circumstances; and his soul, as the departing souls of all believers are, was immediately conducted, with safety and grandeur, under a convoy of angels, to a state of glory and blessedness, where he had the honour and the delight of being lodged and cherished,

N O T E.

* By the rich man clothed in purple, Christ perhaps pointed to *Herod*; and by *Lazarus*, which signifies one who has God

for his help, he might mean some eminently pious man of that name, who was a known beggar in these days.

ham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.

23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried, and said, father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for

cherished, like one leaning on *Abraham's* bosom, amidst all the rich entertainments of the heavenly world †. The rich man likewise died, as well as the poor beggar; and had a pompous funeral, which finished all his glory; but, alas! how insipid, vain, and worthless were the last honours paid to his formerly pampered, and now insensible and loathsome carcase, whilst, at the same time, his soul was no longer conscious of them, but was tortured in the midst of terrible agonies, which is the case of all that die in their sins, how grand soever their lives and burials were: For in his separate state*, immediately after the death of the body, he fell under executions of vindictive wrath, for his abuses of God's goodness; and there, surrounded with devils and damned spirits, his companions in hideous horror, he had a discovery of the seat and company of the blessed, at a great distance from him, which aggravated his own misery, and that so much the more, as he there beheld poor *Lazarus*, whom he had formerly neglected and despised, lodged with safety, honour, and joy in the very bosom of *Abraham* himself.

24 The rich man seeing *Lazarus* possessed of all happiness, and himself plunged into all insupportable miseries, cried out to *Abraham* †, with great earnestness, in the despairing agony of his soul, O thou Father of all *Israelites*, have compassion upon me, who am one of thine offspring, and who hoped to be blessed by thy covenant, as a descendent from thee, order *Lazarus*, I beseech thee, to come hither, and give me a little relief, though it be no more than a drop of water, hanging on the tip of his finger, might be to cool the tongue of one

NOTES.

† *Abraham's bosom*, was a phrase, by which the *Jews* expressed the happiness of the souls of the righteous, immediately upon their death, which they used to say were carried thither by good angels: And this description of heavenly blessedness seems to allude to the posture that was customary among the ancients at their feasts, where the guests sat leaning backwards, the second in the bosom of the first, and so on to the last: Thus the beloved disciple leant on *Jesus's* bosom: (*John* xiii. 23.) And so poor *Lazarus* had the honour and the felicity of being placed next to *Abraham*, the father of the faithful, and the friend of God, to share in communion and rest, in refreshment and entertainment with him, as Christ does with his Father, who is said to be in his bosom. (*John* i. 18.)

* *Ades*, the word here translated *hell*,

properly signifies the state of separate souls; and it appears from hence, as also from this rich man's having five brethren still leaving upon earth, under the means of grace, that his misery and *Lazarus's* blessedness immediately followed their respective deaths, tho' their different states are represented, in a figurative strain, by most affecting images, taken from the body, and from what we know to be most sensibly touching to it, in the painful or pleasing way.

† The following conversation between the rich man and *Abraham* is not to be literally understood, as if in fact such discourse had passed between them; it is only a representation, by borrowing language, of the happy and miserable state of things, and of the sense which the righteous and wicked have of them, in the other world.

I am tormented in
this flame.

one in the midst of a raging fire, which is the liveliest emblem of what I feel: For I am dreadfully tortured, under the sense and impressions of divine vengeance, as in an intolerable flame. So the sensual and flourishing sinner, who neglected and scorned the people of God in their poverty and affliction, being miserably tormented, immediately after death, in hell, whatever his religious privileges were on earth, would be glad to receive any favour, though ever so little, at their hands to whom they refused the least kindness before.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

25 But *Abraham* bid him reflect, as the damned in hell can do, upon his own and *Lazarus's* former and present circumstances, saying, You are indeed my son, according to the flesh, and had many privileges as such; but how unworthy have you acted of the father, from whom you vainly boast of your descent? and how ungratefully, as well as foolishly, have you sinned away the advantages, which might have been hoped for from thence? Consider, that you, whilst on earth, had riches, pomp, and pleasure in abundance: These were all the good things, that you desired, esteemed, and placed your happiness in; these you used only for yourself; and having abused these, through the hardness and impenitence of your heart, no further good remains to you for ever. And consider that *Lazarus*, whilst he lived in the body, was destitute and afflicted, pining with hunger, and a despicable object in human view: These circumstances were very uncomfortable to him; these he received with submission and patience, from the sovereign, holy, all disposing providence of God; and some of these he received immediately from cruel and unmerciful men, who, like you, shut up their bowels of compassion against him. But now the tables are turn'd, all his evil things are past and gone, and he possesses blessedness without alloy; but all your good things are at an end, and you are insupportably tormented: And how can you, who would not allow him a crumb of bread, expect a drop of water from his hand now? So none of the enjoyments of the sinner and none of the afflictions of God's people, reach any further than the present short, perishing life; the saint at death will exchange his sorrows for all comforts; and the sinner will exchange his mercies for all miseries, and shall then be forced to remember all that passed on earth, in such a manner as will condemn himself, and add a sting to his torments, and will justify God's righteousness in inflicting them.

26 *Abraham* furthermore added, Ah poor wretch! the

26 And, besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

time of mercy and hope is now over; God hath fixed such a vast and unpassable distance between the happy and the miserable, by an irreversible decree and sentence, that if any of us were ever so desirous to go and relieve you, it would be absolutely impossible to do it; and it is as impossible for any of your distressed company to come to us, and share in our joys, though they were ever so earnest in attempting it. So the state of every soul at death is unalterably fixed in heaven or hell, there is no medium; to one of these it must go, and there abide for ever.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house:

27, 28 Then the rich man, despairing of any comfort for himself, said to *Abraham*, I entreat thee, by all the tenderness of a father, to shew me, at least, so much favour, as to dispatch *Lazarus* to my father's house, where I have five brethren still living, who are your offspring too, that he may acquaint them with the true state of things in the eternal world: Let him tell them what a dreadful condition my sins have brought me into; and let him warn them of the danger of treading in my steps, lest they share with me in my plagues, and increase my guilt and torment, for having drawn them into ruin by my example. So though there is no compassion or charity in hell, yet the damned there are in fearful expectation of growing miseries, when their companions in iniquity come thither; and as their punishment is already more than they know how to bear, they would fain have every thing prevented, that might add still further to their distress.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

29 To this *Abraham* replied, No request can be granted to you, who are under an irrevocable sentence of damnation; and as to what you ask for your brethren, it is unreasonable; God will not go out of his appointed and settled way to humour you, or them; they have sufficient notices and warnings in the writings of *Moses* and the prophets, which they may read as often as they please, and which are read and preached in the synagogues every sabbath-day: If therefore they would escape the torments of the damned, and obtain the blessedness of the righteous, let them attend to those instructions, which God has already afforded them. So sinners in hell will find no expedient to prevent their increasing calamities; and sinners under the means of grace upon earth must stand or fall, according to their use or abuse of those means, having no room to expect that God will convert them by voices or visions from the other world, or go out of his ordinary and instituted way to save them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

30 The rich man answered, Nay, father Abraham, what I urged for them is more likely to be effectual than what you mention: The doctrines, the commands and threatenings, contained in the law and the prophets, are become so common and familiar to them, that they the less regard them; but what I speak of, would be a new and strange thing, and so, much more affecting and convincing: And therefore if such an one as *Lazarus*, who was known to be a good, though a poor and afflicted man upon earth, were to rise from the dead, on purpose to tell them of the vastly important things of the invisible world, and to admonish and warn them by his own and my example, they could not but be brought to alter their sentiments, and to turn from sin to God, that they might escape my torments, and enjoy his blessedness. So people insensible of the power of natural corruption, and of the necessity of divine grace to make an effectual change upon the heart and life, are apt to imagine that some other means would be more effectual to conversion, than those which God himself has appointed.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.

31 But Abraham replied again, If they will not believe the warnings given by *Moses* and other inspired writers, whose doctrine is plain, and has been confirmed by unquestionable miracles; an express sent from the dead, might indeed startle and surprize them, but they would give no more credit to his testimony than they do to that which they have already, and which is less liable to be suspected of any fraud: So the same depravity and perverseness of heart, which will not be prevailed upon by ordinary means, would, were a man left to himself, as effectually throw off the influence of all extraordinary ones whatsoever; and it is only by the blessing of God on his own appointments, that any can warrantably expect conversion and salvation.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What are all the enjoyments of this transitory life, but trusts, which God has committed to us for his glory and doing good? We cannot hold them long, and a day of reckoning will quickly come, God only knows how soon, when every one of us must give an account of our stewardship to him; and O how great is the concern that we be found faithful in the great day! How foolish is it, and how contrary to the maxims of common prudence in other affairs, to be more industrious in pursuing earthly riches, than eternal treasures! Who that is as wise for another world, as prudent men are for this, would not use all his opportunities and advantages here, in subservience to everlasting abodes of blessedness hereafter! And they only, who are earnest in pressing after them, can expect to obtain them. How watchful should we be against all unfaithfulness and iniquity; since little sins lead on to greater, and an abuse of lower trusts and enjoyments is a just reason why God should deny us higher! But alas how apt are covetous

proud,

proud, and hypocritical people, and all under the dominion of any sin, to deride reproof, rather than fall under conviction by it! And how often is that, which is of high account with men, abominable in God's sight, who knows the heart, and whose law is a rule of righteousness and of judgment, which never can be reversed! How inconsiderable and worthless are all the riches of this world; since God sets so light by them, as to bestow them with the greatest affluence on wicked men, and they grow worse, instead of better by them, consuming them on their lusts! And how much more desirable is the lot of the poorest and most distressed Christian upon earth, whose evil things, which will soon have an end, are only in this world, and whose good things will be enjoyed in the next with everlasting and unutterable delight, than that of the richest sinner, whose uncertain and unsatisfying comforts are confined to this short and vanishing life, and who will be stripped of all enjoyments, and exchange them for insupportable and endless torments in the world to come! There, immediately after death, the different states of unmixed happiness or misery will be unalterably fixed for ever, to the exceeding joy of the now afflicted believer, and to the utter confusion of the impenitent epicure. And O how terrible will the reflections of lost souls be then, how much soever they may slight and trifle about their eternal concerns now! But blessed be God, that, on this side hell, there is yet room for a happy change of state; from nature to grace, from wrath and curse to favour and a blessing, by means of God's word and the ministry of it. But if by these we are not brought to repentance, there is no room to expect that any other means will be given, or be made effectual for that purpose. How earnestly therefore should we beg, that, while we are in this world of mercy, the gospel may be set home upon our hearts by the blessed Spirit, and so may be the power of God to our own salvation!

C H A P. XVII.

Christ's discourse about offences and forgiving of injuries, 1,—4. About faith and humility, 5,—10. His curing ten lepers, 11,—19. And his account of the nature of his kingdom, and of the destruction of the Jewish nation, 20,—37.

TEXT.

THEN said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but *wo unto him thro' whom they come.*

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, turning his discourse to his disciples, re-minded them of several things which he had delivered to them before, (*Mat. xviii.*) saying, Such is the wickedness and perverseness of mankind, and such their passions and prejudices, that it is morally impossible, but that occasions will arise to the stumbling and falling of many. It is therefore to be expected that persecutors, seducers, and carnal professors will use such violence, vent such corrupt doctrines, and lead such scandalous lives, as will grieve and discourage some, and pervert others from the simplicity of the gospel, and draw them into sin: But great will be the guilt and ruin of that man, through whose errors and evil practices any such offensive and injurious things shall be brought into the world.

^a It were better
for

² It would have been much better for him to have undergone the worst of capital punishments, from the

for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might

hands of men, such as being thrown into the sea with a great stone about his neck, to drown him, than that he should have lived to dishonour and provoke God so highly, and to bring such dreadful miseries upon himself, by doing so much mischief to any one, even of the weakest of them, who believe in me. (*Matth. xviii. 6.*)

3 Take heed therefore that by your example, doctrine, or misconduct, ye do not lay stumbling-blocks in the way of any, or become an occasion of saddening their hearts, or of drawing them into sin; but do all that in you lyes to encourage them, to prevent their falling, and to recover them from their falls: in order hereunto, if one, who is called a brother, should affront and injure any of you, be watchful over your own spirit, that it be not filled with prejudices against him, or against me and my gospel for his sake; but, in a prudent, tender, and brotherly manner, endeavour to convince him of his fault, and of the greater mischief it does to himself than to you; and, whenever he discovers a concern for it, pass it by, and be heartily reconciled to him.

4 Yea, suppose it should happen that, through forgetfulness, carelessness, imprudence, and the like, he should soon and often repeat his offence, even to seven times in one day, and should as often renew acknowledgments of it, with promises to take care that he be not guilty of the like for time to come, so that he at last seems to be in good earnest, go on still to forgive him, persevering in your duty toward him, till you thoroughly overcome and reclaim him.

5 The apostles having heard Christ's charge about these great and difficult duties, which lay so contrary to natural resentments, were much affected with a sense of their excellence and importance, and of their own indispensable need of his special assistance for putting them into practice; and therefore earnestly besought him, as their Lord, that he would strengthen their faith in God's forgiveness of their own great and multiplied provocations, and would draw it into lively exercise, for deriving strength from him, whereby they may be inclined and enabled to answer these high demands.

6 And the Lord Jesus replied, If your faith in me be of the right kind, though it were, comparatively speaking, as small as a grain of mustard-seed, it has such a vigorous communion with my fulness, that, in its proper exercise, ye might perform all these difficult duties, which by your own power are, and in your own sense of things may seem to be as hard and impossible

might say unto this fig-tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea: and it should obey you.

7 But which of you having a servant plowing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go, and sit down to meat?

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9 Dost he thank that servant, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

10 So likewise ye, when ye have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

for you to do, as it is by a bare word, to root up that sycomore-tree, which ye see growing in the earth, and to plant it in the sea: And these duties are as easy to the least true and saving faith, by strength derived from me, as such transplanting of a tree can be to a miraculous faith; for ye may do all things through my strengthenings, (*Phil. iv. 13.*)

7 But always remember that, how great or difficult duties soever ye perform for the glory of God, your own, or other's good; as the strength whereby ye do them is from him through me, so ye can deserve nothing at his hand on their account: For if any of you have a servant who is your own property, and whom you maintain at your own charges to do your business; when he has been plowing your land, or feeding your cattle, and returns home, do you immediately order him to go to supper, before you yourself have been served?

8 Or rather, will you not charge him to do the necessary business of the house, in order to your own supping, and then wait upon you at table, till you have done eating and drinking? and after all this, but not before, do not you use to bid him take his own supper, to refresh himself?

9 And when his master's injunctions have been complied with in all these things, does he think himself indebted to that servant, or obliged to return him thanks for it? No, by no means, he having done no more than his master had a right to, and the duty of his own place required.

10 Even so the case stands between the great God and you: Ye are his servants, and absolute property; and ought to be so, more than any creature can be yours; and when ye have gone through one service, in obedience to his commands, ye must not think yourselves discharged, but go on with the greatest application and diligence to another, as long as he has any thing for you to do; and ye must continue waiting upon him, and waiting his time, before ye rest from your labours, and are entertained with everlasting refreshments: And after all that it was possible for you to do, by the richest supplies of grace and strength, ye must humbly own that ye could merit nothing at the hands of the sovereign Lord of all, nor lay the least obligation upon him, no, not so much as to deserve any thanks from him, because ye have only done what was your proper business and indispensable duty to do.

11 And it came
10

11 As Jesus was afterwards travelling to Jerusalem,

to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off.

13 And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And, when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God.

16 And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he

he by a special design of providence, took the course, which carried him into those parts of *Samaria* that lay next to *Galilee*, and so passed, as it were, in the midst, between those countries *.

12 And as he came near to a certain village, ten leprous persons, who were excluded from towns and common conversation, because of their uncleanness, were got together to converse with, and condole one another †, and they meeting with our blessed Lord, and knowing who he was, kept at a distance from him, in obedience to the law, (*Lev. xiii. 46.*) and under a sense of their own unworthiness:

13 But believing that he was able to cleanse them, they called upon him with a loud and earnest cry, as with one consent, and one voice, saying, Jesus, thou compassionate Saviour, who hast the mastery and dominion over all diseases, look upon our miserable condition with an eye of pity, and cure us of our leprosy.

14 And he seeing their distress, and their faith and importunity for healing, took pity on them, resolving in himself to magnify his power and goodness by granting their request: In order thereunto, he bid them go and present themselves to some of the priests at *Jerusalem*, according to the appointment of the law, (*Lev. xiv. 2.*); thereby intimating that they should pronounce them clean, and thereby give a public testimony to his miracle in cleansing them: And as they were going, in obedience to his command, they all found themselves restored to perfect health; the power of Christ being as effectual to recover them, when they were corporally at a distance from him, as if they had still been before him.

15 Then ‡ one of them, finding what a wonderful work Christ had wrought upon himself as well as the rest of his companions, was so affected with it, that he went back again to him, with a heart full of gratitude and joy, being as earnest to proclaim the praises of God with a loud voice for his cure, as he had been before to beg for it:

16 And, prostrating himself with profound humility and reverence at Jesus' feet, he particularly returned solemn thanks to him, who was the immediate author of this

N O T E S.

* *Vid* Lightf. *Hsr. Hchr.*

† Or they might have heard of Christ's coming that way, and so might be got together to wait for him.

‡ 'Tis likely that they all went to the priest

to be discharged from the confinement they had been under, by reason of their leprosy; and then all but one went about their business, without taking any further notice of the benefit they had received.

he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, *Save this stranger.*

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.

20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them, and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there; for behold the kingdom of God is within you.

this great deliverance: And it is remarkable, that the grateful creature who thus honoured him, by doing the duty which the rest neglected, was a *Samaritan*, who, as such, knew and professed less than the *Jews*, nine of which were healed with him.

17, 18 But (*he*) Jesus, knowing what he had done in curing them all, said publicly, by way of reproof to the *Jews*, and approbation of this *Samaritan*, Was not the same mercy shewn to ten lepers, in their being all healed at once? what is then become of the other nine, who are mine own countrymen, and profess the God of *Israel*, and from whom it might most of all have been expected, that they should render thanks according to the benefit bestowed upon them? How is it that none, but this stranger to the common-wealth of *Israel*, is come back to glorify God for his mercy to him? What a better sense of gratitude and religion does he discover than they? and what a reproach is this to them?

19 Then, turning himself to the *Samaritan*, he encouraged and comforted him, saying, Get up from your prostration at my feet; go in peace: I have observed your faith, expressed in your prayer and praises, which hath been uncommon, and hath obtained a cure for you with rich advantage, not to your body only, but likewise to your soul *.

20 Our blessed Lord and his disciples having often declared in their preaching, that *the kingdom of heaven was at hand*, some of the *Pharisees*, asked him, when it should be set up in the world? In answer to which he said, Your notions of the Messiah's kingdom, are very wrong, while ye imagine that, like earthly kingdoms, it will make a pompous appearance in external riches and grandeur, and will rise and spread, by temporal power, to draw the eyes of the people, and force their subjection to its sceptre; these things are not suitable to its nature.

21 Nor shall any be able to say, Behold in this or the other particular place is the Messiah's throne and court, or this or that is the city or nation where he reigns. No, the gospel-kingdom, which I am come to erect, is altogether spiritual in its nature, power, and designs, suited to the benefit of souls for another world; it works inwardly in men's hearts and consciences, and makes wonderful revolutions there, turning them from darkness

N O T E.

* All these lepers had faith to be healed, but this man's faith had something singular in it; and Christ's answer seems to extend

to the salvation of the soul, *Thy faith hath saved thee, even so*

darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God : Behold, therefore it is already begun in the preaching of the gospel, and in the conversion of some among yourselves, though ye perceive it not ; it is (*ἔργον θεοῦ*) in the hearts of those among you that believe, though invisible to others.

21 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

22 He likewise, directing his discourse to his disciples, said, Do not ye entertain any fond notions of the temporal glory of my kingdom : For such tribulations will befall you, together with the whole nation of the *Jews*, and such severe restraints will be laid upon you, before ye have fulfilled your ministry, that, in those times of sore distress, ye would be glad of one such day of my personal presence with you on earth, as ye now enjoy ; but, alas ! ye will wish for it in vain.

23 And they shall say to you, See here ; or, see there : go not after them, nor follow them.

23 And, in the midst of the disappointments and troubles that will surround you, some will pretend to tell you, that the Messiah is in this or the other private place, or in this or that city, ready to deliver his followers, and to put an end to all the troubles of those days : However, do not let your fondness for his personal presence incline you to give any heed to them, but look upon all such reports as false and foolish.

24 For as the lightning, that lighteth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven, so shall also the son of man be in his day.

24 For as the lightning does not shine merely in this or that particular part of the heavens, but darts at once thro' all the air, so the Messiah will not appear in this or that particular place only, when he comes to destroy the *Jews*, and advance his kingdom in the world : but vengeance, by his providence, shall suddenly spread through all *Judea*, to cut off his obstinate enemies ; and the gospel, by the mighty power of his Spirit, shall fly like lightning through the nations, and prevail with wonderful success among the *Gentiles*, far and wide.

25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

25 But before all these things come to pass, the eternal purpose of God, the ancient prophecies, the rights of divine justice, the wickedness of the *Jews*, the perfection of the gospel-state, and the everlasting salvation of the church make it necessary, that I, the Messiah, should undergo many grievous sufferings of pain and shame, even to the worst of deaths, by the unbelieving, spiteful, and wicked *Jews* of this age : After this, my gospel will diffuse its light thro' the earth, and my vengeance will fall upon those mine enemies all at once, and before they are aware, just as it was in the destruction of the old world, and of *Sodom*.

26 And as it was in the days of Noe,

26, 27 For as, in *Noah's* days, the people went on secure, and merry, and busy, following the affairs and diversions

Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man :

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark; and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded.

29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away; and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 Remember Lot's wife.

33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it;

diversions of life, and contracting marriages, in expectation of continued safety and pleasure; yea, they mocked at that holy man's warnings, rather than gave any heed to them, and so they continued to do, till on a sudden the deluge came, and swept them all away.

28, 29, 30 And just as in Lot's age, the people of Sodom lived in sensuality and security, gave themselves up to the lusts of the flesh, and to the ordinary course of traffick, provided for posterity, and despised the admonitions of that righteous man, as if they were in no manner of danger; and so they lived at a carnal and riotous rate, till the very day on which he left that city, and God poured utter destruction upon them and consumed them all, by a dreadful tempest of extraordinary lightning from heaven. Even so the unbelieving Jews will persist obstinately in the pursuit of business and pleasure, in their wicked courses, and in expectation of a temporal Saviour; will despise all the warnings which I and my apostles shall give them: And will continue so to do, till the very time that my righteous servants shall be hid with safety, and my vengeance shall come with sudden surprise upon mine enemies, by the hands of the Romans, to their utter destruction*.

31, 32 When an army therefore shall come to besiege Jerusalem, whoever would be safe, let him fly with such speed, as, if he be on the top of his house, not to go into it, (see note on *Matth.* xxiv. 17.); and if he be abroad in the fields, not to go home, to take care of even his most valuable treasure there: And for your caution against hankering after worldly possessions, when God shall call you to fly for your lives from among the people of his wrath, remember how Lot's wife was destroyed, and turned into a pillar of salt, as a monument of divine vengeance, only for lingering and looking back with a wishful eye upon her temporal concerns in Sodom, which God had marked out for destruction.

33 In like manner, whoever, in the terrible days I am speaking of, shall think to secure his own life, by any worldly policy in disobedience to my commands, by giving up his profession of my name, or by hearkening to the Jews, and sinfully complying with them, he shall certainly fall by the righteous judgment of God

N O T E.

* This is very applicable to other sinners in all ages, and particularly at the end of life and time: They go on carelessly and securely in the worldly and sensual temper of their hearts, hardening themselves against

all counsel and reproof, and against all warnings of death and judgment, till, to their great consternation, Christ will summon them, before they are aware, to appear at his awful tribunal.

it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other shall be left.

35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left.

37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wherever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

God in the common calamity with them: But he who, notwithstanding all visible danger, shall stedfastly adhere to me, and regard the notices I have given, shall be in a fair way of escaping the miseries of that dreadful desolation, and shall certainly obtain everlasting life.

34, 35, 36 Ye may depend upon these things: For I who am the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, assure you, that in the darkest of these tribulations, distinguishing acts of providence and grace shall appear to some, beyond others, who may be equal as to their visible danger and circumstances in life; like two men in the same bed, or in the same field, or like two women grinding together at the same mill; God will then separate the precious from the vile; one shall be taken into his peculiar care and protection, and the other shall be left to perish in the common ruin for his iniquities.

37 Upon hearing these things, the disciples put the following question to him, saying, Lord, where is it that all this destruction on one hand, and safety on the other, shall be found? And, referring to the *Roman* ensigns, which had an eagle for their arms, he replied, Wherever the unbelieving *Jews* shall be, the *Roman* soldiers will pursue them to their destruction, while others shall escape. And according to a proverbial expression, As those quick-sighted birds gather about a dead carcass to devour it, so the judgments of God will find out obdurate sinners, wherever they are; and as eagles fly swiftly to their prey, so wherever Christ, the Saviour, is to be found, thither will true believers flock, with eager desire for their safety and refreshment, till at length they shall all be gathered up to him in glory.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What an imperfect, wretched world is this! How full of sins and sorrows, desolations and deaths, of infidelity and licentiousness, of earthly affections and ingratitude, and of stupidity and contempt of Christ's word and warnings; and how exposed to sudden surprizes by the righteous judgments of God! How many offensive and injurious things are found among the professors of Christ's name, to the grieving and stumbling of some, and to the everlasting ruin of others! And what heavy woes must fall on their heads, whose corrupt principles and practices are the occasions of these mischiefs! How weak is the faith of God's own people; and how hard do they find it to come up to self-denying duties! How prone are they to offend God and one another! How backward is the offender to repent, and the offended brother to forgive! And how often are Christ's disciples mourning the want of his presence, which sometimes they have enjoyed, and vain would be favoured with again! O may the miscarriages of others, and the rebukes and miseries thereby brought upon them, be a caution to us, that we be neither ungrateful to God and our Saviour, like the nine lepers, who were cleansed; nor hanker after this world, like Lot's wife; nor despise divine warnings, so as to go on in sin, till death and judgment surprise us, like the old world, and the inhabitants of Sodom, and like the Jewish nation! What need have we, under a sense

a sense of our own vileness, to cry out with the lepers, Lord, have mercy upon us; and, with a dependence on his power and grace, to go on in the way of his appointment for healing! And, under a sense of all discouragements, how should we say, Lord, increase our faith! And after the utmost that we can attain to, in a way of duty, what low thoughts should we have of ourselves as unprofitable servants, who deserve nothing at God's hand! And what honourable thoughts should we ever have of Jesus, as a divine person, and the true Messiah, who is the author and finisher of our faith, and can heal and save wherever we are, as if he were visibly present with us; and whose predictions have been punctually fulfilled, with regard to the destruction of the infidel Jews, and the spreading, like lightning, among the Gentiles, that kingdom which is of a spiritual nature, and do not come with observation, but lies within men's own hearts! And whatsoever we may suffer from men for Christ's sake, all our safety and happiness lies in a faithful adherence to him, who is tenderly affected toward the weakest believers, resents the injuries and griefs that are brought upon them, and will distinguish his own, and gather them at length to himself in heaven.

C H A P. XVIII.

The parable of the importunate widow, 1,—8. Of the Pharisee and publican, 9,—14. Christ's kind and gracious regard to infants, 15,—17. The rich ruler's coming to him, and Christ's discourse on that occasion with his disciples, 18,—30. His prediction of his own sufferings, death, and resurrection, 31,—34. And restoring a blind man to sight, 35,—43.

TEXT.

AND he spake a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man.

3 And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while; but

PARAPHRASE.

AS prayer is the duty of all, and believers are a generation that seek God's face, our Lord intimated, that they ought daily to go on with perseverance in that duty, and not give way to despondency, because of any present troubles, or because their prayers are not immediately answered: And, to stir up a holy fervour and constancy therein, he represented the happy success of importunity in the following similitude:

2 There was, said he, an unrighteous, wicked magistrate in a certain city, who had no conscience or honour, no religion toward God, nor concern for his own reputation among men, no regard to right or wrong, but only to his own passions; and therefore little justice or mercy could be expected from him.

3 And in the same city, which was under the jurisdiction of this magistrate, there was a certain poor widow, who being oppressed by a powerful enemy, and having no other way of relief, was forced to apply to him, begging that he would plead her cause, and do her justice, as by his office he was able and obliged to do.

4 And, for a while, he took no notice of her petition, hardened his heart against her miseries, turned a deaf ear to her earnest cries, and would do nothing to redress her grievance: But she continuing time after time, to follow

but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man ;

5 Yet, because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming the weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

follow him with importunate intreaties ; and taking no denial, he at length thought with himself, Tho' I have no regard to conscience or honesty, to the fear or favour of God, or to the reproaches or applauses of men,

5 Yet, for mine own ease and quiet's sake, I will do her justice, and deliver her out of the hands of her cruel adversary ; lest I should be perpetually teized, and have no rest at home or abroad, by reason of her repeated pressing importunity ; and so, to get rid of her he granted her request.

6 Observe, said our Lord, how even this hard-hearted, unrighteous, and unmerciful creature owns himself to be perfectly overcome by the earnest and continued intreaties of this poor woman, and how he resolved to espouse her cause against her oppressor, though he had no value for her, or concern for her miseries.

7 How much more then will the holy and gracious God, who has stiled himself a God hearing prayer, and delights in mercy, attend to the cries of them that call upon him, and arise for the succour and salvation of his own chosen people, whom he loves, and whose concerns lye near his heart? Can ye think that he will not do this, when they are in any temporal or spiritual trouble, and when, according to his own appointment and their duty, they wrestle with him in their continual prayers, though for wise ends he may exercise forbearance toward their enemies, and may try his people's patience, by deferring his vindication of their righteous cause to the fittest season?

8 I assure you, that ere long he will hear and deliver them : His compassionate nature and will, his affection and promises to them, and peculiar propriety in them, his just vengeance against their enemies, and righteous regard to their high priest and advocate, the glory of his own name, and the interest he himself has in their cause as his own, and his delight in their believing and fervent prayers, will certainly engage him to hear and answer them in due season. But, notwithstanding all this, whenever the time shall be at hand, in which Christ will remarkably appear against their persecuting enemies in this age among the *Jews*, or in any after-ages among the *Gentiles*, and in which he shall come to execute judgment upon all the wicked and ungodly, and to save his elect at the last day, how few true believers and faithful men will then be found on the earth? how few that have any faith in him, and particularly concerning his coming? and, among sincere Christians themselves, how few will be found in

a lively

a lively exercise of faith, praying with holy importunity and continuance for it?

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

9 Our Saviour having encouraged and enforced the duty of importunity and perseverance in prayer, proceeded, in another supposed instance, to caution against a self-righteous Pharisaical spirit, which must be renounced, and to recommend humility and self-abasement, which must have a place in the heart, if ever we find acceptance of our persons and prayers: And he directed this discourse to a set of people, who, like the *Pharisees*, had high confidence in their own merit, and made this their great plea with God for acceptance, and who looked with contempt and disdain upon others, as not worthy to be regarded of God, or compared with themselves.

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a *Pharisee*, and the other a publican.

10 To illustrate this design he said, Two men of very different characters went up*, at the same time, to present their prayers to God in the temple, one of them was a proud, self-conceited *Pharisee*, who trusted in his own righteousness to recommend him to divine acceptance; and the other was a poor, humble, penitent, self-condemned publican, who had an affecting sense of his own guilt and vileness, and of his absolute need of pardoning mercy.

11 The *Pharisee* stood, and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

11 The *Pharisee* stood by himself, with great formality, in a place where he might be taken most notice of, and made his address after this lofty and censorious manner, I thank thee, O God, thou author of my being, for the noble powers with which thou hast endowed me, by my own wise and careful improvement of which, I have kept myself from being so wicked and irreligious, as (*ὡς λοιποὶ*) the rest of the world. I am no cruel oppressor, no knave or cheat, no adulterous or unclean person; nor am I guilty of any of the vices which in particular yonder poor despicable wretch, the publican, has doubtless committed; none of all this iniquity is found with me.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

12 But I am a person of more than ordinary piety and holiness; I keep a solemn fast two days in every week; and I devote the tenth part of all my worldly possessions to religious uses, whether they be tithable by the law or not.

13 And the publican standing afar off, would not

13 On the other hand, the poor publican, like a truly humble and contrite penitent, stood at a great distance

N O T E.

* The temple stood upon mount *Moriah*; and it was usual for the people of God to go up thither and offer their prayers there, be-

cause it was not only the appointed place, but likewise the medium of acceptable worship, as it was a type of Christ.

not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

distance from the holy of holies, as unworthy to draw nearer, and as deserving, that God should for ever behold him afar off; yea, so deep was the sense he had of his own vileness, that he feared it would be presumptuous for him to lift up so much as his eyes to the habitation of God's glory in heaven; but, looking downward with dejection, he beat his breast, as if he would take revenge upon his own wicked heart, and cried out with great earnestness, O thou God of all grace, mercy and not merit is my plea, I most humbly beseech thee to be propitious to me, (*ἰλασθῆτι μόν*) a poor perishing sinner, as thou shew'st thyself to be unto such, by the atoning sacrifices offered at this place, and by the mercy-seat here.

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the others; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

14 Then our Lord added, I assure you, that, whatsoever opinion these two men severally had of themselves, or others might have concerning them, the humble, self-abasing, penitent and believing publican returned home discharged from guilt and condemnation, and accepted of God, and not * the proud self-justifying Pharisee: For whosoever is righteous in his own eyes, or conceited of his own goodness to the contempt of others, and expects that God should accept him on account of any merit in himself, shall be righteously brought low to his utter confusion and ruin; but every one, who is self-diffident, mean, worthless, and vile in his own eyes, depending entirely on the mercy of God for pardon and acceptance, as he has discovered himself to be propitious to sinners through an atonement, shall be graciously advanced to endless glory.

15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them; but when his disciples saw it they rebuked them.

15 After this, some of the believing Jews, who were concerned for their childrens happiness as well as their own, brought (*τα βρέφη*) babes in their arms, and presented them to Christ, desiring that he would lay his hands upon them, as a signal of his owning them, and conveying the blessings of his kingdom to them, (see the note on Mark x. 13.) according to a famous prophecy of the Messiah's days, that God would pour his Spirit, upon their seed, and his blessing upon their offspring. (Isa. xlv. 3.) But when his disciples observed their attempt, they shewed a displeasure at it, and went about to prevent them, lest it should lead the way to a practice, that might be too fatiguing to their Lord, and prevent what they took to be more important work.

16 But

N O T E.

* Rather than, seems from what follows Eph iv. 28. and v. 4, 11. and the particle (*ἢ*) is put for (*μυλλων*) in this evangelist, chap. xv. 7. and in 1 Cor. xiv. 19.

16 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

17 Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

16 But Jesus, to shew his favour to the infants, and encourage those that brought them, said to the disciples, By all means let the little children come unto me, that I may bless them; and do not do any thing to hinder or discourage it: For the gospel-dispensation is not designed to exclude them from God's covenant; but such as these, as well as adult persons, are to be deemed subjects of the Messiah's kingdom. (See the note on *Matth. xix. 14.*)

17 Hereupon, to rebuke his disciples for their rash and haughty zeal, and to improve this occurrence to spiritual advantage, he added, I solemnly assure you, that no man, who do not receive the things of the gospel, with a teachableness and meekness, humility and simplicity of spirit, and with a childlike subjection to mine authority, shall ever enjoy its blessings of grace here and of glory hereafter.

18 As Christ was going from this place, there met him a certain young man, (*Matth. xix. 20.*) a person of distinction and authority among the *Jews*, who, falling upon his knees, (*Mark. x. 17.*) saluted him under the title of Good master*; and, with these tokens of superior reverence, asked, by what works of righteousness he might obtain everlasting life?

19 Jesus replied, by way of reproof, What means this high swelling title to one whom you take to be no more than a man? It is God only, who is strictly and properly speaking good, there being none originally, absolutely, and perfectly good besides him; and therefore, unless you believe me to be God, you go too far in applying this epithet, with so much reverence, and in such an absolute, unreserved manner to me.

20 Then our Lord, without taking any notice whether he himself were God or not, proceeded to the question, saying, If you would get eternal life by your own performances, you know what God in the law has commanded them to do, who would live by it: As for instance, thou shalt not commit adultery, nor be guilty of any kind of uncleanness; thou shalt not injure any one's life, or reputation; thou shalt not rob, or cheat him of his property; thou shalt not tell untruths, or give into false reports or accusations against any one whatsoever; thou shalt pay all due reverence and honour to thy parents and superiors, and the like.

N O T E S.

* This the ambitious rabbies of that age affected to be honoured with; but, as some suppose, it was an higher title than used to be given, even to the most celebrated among them.

Christ intimated only in these duties of the second table, that he might convince the ruler of his defect even in them, and so might shew him that he was far from having duly kept the whole law.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing; sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.

23 And when he heard this he was very sorrowful; for he was very rich.

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

21 The young man, having been of a sober and regular behaviour, but ignorant of the exceeding strictness and spirituality of God's law, as extending to the heart as well as life, said, I have always punctually fulfilled every one of these commands from my childhood to this very day; surely then I must be safe for heaven, there is no flaw in my title to it.

22 Now when Jesus heard this answer, he, to convince him that he was far from being perfect, replied, You are nevertheless deficient in one thing, viz. hearty love to God and your neighbour, which the law requires, as the main principle of all obedience: And, for your trial in this, I insist upon your going and selling all your estate, and giving the money away for the relief of poor distressed objects; and if you cheerfully submit only to this one proof of your love, I tell you, for your encouragement, that, instead of earthly treasure, you shall have an heavenly one: And when you have done this, come again, and give up yourself to me, as my disciple and servant, and I will further instruct you in the sure way to everlasting life. (See the note on *Matth. xix. 17.*)

23 At this he was sorely disappointed; and as he was really destitute of a governing principle of love to God, and to them who needed help, he went away from the only Saviour, much troubled in himself to think that he must lose a treasure in heaven, because he could not consent to part with all his temporal enjoyments, in prospect of it: For he had great possessions, which he resolved not to quit; whatsoever might be the consequence.

24 Our Lord Jesus observing what a snare this rich man's estate was to him, took that occasion to caution his disciples (*Mark x. 23.*) against an inordinate love of this world, saying, How hard a matter is it for such as are in affluent circumstances, and are fond of them, to submit to the self-denial that is necessary to my disciples, when their temporal enjoyments stand in competition with the blessings of grace and glory!

25 For such is the deceitfulness of riches, and such the natural addictedness of mens hearts to them, and so many are the temptations and incumbrances which attend them, that hardly any thing can be imagined so difficult, no, not for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, as for a man of a great estate, whose heart is set upon it, to be willing to resign it for the blessings of my kingdom, or to be so weaned in his affections from it, as is necessary for one of my disciples to be

in prospect of an eternal inheritance. (See the note on *Matth. xix. 24.*)

26 And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

26 When the disciples heard him speak after this manner, they were greatly amazed to think, what a sad condition the affection of most men's hearts to this world has brought them into, and what a disappointment they themselves must meet with, who expected that in the Messiah's kingdom they should abound in riches; and thereupon they cried out, If this be such a bar to good hopes of eternal life, who among mankind can ever be saved? And what success can we expect in the ministry to which thou hast called us?

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.

27 Our Lord replied, It is indeed impossible for any man, by his own strength, or by any natural principles within himself, to get the mastery over his worldly affections, and to become so dead to the allurements of this present sinful life, as to prefer future and invisible things to them, and be willing to part with them, whenever I call him to resign them: But all this may easily be done by the power of God's almighty grace, which, accompanying my gospel, works effectually in them that believe.

28 Then Peter said, I.e. we have left all, and followed thee.

28 Then *Peter*, reflecting upon what he and the rest of the disciples had done, when Christ first called them, said, with a mixture of humility and pride, Behold, Lord, how readily we, thy disciples, have by the power of this grace, at thy command, and for thy sake, given up our trade, friends, and relations, together with the best accommodations and advantages of life, which we enjoyed! and as thou tellest us, that abundance of wealth and temporal possessions is so far from going into the blessings of thy kingdom, as to be a hindrance to persons enjoying them; what may we expect from thee in this world and the next?

29 And he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

29, 30 To this our Lord replied, I solemnly assure you, that no one shall be a loser by me: Whether a man have more or less of the good things of this world, if he loses his temporal possessions, or his nearest and dearest friends and relations, and is willing to forsake and give them all up, rather than abandon me and my cause, and his hopes of the blessings of my kingdom; he shall, even in this present life, have more valuable friends, whose hearts will be inclined to pity, favour, and assist him; and shall have infinitely better supports and joys, and more contentment of spirit in his circumstances, than he ever had before; and in the other world he shall possess the utmost glory and blessedness without interruption or end.

30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

31 Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully intreated, and spitted on.

33 And they shall scourge him, and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again.

34 And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

35 And it came to pass, that, as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat

31 Christ, being now on the journey that would issue in his death, took the twelve apostles aside from the company, and told them what would very soon befall him, that they might not be surprized and discouraged when they should see it come to pass: Observe, says he, what I am about to tell you, we are now going up to *Jerusalem*, and this is the time in which all those things shall be fulfilled in me, that have been foretold by the antient prophets concerning my sufferings, and the glory that is to follow them; the word of God must be herein fulfilled, which will be a clear and certain proof, that I am indeed the true Messiah.

32 For as it was prophesied, that kings and rulers should take counsel together against him, (*Psal.* xxii. 6, 7.) and that he would not hide his face from shame and spitting, (*Isa.* l. 6.) so I shall be delivered into the hands of the *Romans*, shall be summoned before their tribunal, and be derided, insulted, and abused by their soldiers, and they will spit upon me with contempt and disdain.

33 And as it was foretold that the Messiah should give his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that pluck off the hair, (*Isa.* l. 6.); that he should be cut off, but not for himself, (*Dan.* ix. 26.); and that God his Father would not leave his soul in a separate state, nor suffer his holy One to see corruption, (*Psal.* xvi. 10.): So mine enemies will lay me under the lash, as if I were a contemptible wretch, and put me to the most cruel and ignominious death, even that of the cross, (see the note on *Mat.* xxvii. 26.); and on the third day I shall break through the bands of death, by rising again.

34 He spoke these things in the plainest manner possible; and yet the disciple's heads were so filled with notions of the temporal grandeur of his kingdom, that they could not tell how to understand his reproaches, sufferings, and death, in a literal sense, nor what to make of his rising from the dead; but thought some other unknown construction must be put upon all these words.

35 As Jesus was passing along, providence so ordered it, that, when he was near *Jericho*, he met with a noted blind beggar*, who being poor, and unable to

get

N O T E.

* *Matthew* xx. 30. 34. speaks of two blind men, that were cured, and *Mark* x. 46. tells us the name of one of them was *Bartimæus*. Here, and in our evangelist notice is taken only of this one, because he

was the most noted beggar. *Matthew* and *Mark* say Christ wrought this miracle, as he went out, or departed from *Jericho*; whereas *Luke* seems to speak of his doing it, as he drew near to *Jericho*: But perhaps the word (*ἐξέβη*)

sat by the wayside begging.

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passed by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him; that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying

get his livelihood, sat by the side of the road, as beggars use to do in public places, to ask the charity of the people.

36 And when he heard the noise of the great company that went along with our Lord, his curiosity, or his hopes of some advantage, put him upon inquiring what might be the occasion of such a great concourse?

37 And some of the company informed him that Jesus of Nazareth was there, and that all this multitude was going along with him.

38 Upon which, being desirous of a cure, he lifted up his voice, saying, with great earnestness, Lord Jesus, as I believe thee to be the promised Messiah of David's race, who art sent of God for the salvation of Israel, I beseech thee to have compassion upon me, who need thy help.

39 And some of those, who went in the foremost part of the crowd, reprimanded him for it, bidding him be quiet, and not tease Christ with his clamour now upon his journey: But, instead of being restrained by their chidings, he cried out with so much the more importunity, O thou Messiah, who art raised up in the house of David, I beg that thou wouldst hear, and have pity upon me.

40, 41 Then Jesus seeing his faith, and being full of mercy and tenderness toward him, whilst others checked, discouraged, and despised him, made a stand, and ordered the people to bring this poor creature to him: And upon his coming near, he, for the further trial of his faith, and more distinct notification of his own goodness in giving him the very thing he wanted, asked him what the particular mercy was which he so earnestly begged! the blind man presently replied, Lord, it is not for an alms, but that thou wouldst please to open mine eyes.

42 And Jesus approving of his faith and his choice, said to him, I command that your sight be restored: Your faith has prevailed with me to answer your request.

43 And no sooner did he speak, but it was done: the blind man immediately saw, and was so affected with the instantaneous and perfect cure, that he followed Jesus in his way to Jerusalem; and, with a heart full

N O T E.

(ἐξῆλθεν) here rendered coming nigh, may signify only (ἐξῆλθεν ἀπὸς) his being near Jericho; and so this fact is anticipated in Luke's

history, which he resumes in the beginning of the next chapter. See a note relating to Jericho in chap. x.

glorifying God : and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.

full of thankfulness and joy, glorified God for this signal mercy, which was shewn to himself, and for sending the long-looked for Saviour to open the eyes of the blind : And all the people joined their thanksgivings and praises to God, who had raised up an horn of salvation for them, in the house of his servant *David*. (*Chap. i. 69.*)

RECOLLECTIONS.

It is surely good for us to draw nigh to God; and the more persevering and importunate our faith is in the duty of prayer, the more welcome and successful we shall be. Though the answer may be deferred for a time: yet every consideration of God, as revealed in the gospel, assures his people that it shall certainly come in the proper season. But how differently may the same duties be performed by different sorts of persons! Some, like the Pharisee, manage them with pride, hypocrisy, formality, and contempt of fellow-worshippers, to the provoking of God, instead of getting advantage to themselves; whilst others, like the humble, contrite publican, abase themselves at his footstool, trust in his mercy and grace, through the great Atonement, and obtain justification to eternal life. And O what a comfort is it to believers, that Christ takes notice of their little ones, has confirmed God's covenant with their seed, has enrolled them with themselves, as the subjects of his visible kingdom under the gospel-state, and is so much set on their being presented to him, to bless them, as to take it ill of those that would debar them of their privileges! But neither privileges nor duties are to be rested in; for persons may go a great way in religion, like the Pharisee, and in morality, like the young ruler, and yet fall short of saving grace: And were we to have a right view of ourselves in the light of God's law, we should soon be convinced of our defects, and of our need of a better righteousness than our own to entitle us to heaven. But, alas! what dangerous snares are the riches of this world to men of carnal minds! Nothing short of God's almighty grace, with whom all things are possible, can effectually change the bias of their hearts, and make them think it worth their while to give up all their temporal enjoyments for Christ. But whatsoever, upon principles of faith and love, we may lose for him, we may be sure of losing nothing by him: And what Christian would think much of suffering for him, who was abased and crucified for us, and rose again from the dead, according to the predictions of the prophets, and his own declarations before-hand, as a demonstration of his being the Christ? And yet how great is the power of carnal prejudices to hide the plainest truths from us! But as the compassions of the great and merciful Saviour are extended to the most wretched objects, he can as easily cure the depravity of our understandings, as open the eyes of such as were corporally blind: And when we receive any signal mercies from him, what special engagements are they upon us, to follow him, and glorify God for raising up such a powerful and gracious Saviour to us!

C H A P. XIX.

The conversion of Zaccheus, 1,—10. The parable of the ten pounds, 11,—27. Christ's riding into Jerusalem, 28,—40. His lamenting over it, 41,—44. And his casting the buyers and sellers out of the temple, 45,—48.

TEXT.

AND Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

PARAPHRASE.

CHRIST proceeding on his journey toward Jerusalem, his way lay through the city of Jericho, in the tribe of Benjamin.

2 And behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was, and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree, to see him; for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zaccheus stood,

2 And behold a wonderful instance of his grace, as he passed along! There was in that neighbourhood a certain man, called *Zaccheus*, who was one of the chief collectors of taxes for the *Roman* emperor, or a receiver-general, to whom the other publicans brought their money; and so he had more authority and influence, and a larger share of profits, than the rest, and by this means was grown very rich*.

3 This man having heard much of the fame of Jesus, which rung through all the country, had a great curiosity to see what sort of person he was; but, being low in stature, he could not hope to obtain his desire, standing on the ground, because of the crowd of taller people.

4 Therefore, laying aside all state, he ran to a sycamore tree, by the side of the road, where he knew Jesus was to go; and climbed up into the tree, that he might have a full view of him.

5 And it was happy for him that he was found in Christ's way, tho' only curiosity brought him thither: For as Jesus came to save the chief of sinners, so when he arrived at the place, where *Zaccheus* had set himself, he looked up to the tree; and, seeing him there (*ὁ δὲ αὐτός*) knew him to be one of his sheep, whose name was written in the book of life; and, contrary to this man's expectations, he took a kind and particular notice of him, and calling to him said, *Zaccheus*, come down with all speed; for I must needs stay a while to-day at your house.

6 These words wrought effectually upon him by a secret energy that attended them; and he was so affected with the thought of Christ's taking such particular notice of him, that he instantly came down, and cheerfully received him into his heart, and then into his house.

7 And when the company saw the kind salutations and behaviour that passed between them, they were highly offended, and expressed their resentment at it, saying, How unworthy is this of the professed sanctity of Jesus, that he should go for entertainment to one of the greatest sinners in all the city

8 But (*ἰδὼν*) *Zaccheus*, to shew that the grace of Christ had indeed reached his heart, and that he was now become another man than he had been before, and than they uncharitably and maliciously supposed him to be still,

N O T E.

* This *Zaccheus* was probably a Jew, as his name intimates; it being a common name among that people: However, his office, and the abusive methods with which it was

ordinarily managed, rendered him odious to them; and the greater it was, the more criminal and detestable they accounted him.

stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham.

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

still, stood and publicly professed his faith and repentance before all the people, saying, Behold, O Lord, thou expected Messiah, what an effect thy words have had upon me! whereas I have gathered a great estate, and hitherto used it only for myself, I now feel such remorse and grief, as even constrain me to give away one moiety of it immediately, for the benefit of the poor, that I may honour God with my substance, and do all the good I can with such money as may have been injuriously taken from persons at present unknown to me: And if any one, whom I have wronged by fraud or extortion, by false charges or oppression, will give me an opportunity of repaying him, I am ready, in testimony of my hearty repentance, to make him amends, not only by restoring as much as I took from him, but even four times more with it, according to the utmost demands that the law makes of restitution, in any case of injury whatsoever*.

9 Jesus, to encourage him, and vindicate himself against the murmurs of the people, replied, I, the † Saviour of lost sinners, am this day come hither, bringing the glad tidings, and all the blessings of salvation along with me to this man, who ye hear, by his own confession, is become a true believer and penitent; and this day the promises of salvation are brought to his family, they being taken into covenant together with himself; because he is now not merely by birth, but by faith in me, one of the true and spiritual seed of Abraham what I have therefore done herein cannot reasonably be objected against.

10 For I, the Messiah, am sent to search and seek out my sheep, wherever they are scattered; especially those of the house of Israel; and as this man, by being a publican, was looked upon as lost to God and all goodness,

NOTES.

* In cases of theft and fraud, and swearing falsely, to deprive another of his property, the law required a restoration of the principal, with the addition of a fifth part. (Lev. vi. 2, — 5.) If the theft were found in a man's possession, it required restoring double; and for a stolen ox that was killed or sold, it demanded five oxen to be restored. (Exod. xxii. 1, 4.) Zaccheus therefore, to shew the sincerity of his repentance, declared himself willing to comply with the strictest of all the laws about restitution. And repentance can never be proved to be sincere, without restitution for the injuries we have done to others, according to our ability, and the opportunities we may have

for it. This is the genuine way in which true grace works in the heart, and where there is no concern about this, when we have cheated, robbed, or defrauded any man, in vain do we flatter ourselves that our repentance is unto life.

† By *salvation* may be meant *Christ himself*, the author of salvation, (1st. xlix. 6. and Luke ii. 29, 30.) or, as is most usual, the *blessings* of salvation, (Acts iv. 12.) or the *promises* and the *gospel* of salvation, (John iv. 22, and Acts xxviii. 18.) And by Zaccheus's being the son of Abraham, may be meant, his being so, both by birth and by faith in Christ. Accordingly all these senses are included in the paraphrase.

goodness, and as he really was in the lost state and condition of a sinner, I am doing my proper business in converting him, and bringing salvation to him and his.

11 And as they heard these things, he added, and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

11 The people having heard Christ speak of his coming to act the Saviour's part, and knowing that he was on his way to *Jerusalem*, the seat of their ancient kings, imagined, that as soon as he should get thither, he would openly declare himself to be the Messiah, and set up his kingdom with great pomp and worldly power there: And therefore, to rectify their mistaken notions, he acquainted them that the nature of his kingdom was very different from what they apprehended, that the generality of the *Jews* would exclude themselves from it, and that its glory would not appear so soon as they vainly fancied; and this he illustrated in the following similitude:

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

12 A certain noble lord took a long journey into another country, to be vested and confirmed in his kingdom, and then to return, with all his honour and authority, to distribute proper rewards to his subjects*. So Christ is of high and noble birth, as the Lord from heaven; and, being King of *Israel*, and of the whole church of God, he ascended up on high, to be vested in his spiritual and glorious kingdom; and afterwards to return in power and great glory, to execute judgment in the rewards and punishments of the great day.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

13 And before the king set out on this design, he called together ten of his servants, and divided among them ten pounds†, ordering them to trade with these to the best advantage, till he should return. So Christ, before he left this world and went to the Father, instead of raising his disciples to temporal preferments, as they were ready to expect, called them to duty and service; in order to which he bestowed upon them several gifts, suited to the nature and design of his kingdom, such as * knowledge and grace, utterance, miracles, and the means of salvation, commanding them to

N O T E S.

* Here seems to be an allusion to the kings of *Judea*, who used to go to *Rome* to receive the investiture of their kingdoms from the *Roman* emperors, and then return to *Judea* in the full glory of their character.

† The value of a pound is uncertain, tho' some have reckoned it at about three pounds two shillings and sixpence; and others at twice as much of our money.

* We are not to suppose that the gifts, signified by the pounds delivered to each person, were all of one sort, and were bestowed upon all alike; for this parable is of

much the same import with that of the talents, (*Matth. xxv.*) which were distributed, in various allotments, to one and another servant; and these pounds and talents include all the gifts, which Christ bestows on different persons, whether of common providence, of common assistance and gospel-privileges to unbelievers, and unsanctified ministers. or, together with them, the additional gifts of special grace to true believers, and his faithful servants. See the note on *Matth. xxv. 14.*

to make a proper use and improvement of them for the advancement of his interest in the world, till he should come again, and call them to an account.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

14 But as soon as the prince was gone, his own citizens, who all along had hated him, declared that they would not submit to his dominion. So the body of the *Jewish* nation, who were Christ's kindred, according to the flesh, and his covenant-people, discovered their continued enmity against him by their obstinate refusals of his grace and government, and violent opposition to his gospel, after he was ascended into heaven. And in like manner, all unbeliever's hearts are naturally so averse to him, that they will have nothing to do with him; or if they would have him for their Saviour, they will by no means have him for their King.

15 And it came to pass, that, when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

15 And, being established in his kingdom, he ordered his servants, at his return, to give an account of the money, which he had entrusted them with, that he might see what improvement each one had made of it. So Christ being exalted at the right hand of the throne of God, far above all heavens, will come again at the last day, and make a strict inquiry of every one, how he has used the several gifts and talents committed to him, according to his station and character, circumstances and opportunities in the world, and what good he has done by them, for the glory of God, and the good of his own and others souls.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

16, 17 Then one of these servants, whose improvements had been most considerable, gave in his accounts to his lord, saying, * The produce of thy one pound, which thou committedst to me, is ten more for thine honour, and service: And his lord, commending his diligence and faithfulness in the good use he had made of so small a trust, generously rewarded him with the government of ten cities. So when Christ shall come again to judgment, such of his servants, as have the grace of God in truth, and have been most laborious, faithful, and successful in laying it out, together with all other gifts and furniture, for the interest of Christ and religion, will ascribe the improvement, not to themselves, but to the *grace of God which was with them*; and yet he will publicly declare his approbation of their care and faithfulness, and will amply bestow upon them gratuitous rewards, letting them know, at the same time,

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant; because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

N O T E.

* The servant's saying, Thy pound has gained ten pounds, may intimate that, tho' he was active in employing it, the advantage

made by it sprung out of the pound itself, and was owing to that, rather than to himself.

time, that what they had done in so very little a matter, and that by virtue of his own free gifts to them, could never deserve so high an honour and advantage, as answers to being made a governor over ten cities.

18 And the second, came saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

18, 19 Another of his servants said, By means of thy one pound, five more are gained for thee; and his lord, expressing his approbation of him also, bountifully rewarded him with the government of five cities. So such of Christ's servants as have been helped to be faithful in improving his gifts, though not with such remarkable and uncommon diligence and success as some others, for the advancement of his kingdom in the world, will be publicly and favourably approved of by him; and he will give them such a proportion of his free rewards, as shall carry like evidence, that it is all the vouchsafement of his own rich and sovereign grace.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou laidest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

20, 21 And a third of these servants, who had been careless and slothful, came with excuses of himself, and accusations of his lord, saying, Here is thy money, which I have wrapped up and laid by; for I durst not venture to trade with it, lest it should not turn to good account, because thou art a severe exacter, who I expected wouldst demand more than thou gavest me. So it is with graceless, careless, and slothful ministers and professors of Christ, who having gifts suited to the edification of others, have no concern about doing good with them, and think it enough if they do no harm: They are apt to form vain excuses for themselves, as if there were danger of loss, and no prospect of success, though they were to take ever so much pains in attempting to do their duty; and they entertain hard and unrighteous thoughts of God, as if he demanded more difficult services, than he had furnished them for, or would assist them in.

22 And he said unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knowest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

23 Wherefore then givest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own

22, 23 But ^(2^d) the king, being offended at his frivolous pretences and unjust charges, said to him, Thou wretched, evil-minded servant, not only your own iniquity, but even your own mouth shall condemn you: If you thought that I was a severe master, who demanded more than I gave, Why did not that very consideration put you upon trying some way or other to improve my money, at least by putting it to interest* in some public fund where it might have been safe, and I might have received it, though not with the greatest,

yet

N O T E.

* Christ here seems to allow of improving money, by way of interest in public funds; and therefore every kind of usury, or of increasing money by lending it, is not to be deemed unlawful.

own with usury?

yet with some increase? So it will be in the day of judgment: The careless, graceless, and slothful, will then be found to be base and wicked servants; and Christ will condemn them as such, not only for their injurious charges upon him, but for their not doing what even their own wrong notions about him told them he expected from them: For if they knew that he would demand an improvement of his gifts, to his glory, and their own and others good, as indeed he justly may, How could they expect to escape his anger for their negligence and sloth, in making no good use of them at all?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

24 Hereupon the king ordered some that were present, to take this pound away from the wicked and slothful servant, and give it to him who had already ten pounds. So Christ, in the administration of his kingdom in this world, often blasts the gifts of those that make no good use of them, and, in the day of judgment, will strip them of all the advantages they enjoyed before; and he increases the gifts and graces of his good servants, that live in the exercise of them here, and will distinguish them that have been most faithful and diligent, with remarkable degrees of glory hereafter.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

25 The standers-by, objecting against this, said to the king, How is it that thou wilt order this pound to be given to him who has already ten pounds? So some, who are strangers to the rich liberality of Christ, in his gracious dealings with his faithful people and servants, are ready to envy their superior gifts here, and the high honour Christ will put upon them in the day of judgment.

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

26 But the king signified, that his order should not be reversed: For I tell you, said he, it is my will that he who makes a right use of what I have entrusted him with, shall have still more; but he who makes no good use of it, shall be deprived even of that which I had given him. So Christ assures us, that his faithful disciples and servants who make a right improvement of the graces, gifts, and opportunities he bestows upon them, shall have the greatest increase of them here, and shall shine as the stars in the firmament for ever and ever; and that the unprofitable and slothful servant and professor shall often be deprived of his gifts and abilities in this world, and shall be cast into outer darkness in the next. (*Matth. xiv. 30.*)

27 But those enemies, which

27 When the king had taken this account of his servants, and dealt with them suitable to their different characters, he at last proceeded, with the utmost severity, against his obstinate and implacable enemies, saying,

which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

28 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

29 And it came to pass when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over-against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.

31 And if any man ask you, Why do you loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

saying, But as to those rebellious subjects of mine own city, who absolutely refuse to have me for their ruler, I will make them the most dreadful examples of my just indignation, by bringing them forth, and putting them to death before my face. So Christ will execute the most terrible vengeance on the rebellious nation of the *Jews*, and on all that obstinately reject his authority and grace, especially on those that bore a visible relation to him *.

28 Our blessed Lord, having thus guarded against mistaken prejudices about the nature of his kingdom, continued his journey toward *Jerusalem*; and, knowing that the approaching passover was the appointed time for his being made a sacrifice for sin, he went foremost of the company, to shew how ready he was to offer himself.

29, 30 And when he arrived at the mount of *Olives*, near *Bethphage* and *Bethany*, he thought fit to make a public entry into *Jerusalem*, in a sort of humble triumph, which might at once represent his low condition in this world, and the high honours that were nevertheless due to him, as the King of *Israel*, and in a little time, would be conferred upon him in his exaltation to his kingdom, at the Father's right hand. And therefore, having a perfect fore-knowledge of every minute circumstance of things, he ordered two of his disciples to go into a village, which lay at a little distance, telling them, that, at their very entrance into it, they should find an ass's colt, which had never been backed, and bade them untie and bring it to him. (See the note on *Matth. xxi. 7.*)

31 And, said he, if any one go about to prevent you, asking what business ye have to meddle with the colt, and lead it away, ye shall answer him, that your Lord and Master has at present a special occasion to make use of it; and this shall so far pacify him, that he will readily let you bring it to me.

32 Then the two disciples, in obedience to their Lord's command, went into the village; and, punctually following his directions, found every thing come to pass, just as he had foretold.

33 Accord-

N O T E.

* As the *Jews*, after Christ's ascension and the effusion of his Spirit, continued resolutely to oppose his grace and government, persisted in their impenitence and unbelief, persecuted his disciples, and blasphemed his name, he destroyed their city and nation by a most exemplary execution of his vengeance upon them, in the dreadful havoc that was

made of them by the *Romans*. And this was to be a lively emblem of the still more terrible and everlasting destruction he will bring upon them, and upon all the ungodly, who obstinately persist in their sins, and in their rejecting of Christ and his gospel, and especially upon apostates, when he shall come to judge the world at the last day.

33 And, as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

36 And, as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when he was come high, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen,

38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord;—peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

33 Accordingly, while they were untying the colt, some of its proprietors asked them, what they meant by offering to take it away? thereby intimating, that they should let it alone.

34 But (6i) they, according to the instructions Christ had given them, replied, That their Lord and Master had a special occasion just then to make use of it; upon which these persons made no further opposition, but let the disciples take their own course.

35 And they, bringing the colt to Jesus, put their clothes upon it, for the ease, convenience, and decency, of his sitting; and, having thus arrayed it, they mounted him upon it, that he might ride in the meek glory of his triumph to *Jerusalem*; whereby some ancient prophecies of the Messiah were fulfilled in him. (See *Matth.* xxi. 4, 5, 7. and the notes there.)

36 And as he marched toward the city, the people, to express their high respect and joy, spread their garments, like carpets, in the way, for him to pass over, as was usual at the triumphal processions and entries of great princes into their capital cities; others cut off the branches of trees, and strewed them in the road. (*Matth.* xxi. 8. see the note there.) And many, when they heard at *Jerusalem* of his approach, went out from thence to meet him, with branches of palm-trees in their hands. (*John* xii. 13.)

37 And when he arrived at the lower part of mount *Olivet*, on that side which was next the city, and not far from it, a numerous crowd of disciples, that attended him, began, as with one heart and one mouth, to unite their voices in such loud and joyful acclamations, as caused the air to echo with the high praises of God, for the many great and wonderful miracles which their King and Saviour had wrought, and which were brought to their remembrance by what they had lately seen, or heard of, in his raising *Lazarus* from the dead. (*John* xii. 17, 18.)

38 Therefore, amidst their praises of God, they honoured Jesus, and expressed their joy, as they used to do at their feast of tabernacles, saying, Blessed be Messiah our King, who is come with a divine commission and authority to save us: Peace is brought to earth from heaven, God now shews himself to be reconciled, all is safe and happy: May prosperity attend the Saviour and his kingdom, and every glory be heaped upon him! we extol him in the highest strains; may his throne be exalted above every other throne! And may the blessed angels join their loudest songs with ours, that

that his name may be ever glorified, and God's name in him! (See the notes on *Matth. xxi. 9.*)

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

39 While they, under a divine afflatus, were thus paying their honours to Christ, his enemies were vexed and enraged at it; and some of the *Pharisees*, who mixed with this vast multitude, fearing that it would effectually destroy their authority among the people, and defeat their malicious designs against him, spake to him with great contempt and indignation, saying, Master, how does this consist with your pretences to gravity and humility! What a ridiculous farce is here! and how mutinous and seditious is this! Command your disciples to be quiet, and not to make such an intolerable noise.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

40 But, instead of checking them, he severely rebuked the *Pharisees*, saying, Whatever evil constructions ye put upon their joyful acclamations, I assure you, they are so fit and necessary, and due to me, and so much to my Father's honour, that if these persons were to be silent to our praise, others should be found to proclaim it; yea, rather than fail, as great a miracle should be wrought for this purpose, as if the very stones were to burst out into the loudest songs; and if all the *Jews* were to withhold the honour which belongs to me as the Messiah, the most stupid and unlikely, such as ye reckon the heathens to be, should rise up and pay them.

41 And, when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it.

41 When he drew so near the city, as to take a full prospect of it, he beheld its grandeur and magnificence; and, his human passions being moved with the thoughts of its approaching desolation, for the obstinate impenitence and unbelief of its inhabitants, he, amidst the hosannas of the people, compassionately lamented over it with tears*.

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the things which

42 Saying, as a man and minister, O thou great and populous city, who hast been flourishing and prosperous, and once wert the city of God's peculiar habitation, how melancholy is the thought, that ere long thy glory will depart! O that thou hadst been wise†! Happy would it have been for thee, hadst thou but understood, and seriously considered the things, which relate

N O T E S.

* He did this to shew that he had the real affections of human nature, was tenderly touched with the thoughts of *Jerusalem's* iniquities and miseries, and would try all proper means to awaken a just concern in the people's minds about their own sin and ruin.

† Some suppose this to be the form of a wish; others take it to be an abrupt sentence, under strong workings of the passions, which is to be supplied with such words as these, *Happy would it have been for thee, if thou hadst known, &c.* accordingly I have taken both senses into the paraphrase.

which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

relate to thy temporal and eternal happiness, if not before, yet now at least in this last season of grace! But, alas! whatsoever may be the case of some few among you, it is now too late for you, as a community, and for the chief and greatest part of you, to obtain mercy: God is about to deprive you of all means of salvation, to give you up, in righteous judgment, to that blindness of mind and hardness of heart, which ye have chosen, and to bring upon you the utter destruction which ye have deserved.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

43 For the appointed time draws near, in which your enemies will surround and closely besiege you on every side, and will shut up all your inhabitants within your walls, so that none of them shall escape.

44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

44 As to thy strong and sumptuous buildings, they shall be so utterly razed to their very foundations, that not one stone shall be left upon another, to shew the ruins of thine antient grandeur; and as to thine inhabitants, they shall all be miserably destroyed by the fury of their enemies, and by the just vengeance of God, because thou hast shut thine eyes, and hardened thine heart against the light of my word, and the strivings of my Spirit, and wouldst not regard my warnings and threatnings on one hand, nor my kind invitations and overtures of mercy on the other*.

45 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought,

45, 46 Jesus at length arrived to the city; and, alighting from the ass's colt went not to the royal palace, as if he designed to set up for a secular prince, but to the temple, as to his own house, whose kingdom was not of this world: And upon his entering into the outward court, called the court of the *Gentiles*, where the proselytes used to worship, he found that the people, by the encouragement and for the advantage of the priests, had turned it into a market-place, for changing of money, and for buying and selling of oxen, sheep, and doves, (see the paraphrase on *Matt. xxi. 12.*): But, he drove out all these traders, and would not suffer them to continue there; saying, It is written, (*Isa. lvi. 7.*) *Thy house shall be called an house of prayer for Gentiles as well as Jews*; but ye have profaned it, by putting it to secular uses, to which it was never

46 Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have

COII-

N O T E.

* All this was exactly verified, when, about forty years afterwards, *Titus* besieged *Jerusalem*, cast up a trench, and built a wall round about it, that none of the Jews might escape; and at last the temple being fired contrary to his will, he commanded the soldiers to dig up the foundations of the tem-

ple and city, and to lay all level, excepting three towers, which in *Julian* the apostate's days were also levelled with the ground, as we are told by *Josephus* and other historians. *Vid. Joseph. de bell. Jud. l. 5. c. 27. & l. 7. c. 1. & Socrat. v. 10.*

have made it a den of thieves.

47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests, and the scribes, and the chief of the people, sought to destroy him ;

48 And could not find what they might do : for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

consecrated ; and, according to the complaint in another prophet, (*Jer. vii. 11.*) Ye, by your covetousness and unlawful gains here, have turned the sanctuary of the Lord into a place for robbery and extortion. (See the note on *Mark xi. 15.*)

47, 48 And, when he had purged the temple from these abuses, he continued preaching there every day of that week, till the passover came on at which he suffered †. But the chief priests, doctors of the law, and the, principal heads and rulers of the people, were so enraged at his spiritual and holy doctrine, and at his opposing their corruptions and their authority, that they held close consultations about putting him to death ; and yet they could not tell how to contrive a scheme for doing it effectually, and with safety for themselves : For the generality of the common people (*εξ απλου*) hung upon him, and were exceeding diligent in attending his ministry, who, they thought, spoke like one having authority, and not in such an empty, jejune, trifling manner as the *scribes*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What riches of sovereign grace are there in Christ, whose eye is upon his sheep wherever they are ! He prevents them with his free mercy, touches the hearts of the rich as well as poor, and of greater as well as lesser sinners, and sometimes turns curiosity itself into effectual faith and repentance ; it is good to be found in his way And O what a wonderful change does grace make in its secret operations ! It opens the ear to Christ's call, and the heart to receive him gladly ; it brings the whole man into an obediential subjection to him, in whatsoever he demands : it turns the covetous, proud, and cruel oppressor and extortioner, into an humble and honest, merciful and liberal man ; and it engages him to make restitution, as far as possible, for every injury he has done to others. How great is the happiness that attends this change, as the blessing of Abraham therein comes upon him, who was in a lost state before ; and as it opens a door of hope for his family, together with himself ! And how high should Christ stand in our account, who came to save us in the name of the Lord ! All that we call our property is his, and nothing should be withheld from him ; he is worthy of the most exalted triumph, and joyful praise ; and, however some may envy and detract from his honour, he will have a seed to serve and glorify him : His house shall be reformed, divine institutions shall be preserved, and his authority shall bear down all opposition before him : All our knowledge and assistances, privileges and means of grace are his gifts, to be improved for him ; and when he comes again to judgment, he will require a strict account of what we have done with them. How earnest then should we be for grace to make a good use of all his other gifts ! Dreadful will be the case of the slothful servant ; Christ will count him a wicked one, for not doing what he might and ought, and will righteously strip him of all the comforts and advantages he ever enjoyed or hoped for : The things that belong to his peace may soon be hid from his eyes ; and those ene-

mies

N O T E.

† He in those few days discoursed concerning the nature and design of his death, the incredulity and rejection of the Jews, and bringing in of the *Gentiles*, his own divine authority, and his coming to judge the world at the last day, with several other

things, relating to himself and his saving work, as we find them recorded in the next chapter, and in *Matth. xxi, xii, xiii, xiv, xxv.* chapters, *Mark xi, xii.* chapters, and *John xii. 20.* to the end of the chapter.

mies, who will not that Christ should reign over them, shall be slain before him. But O what free and bountiful rewards will he bestow upon his faithful servants, in wise proportions, beyond their expectations or deserts! *God works in them that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, that they may do his will;* and they are encouraged to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as they know that their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. Heb. xiii. 21. and 1 Cor. xv. 58.

C H A P. XX.

Christ's vindication of his authority by a question about John's baptism, 1,—8. The parable of the vineyard, 9,—19. The obedience that is to be paid to the civil magistrate, 20,—26. The resurrection vindicated against the Sadduces, 27,—38. The scribes puzzled with a question about Christ's being David's son, 39,—44. And a caution against the scribes, 45,—47.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, that, on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us by what authority dost thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of

PARAPHRASE.

THE chief priests, scribes, and elders, that made up the Jewish sanhedrim, having formed a design against Christ's life, wanted a fair pretence to execute it; and as they were afraid of provoking the people, who had generally a good opinion of him, they resolved to try, whether they could not urge him to say something that might give them a plausible occasion of laying sedition, or blasphemy to his charge: And therefore as, from day to day, he was continually instructing all that came to the temple, and preaching the gospel to them; so, on one of those days, these men came in a body, hoping to surprize and terrify him.

2 And they said to him, in a fierce, insulting manner, We come as persons that have a right to demand what you mean by this way of going on, and insist upon your telling us by whose commission you thus take upon you? Who empowered you to enter Jerusalem in such a public and noisy manner, to turn the buyers and sellers out of the temple, to broach new doctrines, and preach down those which have been so long established, and to attempt the lessening of our character among the people? Pray, who could pretend to give you a commission, and from whom do you say you had authority for doing such things as these?

3 But (sc) Jesus knowing their invidious designs, and having many a time before asserted his divine commission, and proved it by various signal miracles, said, I have likewise a question of the same nature to put to you; and if ye will answer it, I will tell you plainly who it is that has authorized me to do all these things:

4 When John came preaching the doctrine of repentance, and baptized the people into the faith of the approach-

of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us, for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable: A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

approaching Messiah, Was it by a commission from God; or only of his own head, or by the order and appointment of any other man?

5, 6 This question exceedingly gruelled them, their thoughts working after this manner: If we shall say that *John the Baptist* was sent of God to preach and baptize, we shall give up our main point, and confirm the authority of Jesus against ourselves; for he will certainly reply upon us, that then we can never answer our rejecting himself and his doctrine, to which that divine messenger gave testimony: And, on the other hand, if we shall say, that *John* came of his own head, or only by the order and appointment of some other man, the generality of the people will be so incensed against us, as to stone us; for they are fully persuaded that he was a prophet, who had a divine commission for what he said and did.

7 And therefore, perceiving the danger of answering either way, they declined giving their real sentiments about *John's* doctrine and baptism, and pretended not to know whence, or from what original his authority was derived.

8 Upon this Jesus said to them, Since ye refuse to answer so plain a question, which would have served for a just reply to your own, I may well be excused telling you from whom I have my authority to do what ye have seen and heard; and therefore at present shall say nothing further about it.

9 Having thus defeated the design of these his implacable enemies, in such a way as carried a smart reproof for their disregarding both his own and *John's* authority, he proceeded in a discourse to the people, together with them, to deliver the following parable; by which he intimated, that God would cast off the *Jewish* nation, and particularly the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, notwithstanding all their pretences to religion, for their obstinately rejecting him; and would receive the believing *Gentiles* in their room: There was, said he, a certain man, who planted a vineyard, and provided it with every thing necessary and convenient; and, having let it out to some husbandmen, to cultivate and improve it, he took a long journey, from which he was not to return for a great while. So God instituted the *Jewish* church by the hand of *Moses*, enriching it with many privileges and blessings, suitable to that dispensation; and then, committing its administration to the chief priests and rulers of the people, he withdrew the visible appearances of his presence, and left them promises of returning again in some future age.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent him away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.

12 And again he sent the third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved Son: it may be they will reverence him when they see him.

14 But, when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying,

10 And when the proper season for vines bearing, and bringing forth ripe grapes was come, (see the note on *Mark* xii. 2.) the master sent his servants to the husbandmen, to require the profits, and to assist in gathering and managing the fruits: But they, instead of answering his just demands, shamefully abused his servants, and drove them empty away. So when God's ancient people the *Jews* had enjoyed these rich advantages for a considerable time, and brought forth little good fruit answerable to them, he sent several prophets, under the former part of the Old Testament-dispensation, to stir them up to their duty, and to instruct and encourage them in his ways: But they raised up persecutions against his servants, and disregarded their message, instead of returning to him, and yielding the holy obedience he demanded of them; and the corruptions of the priests, and rulers had such an influence upon the people, that God had no revenues of glory from them.

11, 12 And again the master sent other servants, one after another, from time to time: But (11) the husbandmen, still persisting in their disobedience, abused them more than the former, driving them away also empty-handed. So God continued to send the latter prophets to the *Jews*, with further counsels and cautions to reclaim them; and, at the close of that dispensation, he sent *John the Baptist* to point out the Messiah, and to call them to repentance, and to faith in him: but they still persisting in their obstinacy, impenitence, and unbelief, rejected and despised, vilified and persecuted all these, one after another, with yet greater virulence; and thrust them away, resolving not to be reformed.

13 Then the master of the vineyard considered with himself what might be proper for him to do further, to win upon these obstinate rebels; and at last resolved to send his own son and heir, supposing that they might shew a due respect to his authority. So God, according to the eternal counsel of his will, determined to send at length his only begotten and dearly beloved Son, who is Lord of all, as the last expedient for working upon the rebellious *Jews*; since it might justly be expected, that they should homage and submit to such a divine person, who gave the plainest proofs of his being so by the miraculous works which he wrought in a God-like manner among them.

14, 15 But, upon the husbandmen's seeing their master's son and heir, they thought, that if they could but get rid of him, they might take possession of the estate for themselves: And therefore they desperately resolved

ing, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the Lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come, and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And, when they heard it, they said, God forbid.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

18 Whosoever shall

to lay violent hands upon him; and, dragging him out of the vineyard, destroyed him. So when the Son of God appeared among the Jews; and the chief priests and rulers saw with what authority he preached and behaved, what wonderful miracles he performed, and how the people applauded him, they, instead of believing in him themselves, and encouraging others to embrace him, were filled with envy at him; and thinking that, if they could but dispatch him, there would be none left to oppose their authority, they rose up in rage against him, cast him out of the church, who was indeed its chief Corner-stone, and crucified the Lord of glory. What punishment therefore, said Christ, must ye suppose the Lord of the vineyard will inflict upon those wicked wretches, meaning the Jews, for abusing and destroying, not only the servants he sent to them time after time before, but at last his own dear son also?

16 He will certainly execute judgment upon them, to their utter destruction; and commit the care of his vineyard to others, who will be more true to their trust, and yield him its fruits in due season. And, as Jesus had not explained this parable, the chief priests and elders, not considering at first how far they might be concerned in it, condemned those wicked husbandmen, as deserving to be destroyed without mercy, that more faithful men might be put into their place. (*Matth. xxi. 41.*) But as soon as they perceived that Christ herein pointed at themselves, as the persons represented by the husbandmen, they said, Far be it from us to be guilty of putting the true Messiah to death; whenever he comes, we shall take care that we do not commit so horrible a villany.

17 But, (*sc.*) while they were thus professing their detestation of such wickedness, our Lord, looking upon them with compassion, and yet with severity and disdain, said, If what ye pretend be real, what means that ancient prophecy, where it is written, (*Psal. cxviii. 22.*) *The stone which the builders refused, is become the head-stone of the corner?* i. e. The Messiah, who was rejected by the chief priests and elders, that ought to have been builders of God's house, and by the generality of the Jews under their influence, is made the foundation and chief Corner-stone of the church, upon whom, when he comes to be exalted, both Jews and Gentiles should rest, like the two sides of a building, and be firmly and beautifully knit together in him.

18 If therefore, under the power of mistaken pro-

judices,

shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

19 And the chief priests, and the scribes, the same hour, sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly;

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cæsar, or no?

23 But he perceived their craftiness,

judices, any should be so offended at the Messiah, because of his mean appearance on earth, as not to believe in him, he exposes himself to great hurt and danger, which will be like flinging him down upon a great stone: But if any shall utterly reject Christ after his exaltation, he shall be inevitably destroyed without mercy, and that for ever, like one crushed to death by the weight of a heavy stone cast upon him. (See the note on *Matth.* xxi. 44.)

19 Then the chief priests and *scribes*, who by this time clearly saw that Jesus meant all this against them, instead of being concerned about it, and humbled under it, were so much the more incensed at it, and would immediately have seized him by force, and put him to death, had they not been restrained by their fear of the people, who they knew had a high esteem of him.

20 And therefore, that they might get a fairer opportunity for it, they resolved to keep a watchful eye over him, and set some *Pharisees*, who were zealous for the liberty of the *Jews*, and some *Herodians*, who were as zealous for the *Roman* authority, to be spies upon him, (*Matth.* xxii. 16. see the note there); ordering them to put on the appearance of honest, conscientious men, who wanted him to satisfy the scruples of their own minds; and in that way to try whether they could not draw something from him, that might either offend the common people, or expose him to the resentments of the government, and lay a foundation for a judicial process against him.

21, 22 And they, according to their instructions, addressed him in a respectful manner, saying, Master, we are well assured that you are a person of great integrity and wisdom, and teach the right way of pleasing God, and that your impartiality and resolution set you above being influenced by favour or affection, or by the fear of any man whatsoever. We therefore desire that you would resolve a case of conscience which lies in debate between us, *viz* Whether it be lawful for us, who are God's own peculiar people, and under his immediate government, to submit to the authority of the emperor, who by nation and religion is a foreigner, and, in consequence thereof, to pay the tribute he demands of us? What do you say is our duty in this case?

23 But he, who saw through their treacherous and wicked designs against him, knew that if he should answer in the negative, they would accuse him as an enemy to *Cæsar*; and if in the affirmative, they would incense the people against him, as an enemy to their rights

ness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

24 Shew me a penny; Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, *Cæsar's*.

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto *Cæsar* the things which be *Cæsar's*, and unto God the things which be God's.

26 And they could not take hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

27 Then came to him certain of the *Sadducees*, (which deny that there is any resurrection) and they asked him,

28 Saying, Master, *Moses* wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also. And they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

33 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall

rights and liberties; and therefore he said to them, Why, under a pretence of respect, in referring a case of conscience to me, do ye attempt to ensnare me, as if I did not understand your deceit?

24 Let me see a piece of your tribute-money; and when they shewed him a *Roman* penny, which used to be paid on that occasion, he asked them whose image and superscription were stamped upon it? They, not perceiving his design, immediately replied, *Cæsar's*, as the *Roman* emperors were ordinarily stiled.

25 Upon which he answered, Your receiving *Cæsar's* coin, as current, is a practical confession of his authority; it being always accounted the prerogative of the higher secular powers to coin money, and thereby to ascertain its value, and make it current: Ye therefore ought to return the tribute of that to *Cæsar*, which ye receive and enjoy by his authority and protection, as far as ye can do it consistently with the homage and service ye owe to God, to whom ye must likewise be faithful, in rendering all religious obedience unto him.

26 And there was so much wisdom and equity in this answer, that these captious, subtle enemies, did not know how to give a bad turn to what he said, in the hearing of all the people: but were amazed at his prudence and caution, and were entirely silenced and confounded.

27 They having failed in this attempt, some of the *Sadducees*, who were the free-thinkers of the age, and denied the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, came on the same day, (*Matth. xxi. 23.*) and put the following question to him,

28 Saying, Master, *Moses* ordered in the law, (*Deut. xxv. 5.*) that if a married man, who has brethren, should die without issue, one of them, being single, should marry his widow, to keep up his name and family, and perpetuate his inheritance in *Israel*.

29 Now, say they, It happened that there were in a certain family seven such brethren, the eldest of which, having taken to him a wife, died, and left her without any child.

30 And the second brother marrying her died likewise, leaving no issue behind him.

31 And then the third in order took the widow for his wife; and so, in their turns, did all the rest, none of which had any child by her.

32 At last the woman herself died without issue likewise.

33 If therefore there be a future state, and a resurrection of the body, we would ask you, whose wife shall

of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage;

36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

38 For he is not

this woman be in that other world, since they were all married to her in this, and she bore no child to either of them, to give one, more than another, a claim to her?

34 Jesus replied, Ye are grossly mistaken, in supposing that this is any real objection against the doctrine of a future existence, and of the resurrection of the dead; and all your cavils of this sort proceed from your own ignorance of the true design of these and other scriptures, and of the exceeding greatness of God's power, as if he could not raise the dead, (*Mat. xxii. 29.* and *Mark xii. 24.*) Here indeed, in this mortal state, it is necessary for the continuance of mankind upon earth, and is proper for their convenience and comfort, that men should marry, and women should be given to them in marriage; and the law of inheritances, and of keeping up distinct families in *Israel*, made it expedient, that surviving brethren should, in their order, marry the childless widow of a deceased brother:

35 But they, whom God shall graciously accept as worthy to be admitted to the inheritance of eternal life, and to be raised from the dead to the possession of it, in the other world, will have no occasion for marriages, either to keep up the stock of its inhabitants, or to provide for their own convenience or comforts, or to entail their inheritances upon their families after them.

36 Nor can they die out of that world, and leave successors behind them, as they do in this: For they shall all be as glorious, happy, and immortal, as the holy angels themselves; their manner of living and enjoying shall be just like theirs, and they shall possess all the glory of a divine adoption, as the sons of God, who are to abide in his house for ever, after the resurrection from the dead.

37 And (31) that there really will be a resurrection of the body to a blessed immortality, may be fairly argued from what even *Moses* himself said, (see the note on *Matth. xxii. 31.*) in his recital of the words, which God spoke, when he appeared to him in the bush, saying, (*Exod. iii. 6.*) Not *I was*, but *I am* the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, many years after they were dead; thereby intimating, that they still continued to be his children, and so the sons of the resurrection, who are waiting for, and shall receive the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. (*Rom. viii. 23.* see the note on *Matth. xxii. 32.*)

38 For his being their God implies, that he is their portion, and exceeding great reward: But as they never were partakers of the full glory of this relation here;

not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

so he could much less be still the God of those human persons, if that essential part of the man, which is now dead, were never to rise again. Therefore, as their souls already live in another world, and it cannot be said that in all respects they are even now dead; so their bodies shall revive at the resurrection of the just: For all his people live to him, that not only a part of them, but the whole man, according to the tenour of his covenant, may be for ever and completely happy in the enjoyment of him; and they now live in his account, who *calls those things which be not, as though they were, because he quickens the dead.* (Rom. iv. 17.)

39 Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

39 Upon this, some of the *Jewish* doctors, who believed the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body, were so pleased with his judicious answer to the *Sadducees*, that they could not but express their satisfaction in it, saying, Master, you have clearly solved the difficulty, and established these great doctrines beyond all reasonable contradiction.

40 And, after that, they durst not ask him any question at all.

40 And such was their conviction of his wisdom and ability, by this and several other answers to questions which were put to him, that they were afraid to offer any more, or to engage in any further dispute with him.

41 And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?

41 He then took an opportunity, in his turn, to propose the following question to the *Pharisees*, (*Matth. xxii. 41.*) saying, Why do the *scribes*, (*Mark xii. 35.*) or interpreters of the law affirm, that the Messiah shall be a son of *David's* race *? How can that be, or how do ye understand it?

42 And David himself saith in the book of psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

42, 43 *David* himself, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, owned him as then existing, and honoured him as his superior, and as a divine person, saying, (*Psal. cx. 1.*) God the Father said unto my Lord, the Messiah, Sit thou enthroned in all dignity and power, glory and delights in heavenly places; and continue reigning in thy mediatorial kingdom, till all thine enemies be effectually and entirely put under thy feet, in a way of subjection to thee.

43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord, how is he then his son?

44 Since therefore *David*, in this known prophecy of the Messiah, expressly stiled him his own Lord, by way of superiority to himself; How can ye reconcile this with your other notion, which ye truly have, of his being a descendant from *David*? And his enemies, being

N O T E.

* It was generally owned among the *Jews*, that the Messiah was to spring from *David's* loins: Accordingly, on occasion, some of them pleaded, Has not the scripture said, that Christ comes of the seed of

David, and of the town of *Beth*? or where *David* was? (*John vii. 42.*) And the usual appellation of Christ among those, who looked upon him as the Messiah, was, *Ihsa Son of David.*

being at a loss what reply to make, held their peace. (Matth. xxii. 46.)

45 Then, in the audience of all the people, he said unto his disciples,

45 'Then as, by this and other instances of their perverseness, it appeared that whatever he said, and how much soever he confuted them, they either would not be convinced, or would not own themselves to be so, Jesus applied himself to his disciples; and, in the hearing of all the people, publicly cautioned them against these men, saying,

45 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

46 Take heed of being imposed upon by the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, and of imitating or gratifying their pride, hypocrisy, and self-conceit, who wonderfully affect to put on solemn airs, that they may command the greatest reverence, and get an ascendancy over others: Accordingly they chuse to walk about in long garments down to their feet, with an appearance of stately gravity; they are ambitious of receiving high compliments, and visible tokens of respect from the people, in the streets and markets; and they are ever pushing forward for the upper-hand and highest seats, in all places of publick worship, and at all enertainments, as if they were holier and more worthy than the rest of mankind.

47 Which devour widows houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

47 They likewise make high pretences to uncommon piety, and draw out their prayers to a much greater length than others: But all this fond appearance of sanctity and zeal, is only a cloke to their covetousness and oppression, that they may be the less suspected of any ill designs, and may the better impose upon and injure the richer sort of widows, and their fatherless children, by getting their affairs into their own hands, and sacrificing them to their own gain: And as they commit this wickedness under, and by means of a hypocritical form of godliness, the more aggravated and provoking is their guilt, and the more dreadful vengeance will the righteous God inflict upon them for it.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How unreasonable are all exceptions against the authority of Christ, who ought to be revered as God's own Son, and the chief Corner-stone of the church! And what hard shift do his enemies make to avoid the conviction that would lead them to own and honour him! And yet behold the surprizing patience of God, and the various means of grace, which he sends, time after time, to an unfruitful and rebellious people, before he utterly casts them off! But how dreadful will be the misery of those, that finally reject Christ, and set themselves against his servants and him! They are all along doing mischief to themselves, and putting down the heaviest destruction upon their own heads; while they, who build on him as their only foundation, shall find the utmost security and satisfaction in him, shall be taken into his vineyard, kept under his eye and care, and made fruitful to eternal life.—O what a wonderful person is Christ, who was David's Son and Lord! It is only a consideration of his divine and human natures, that

can reconcile the seemingly contradictory characters of supremacy and inferiority, which the scripture gives of him. How securely may we depend on him without danger of being deceived! And how carefully should we beware of evil men, that we may guard against their designing hypocrisy, and never place an implicit faith in any human guides, how dignified and sacred soever their professions may be! But there is no inconsistency between an entire subjection of conscience to God, in all matters of religion; and yielding faithful obedience to civil magistrates, in secular concerns: And though difficulties may be started and urged against the most evident and important truths; yet our faith should not be shaken by them; but whatever is asserted in, or, by just consequences, deduced from the word of God, should be heartily believed; and we may be sure, according to its infallible testimony, that, as there will soon be a change in the circumstances and relations of this dying world; so true believers can never die away from their God. And O what a blessed lot will they have in the world to come, where they shall be the children of the resurrection, and be like the holy angels, at the final manifestation of the Sons of God!

C H A P. XXI.

Christ's observation of a poor widow's casting two mites into the treasury, 1,—4. His prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, as a type and figure of the end of the world, 5,—33. His caution to be watchful, 34,—36. And a general account of his preaching, 37, 38.

TEXT.

AND he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

1 And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth, I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all.

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God; but she of her penury hath cast in all she had.

PARAPHRASE.

AS our Lord was one day sitting over-against the treasury in the temple, (*Mark xii. 41.*) he took notice of several rich persons making very large free-will-offerings, which they put into the public chest for the service of that holy place, and for the several religious uses to which those gifts were to be applied.

2 And he observed there came, among others, a poor widow, who being desirous to honour God, according to, and even beyond her ability, threw in two small pieces of money, which amounted to the value of but one farthing. (*See the note on Matth. x. 29.*)

3 Hereupon Christ, to shew his approbation of it, called his disciples to him, (*Mark xii. 43.*) and bade them observe that indigent, and yet generous creature, assuring them, that the little present, which she had made, was really more for her to give, and of higher account with God, than all the large offerings of the rich.

4 For, said he, all these have parted only with a small proportion of what they might well spare out of their abundant wealth; whereas this destitute widow, being herself in necessitous circumstances, has freely given all that she had in possession for her present subsistence, which shews that her love and zeal are greater than theirs.

5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones, and gifts, he said,

5 Soon after this, as he was going out of the temple, (*Mark* xiii. 1.) some of his disciples took notice with what vast stones and beautiful ornaments *Herod* had rebuilt it, (see the note on *John*. ii. 20.) and with what rich presents the people honoured it; and they desired him to observe and reflect upon all this, that the dreadful sentence might not be executed, which he had just before pronounced against it. (*Matth.* xxiii. 37, 38.)

6 As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

6 But he replied, Do the external pomp and grandeur of these things raise your admiration and move your concern that they may never be demolished? Alas! I assure you, the time is hastening apace, in which this stately building, with all its glory, shall be so entirely destroyed, that there shall be no remains, so much as to shew where it stood. (See the note on *Matth.* xxiv. 2.)

7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?

7 The disciples hearing this plain and peremptory declaration, asked him, how long it would be before the surprizing things he had mentioned should come to pass, and by what evident signs they might know when to expect such alterations, as they supposed would put an end to the present state of things upon earth, and consummate the glory of his kingdom. (*Matth.* xxiv. 3.)

8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

8 Our blessed Lord replied, Be very cautious that no man delude you by specious and false pretences: For before the accomplishment of the terrible desolations I spake of, various impostors will take upon them the character of the Messiah, each of them pretending, that, if *Israel* would obtain the expected advantages of his kingdom, they must repair to him, and that the time of deliverance from all their bondage and misery is just at hand: Give no heed to any of these seducers, for by their fair promises of what they will do for their followers, and by other stratagems and false appearances, they will deceive many, to their utter perdition. (*Matth.* xxiv. 5.)

9 But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.

9 But when ye shall have rumours of great tumults and wars among the *Jews*, and between them and other nations, do not be surprized or affrighted at them, to the discouragement of your faith and holy profession: For all these troubles must precede the destruction of *Jerusalem*; but they will be some time before it.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom;

10, 11 Then, by way of further explication of these events, he said to them, One body of *Jews* will take up arms against another, and *Gentiles* against *Jews*; and so civil and foreign wars will make dreadful havoc in *Judea*: And, besides the miseries arising from hence,

gainst kingdom:

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 But, before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

14 Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before, what ye shall answer.

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, nor resist.

hence, there will be terrible earthquakes, distressing famines and plagues, and surprizing appearances in the air, such as comets and blazing-stars, which will strike a pannick fear of some tremendous judgment as at hand †.

12 But, before all these public confusions, your enemies will discover a cruel temper, and raise up persecutions of all sorts against you; they will deliver you up to ecclesiastical courts, as if ye were the worst of apostates, and stir up kings and civil magistrates against you, as if ye were the vilest of criminals; and they will throw you into jails, and exercise all manner of severities against you for my sake *.

13 Nevertheless, (†) God in his providence, and by the influence of his Spirit upon your hearts, will overrule all this to his glory, and your own and others good: For by means of these sufferings, and your Christian behaviour under them, ye shall bear an honourable testimony to me, to the truth, excellence, and power of my gospel, to your own faith, and integrity in your profession of my name, and to your being assisted and owned of God in it; and ye will thereby have opportunities for preaching, clearing, and defending my gospel, so much the more, to the confutation of its enemies, to the conversion of many, and to the confirmation of my disciples in their most holy faith.

14 Since therefore your cause will quit cost, instead of being anxiously careful before-hand how to answer interrogatories, accusations, and inditements, either in ecclesiastical or civil courts; and, instead of being diffident about the issue, because ye are strangers to the arts of pleading, let it be a settled point with you to commit the affair to me.

15 For I, your Lord and Master, will give you such a spirit of wisdom and courage, and will furnish you with such convincing proofs of the truth and excellence of my doctrine, and of its being your duty to profess and preach it; and I will suggest such proper expressions for your defence, as the very worst of your malicious and subtle enemies shall by no means be able to withstand or contradict §.

16 But

NOTES.

† Thus historians tell us it was before the destruction of *Jerusalem*; and thus we may expect it to be in other nations, toward the end of the world. See the notes on *Matth. xxiv.* and the paraphrase on that chapter, and on *Mark xiii.*; where these and several other events are considered as applicable to the time of Christ's coming to judge the world at the last day.

* The Acts of the apostles inform us that all these things were fulfilled in those days.

§ How remarkably was this fulfilled, when *Peter* and *John* were called to an account about the cripple before rulers, elders, scribes, and others, with the high-priest, as met together in counsel! Acts iv. 5,—21.

16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.

18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

21 Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in villages

16 But ⁽²⁾ notwithstanding all this, such is the direct contrariety of my gospel to the corrupt principles and practices of the world, that even the nearest relations and acquaintances will break through all the bonds of natural affection and friendship, to oppose you for owning and publishing it: So that kindred and intimate friends will deal perfidiously with you, and even your own brethren and parents will betray you into the hands of cruel persecutors, and by the means of putting some of you to death.

17 Yea, a malignant spirit against you will spread to such a degree, that the generality of men, even all the seed of the old serpent, will unite in their antipathy, opposition, and rage against you, because ye belong to me, and bear my name.

18 But, I tell you for your comfort*, surprizing deliverances shall be wrought for you, whilst I have any work to do by you; and if, after that, any of you shall fall by death for your faithfulness to me, it shall be only exchanging this mortal life for an immortal one; and so in the balance of accounts all will be safe, and turn to your own profit.

19 And therefore whatsoever your danger or sufferings for my sake may be, do not be discouraged in yourselves; and let not the terror of your adversaries discompose and ruffle your spirits; but keep possession of your own souls in quietness and peace, in holy fortitude and calm resignation, with all long-suffering and patience, by a humble confidence, that, *As your days, so your strength shall be.* (Deut. xxxiii. 25.)

20 And now, that I may give you an immediately preceding sign of the utter destruction of this magnificent city and temple, whenever ye shall see the *Roman* forces laying siege to *Jerusalem*, and casting their lines about it, ye may assuredly conclude, that the time of this dreadful calamity is † very near.

21 Then let them that are in any part of *Judea*, flee for their lives into some distant mountains, or places of retirement, to hide themselves from the observation and fury of both *Jews* and *Romans*; and let those that are in the holy city, get out of it, before they be hemmed in; and let no one, who is in the fields or villages

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* This may possibly refer to the remarkable preservation of the Christians at the destruction of *Jerusalem*, when such vast multitudes of the *Jews* were slaughtered by the *Romans*; or rather it may be considered, as a proverbial expression to denote the best of

safety and advantage in times of danger; for Christ had expressly said, (ver. 16.) *some shall be put to death.*

† It afterwards appeared that the siege was never raised, till *Jerusalem*, and the temple with it, was destroyed.

in the countries
enter thereinto.

villages round about it, venture to go into it, either from a vain imagination, as if he might be safest in such a place of strength, or from a covetous desire of carrying off some effects which he may have there: But let every one flee with all possible speed, as ever he would not fall in the common desolation.

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

22 For this will be the very time in which God's patience toward this provoking people will expire, and his righteous wrath will flame out upon them, that all the horrible desolations, so often threatened in the prophecies of the Old Testament may be inflicted upon them, to their utter ruin.

23 But wo unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days: for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

23 But, since speedy flight will be so necessary to safety in those days, sad will their condition be, whose circumstances render them incapable of expedition, such as women with child, and those who have infants hanging at their breasts; it will be very difficult for them to escape: For that will be a time of extreme and spreading distress through all the land of *Judea*, and full vials of divine and human wrath will be poured out upon its inhabitants.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

24 Civil wars among themselves, and the sword of the common enemy against them all, will make a dreadful slaughter among them; and such as escape the sword shall be led into captivity, for death, or slavery, in all the nations round about*. And *Jerusalem* itself shall be sacked and trampled upon with indignation and contempt, and shall be kept under the jurisdiction of the *Gentiles*, and never be rebuilt again with any grandeur, suitable to its present state, till the glorious days shall come, which are appointed for the general conversion of the *Jews*, and bringing in of the fulness of the *Gentiles*.*

25 And there shall be signs in the

25, 26 And at the close of the forementioned desolations, the subversion of the *Jewish* government, religion, and laws will be so great, that, (as the prophet expresseth these terrible revolutions, *Joel* ii. 31. and iii. 15. 16.) they may be represented under the figures § of

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* Accordingly *Josephus* tells us, that the number of those who were taken captive by the *Romans*, during this war, was ninety-seven thousand, most of which *Titus* dispersed through the *Roman* provinces, to be destroyed in the theatres by the sword and wild beasts: But they that were under seven-teen years of age were sold. *Vid. de bel. Jud.* l. 7. c. 49.

then *Jerusalem* should be rebuilt, and the *Jews* gathered to their own country and city again; and that the *Gentiles* shall then no longer lord it over them; but all nations shall flow in unto them; and shall walk in their light, rejoicing in God's mercy to them, and sharing in all spiritual blessings with them.

§ These expressions may be considered in a metaphorical sense, as relating to the destruction

9 Our Lord hereby seems to intimate that

the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring.

26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

29 And he spake to them a parable, Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees;

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see, and know of your own selves, that summer is now nigh at hand.

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that

of the sun, moon, and stars, the heavens, the earth, and the sea being confounded, and the whole frame of nature dissolved; and then the nations of the earth will be filled with consternation and distress; and the hearts of the unbelieving *Jews* will be utterly sunk and overwhelmed with anguish, in expectation of the dreadful miseries that are coming upon them: And at the close of like troubles toward the end of the world, there shall be, in a literal sense, a dissolution of the present frame of the heavens and of the earth, (2 *Pet.* iii. 10, 11.)

27 The unbelieving *Jews* themselves shall then see, though alas too late! that Jesus is indeed the only true Messiah; and he will appear in such a solemn manner, as shall fully convince every one of his great majesty, power, and glory, to the joy of his saints, and the confusion of his enemies: And thus it will be still more remarkable, when every eye shall see him personally appearing in the clouds of heaven, at his coming to the final judgment.

28 And when these signs of *Jerusalem's* destruction begin to appear, look upward by faith for protection, support, and a happy issue; and rejoice with exceeding joy, in the near prospect of approaching mercy to you; for whatsoever becomes of others, ye may be sure that your deliverance will then be just at hand, and that my kingdom shall soon be exalted: And when like tokens of the last general judgment shall be seen, let all my disciples rejoice in a believing confidence, that they shall quickly have compleat deliverance from their sins and sorrows, and obtain salvation with eternal glory.

29 And for an illustration of these awful things, Christ further said, Observe how they may be represented by a similitude taken from the fig-tree, and all other trees*.

30 As ye now see all nature in its spring, and all the trees round about you breaking out in buds and leaves and tender shoots; ye are fully satisfied, from your own observation of things, that the summer is just now coming on.

31 So when ye shall see the fore-mentioned prognosticks come to pass, be assured upon the credit of my word, that the destruction of the *Jewish* temple and city,

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struction of *Jerusalem*; or in a literal sense, as they may relate to the dissolution of all things at the end of the world: And so I have represented the meaning of these passages, according to these different ways of applying them.

* It was in the spring, just before the pas-

sover, that Christ spoke these words; and so, according to his custom, he took an occasion from the present season of the year, when all the trees were budding on the mount of *Olives*, where they then were, (*Matth.* xxiv. 3.) to make use of this similitude.

that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

31 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

32 Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.

33 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkennels, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a snare

city, religion and polity, to make way for the advancement of my kingdom in all its glory through the world, will be then just at hand: And the like may be observed in after-days, with regard to the dissolution of the world, to introduce the last and most exalted glory of the Messiah's kingdom.

32 As to the events which particularly relate to the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the calamities that shall precede it, I tell you for certain, that there are some now living, who shall not be carried off the stage, till they shall see every one † of them fully accomplished.

33 And as to the like events, which will go before the destruction of the world at the last day, I further assure you, that the present state of the visible heavens, and of the earth, shall certainly in due time be dissolved: But nothing, that I have foretold you, shall ever fail of a punctual accomplishment, though the precise time for these last things is not certainly known as yet *. (*Matth. xxiv. 36.*)

34 Since therefore the time for the dissolution of the whole frame of nature, and for the final judgment, will as certainly come, as the desolation of the *Jews*, but none knows when; see to it that ye never indulge luxurious and intemperate appetites, in eating and drinking to excess, nor give way to any sensual and irregular pleasures, which will bring great guilt upon the conscience, and stupify and unfit you for all spiritual and important concerns; and take heed that ye do not greedily involve yourselves in cares, projects, and pursuits after the riches of this world, which will ingross your time and hearts, and shut out better things, lest the day of God's dreadful vengeance should rush upon you before ye are aware, and when ye will be worst of all prepared for it.

35 For the solemn judgment of the great day, as well

N O T E S.

† In fact the apostle *John* and others did see and survive this dreadful catastrophe.

* This sense of these words seems best suited to the mixed design, which, as appears to me, our Lord carried on, through this discourse, to notify his coming to destroy *Jerusalem*, and to judge the world at the last day: For as one was a lively type of the other; so he here declares what in fact should be, with respect to the final alteration which is to be made upon the whole face of nature, and so passes on to what most directly and immediately relates to the general judgment, which would come as a snare on all them that dwell on the face of

the whole earth, *ver. 35.* and of which he says, *But of that day and hour knows no man, no not the angels of heaven, but my Father only,* *Matth. xxiv. 36.* thereby intimating, that as to the precise time, when that day will be, it was then a secret in his Father's own breast, which he had not revealed to any man or angel, no, not to the Messiah himself, as man, at least not with any commission to reveal it to others at present: And answerable to this conclusion of Christ's predictions, relating to the final judgment, he discoursed at large on that subject in the next chapter. (*Matth. xxv.*) See the notes on *Matth. xxiv. 35.* and *Mark xiii. 32.*

snare shall it come on all them: that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

35 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

37 And in the day-time he was teaching in the temple, and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount of Olives*.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple for to hear him.

well as that on *Jerusalem*, will certainly come with surprizing and inevitable ruin to all careless, sensual, and worldly minded sinners, in whatever part of the world they may be: And just as birds, when they are caught in a snare, are frightened and flutter, but cannot get out; so they will be *snared in an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them.* (Eccles. ix. 12.)

36 Be ye therefore always in a wakeful, circum-spect temper, and strictly upon your guard against temptations to sin on one hand, and dreadful surprizes on the other; and be instant in daily prayer for continual assistance unto the discharge of every duty, and departure from every iniquity, that ye may be found * bearing the character of those whom the Messiah shall adjudge to the honour and privilege of escaping, not only the vengeance which shall be executed in this world, but the sting of death, and the condemnation of the ungodly at his awful tribunal in the last day; and that ye may be deemed meet to stand in the congregation of the righteous, who shall be acquitted by him, and have boldness before him at his coming.

37 Now after Christ's public entry into *Jerusalem*, he constantly, for a little while, repaired to the temple by day, that he might preach there, and retired to the mount of *Olives* by night, that he might have the better opportunities for private devotion, in view of his approaching death, and that he might not be shut up within the walls of the city, and so be taken before his appointed time was fully come.

38 And in the morning, upon his return to the temple, the common people, either out of curiosity, or from a good opinion of him, flocked thither betimes in great multitudes, that they might be ready to attend on his ministry; so that he always had a crowded audience, though, alas! there were but few among them who received the love of the truth that they might be saved.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a critical notice does our Lord take of all our offerings, and of all the circumstances that attend them! And who can think of his awful predictions, and their accomplishment, and not read in them the Saviour and the God, also

NOTE.

* *Worthy*, in the scripture-sense of the term, sometimes relates to an honour put upon a person, as when it speaks of being counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ; (Acts v. 41.) and at other times it signifies meekness, and what is becoming, as when we are said to walk worthy of God,

and of the vocation wherewith we are called, and to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. (1 Thess. ii. 12. Eph. iv. 1. and Luke iii. 8.) And so to be counted worthy to escape, &c. is to have the honour of it, and to be fitted or prepared for it.

also the demolition of the *Jewish* frame of worship, with the temple at *Jerusalem*, and the establishment of a new dispensation of grace on its ruins! Obstinate sinners may well expect severe judgments upon earth, for persisting in their iniquities, and in their contempt of Christ and his gospel; and the heaviest destruction will certainly overtake them at the great day, unless they fly to Jesus, and cleave to him in opposition to all other pretended Saviours. though heaven and earth shall pass away, his words shall never fail; but his threatnings against the wicked as well as promises to his people, will have a sure accomplishment: And O how will his second coming be to the utter confusion of the one, and the unspeakable joy of the other! He faithfully gives his followers notice, before-hand of their dangers and deliverances; and whatsoever tribulations may befall them for his sake, from the greatest powers on earth, or from the hands of their nearest kindred and friends, why should they be terrified or discouraged at them? All shall be accompanied with special aids; and turn for a testimony of good account, to the honour of their Redeemer, the confutation of his enemies, and the comfort of their own souls: They may lift up their heads and rejoice; for their redemption draws nigh; and faith and patience will carry them safe through all difficulties, in their way to the better state, which shall succeed the dissolution of all things here. But O how dangerous are the cares, the pleasures, and excesses of life, and what need is there of constant watchfulness and prayer against them, and for an escape from the miseries, and an arrival to the blessedness spoken of in the word of God! And how happy will it be for those, who shall be enabled to stand till, and to stand at, the appearing of Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven, in all his majesty and glory! In order hereunto, may we have wisdom to discern the signs of the times, and our calls to answerable duties. And may we attend upon gospel-ministrations in such a manner, as to hear that our souls may live!

C H A P. XXII.

Judas's betraying his Lord, 1,—6. Christ's eating his last passover, 7,—18. His instituting his supper, 19, 20. His discourse with his disciples, 21,—28. His agony in the garden, 29,—46. His being apprehended, 47,—53. Peter's denying him, 54,—62. And his trial and condemnation in the high-priest's hall, 63,—71.

TEXT.

NOW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

PARAPHRASE.

AT this time, the fourth passover after Christ's baptism, at which according to the determinate counsel of God he should suffer, was coming on within two days, (*Mark* xiv. 1.) and was called the feast of unleavened bread, because the *Jews* were to have no leaven in their bread or houses, during that solemnity.

2 And then it was that the sanhedrim, made up of chief priests and doctors of the law, together with the elders of the people, men of great reputation for piety and learning, met to consult how they might most conveniently apprehend Jesus, in order to their putting him to death; for they were under a difficulty about it, because of the extraordinary concourse of people at that season, who they knew had a high veneration and esteem for him, and who they were afraid would take his part, and

and rise up in arms to rescue him out of their hands; and therefore they resolved to attempt it not by open force, but privately by stratagem, (*Mark* xiv. 1, 2.)

3 Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve:

8 At the same time Satan, who had set them to work, stirred up the corruptions and covetousness of *Judas Iscariot*, one of the twelve apostles, and drew him into a treacherous design against his Lord, (see the note on *John* xvii. 27.); and it pleased God to permit it, that by the over-rulings of a wise and holy providence, he who was the true paschal Lamb; might die at the very time of the passover, and before many witnesses.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

4 Accordingly this base and perfidious disciple, knowing where to find the chief priests, and the captains of the temple, whom they had called in to their assistance, went and proffered his service, by making a proposal about his own privately and effectually betraying Christ into their hands.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

5 And they no sooner heard this, but were mightily pleased, and readily accepted the offer, it exactly falling in with their own scheme; and to encourage and bind him to a performance of this project, they agreed to give him a sum of money, to the value of thirty shekels of silver. (*Matth.* xxvi. 15. see the note there.)

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

6 And, though this offer was of no more in the law, appointed to be given for a slave, (*Exod.* xxi. 32.) this sordid, covetous, and vile-spirited wretch struck a bargain, and engaged to do his utmost to deliver Jesus into their hands, not doubting but he should be able to accomplish the horrid design: And from that time forward, he watched for an opportunity of letting them know the place of Christ's retirement, that they might privately come upon him, when none of the people should be present to make an uproar, or attempt his rescue.

7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

7 Then came on the first day of unleavened bread. (*Matth.* xxvi. 17.) * on which the Jews were obliged by the law to kill the paschal lamb, in order to eating it at the evening, which belonged to the following day.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

8 And as our Lord came to fulfil all righteousness, he ordered two of his disciples, *Peter* and *John* by name, to go before him into *Jerusalem*, and there to get every thing ready for the passover, which he designed to celebrate

N O T E

* It is observable that our Lord, who was typified by the paschal lamb, suffered at this passover for the redemption of his people; and was seized on the very day (the

fifteenth of the month *Nisan*) on which *Israel* were delivered out of *Egypt*. (*Numb.* xxxii. 3. 3.)

brate in the city, together with his disciples, whom he had taken under his care and charge as his family.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

9 And as they had no dwelling of their own there, they desired him to let them know at what house he would please to have them get things ready for that service.

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

10 And for a demonstration of his own foreknowledge and government of all events, as well as for their direction, he gave them this token, saying, When ye are got into the city, observe a man, whom ye will meet with, carrying a pitcher of water; and whatsoever house he goes into, follow him thither. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 18.)

11 And ye shall say unto the good-man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

11 And as soon as ye enter the house, tell the honest man who keeps it, that I, your Lord and Master, sent you to ask him for a proper room for me and my disciples, to eat the paschal lamb together.

12 And he shall shew you a large upper-room furnished: there make ready.

12 And ye need not fear his being offended, or his refusing you a suitable accommodation; for as soon as ye have told him this, he will immediately, without making any difficulty of the matter, conduct you to a large chamber, which is proper for your purpose: There prepare all that is needful in order to our celebrating that ordinance.

13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

13 Accordingly these two disciples, believing the words he had spoken, went, and found that every circumstance punctually answered his prediction; and in that room they made every thing ready against his arrival to eat the passover.

14 And, when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

14 And when, after sun-set, the latter evening came on, which was the time appointed in the law for the *Jews* to eat the paschal lamb, (see the note on *Matth.* xxvi. 20.) Jesus came to this house, and sat down with his twelve apostles to supper.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.

15 And whilst he was sitting with them round the table, he said unto them, I have most earnestly looked and longed for the time in which I might eat this my last passover with you before my death: I know my bitterest sufferings are now just at hand, by which I shall finish the great work of redemption; and such is my delight to do my Father's will, that I have as eagerly wished for this time of fulfilling it, as if no terrors were to attend it; and I am glad that it is now so near, and that I have this opportunity of freely opening my heart,* and giving you some useful and comfortable counsel

N O T E.

* It is observable, that at this time he delivered those excellent discourses to them, which follow in this chapter, and in the thirteenth and fourteenth of *John*; to which he VOL. II. † P

counsel alone, just before I am to bleed and die for you and to be taken from you.

15 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

16 For I assure you, that I shall never have an opportunity of eating another passover with you, till its types and figures shall be really accomplished in me, the true paschal Lamb, and their substance or antitype shall take place in that gospel-kingdom, which I am come to set up, and in which I will institute another ordinance to supersede this; nor till at length we shall delightfully commemorate, in the kingdom of glory, that greater redemption from sin and wrath by my death, which was typified by the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves.

17 And Christ, as was usually done by the master of the family at this feast, took a cup of wine into his hand, and gave thanks in a solemn manner to God his Father; and then drinking part of it, delivered the rest to his disciples, ordering them to hand it round, and partake of it in their turns.

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

18 For, said he, I again tell you, that I shall never have an opportunity of drinking the paschal cup any more, till this divine institution shall be superseded by a redemption from all spiritual and eternal evils, and by another ordinance, in the gospel-state, to commemorate it, which was prefigured by that deliverance of *Israel*, in remembrance of which the passover was appointed, and has been observed to this day; and from henceforth I will rejoice with you in no other salvation, than that which ye shall enjoy with me for ever in the kingdom of glory. (See the note on *Matth.* xvi. 29.)

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

19 As soon as the paschal supper was ended, our Lord again took bread into his hands; and, setting it apart by thanksgiving and prayer for a religious purpose, he broke and distributed it among his disciples †, saying, (1 *Cor.* xi. 24.) This is what I appoint to be henceforth the memorial of my body's being broken by terrible sufferings in your stead, as freely given up to death for your redemption, and made over to you for salvation: From this time onward to my second coming, eat ye bread, with faith, thankfulness, and joy, in perpetual remembrance of my dying for you, even as ye have hitherto eat the passover, in commemoration of *Israel's* deliverance from * *Egyptian* miseries.

20 In

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also added those in the fifteenth and sixteenth of that Evangelist, as soon as he went out of the house to the mount of *Olivet*.

† He did not stand at an altar to offer a sacrifice to God, that his disciples might adore the bread; but he sat at a common table, and

set it apart to sacred use, that they might take and eat it. See the note on *Mark* xiv. 22.

* As Christ had just now celebrated the paschal supper, which was called the passover; so, in the like sacramental language, he calls this bread his body: And this circumstance of

10 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

23 But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.

24 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but

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20 In like manner, after the paschal supper, and after eating bread in this new institution, he took a cup of wine to his hand †; and, having likewise solemnly set this apart for sacred use by thanksgiving and prayer, he gave it to his disciples, saying, Drink ye all of this, (*Matth. xxvi. 27.*); for I appoint that, from this time forward, your drinking wine, in this ordinance, shall be a perpetual memorial of the confirmation of the new covenant by my blood, as shed for the remission of your sins, instead of drinking wine, at the paschal supper, in commemoration of *Israel's* great deliverance*.

21 But while they were celebrating the passover ‡, (*Matth. xxvi. 21, and Mark xiv. 18.*) Jesus, knowing the most secret design of Judas's heart against him, took an opportunity to give them an alarming hint about it, saying, Behold, one of you, my most intimate and familiar friends, who are now sitting with me at table, will perfidiously betray me into the hands of mine enemies, according to that antient prophecy, (*Psal. xli. 9.*) *Mine own familiar friend, which did eat of my bread, has lift up his heel against me.*

22 And to tell you the plain truth, I, the Messiah, am just now going freely, and not by constraint, to the place, where I shall be apprehended in order to my last sufferings and death, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and various prophecies in the Old Testament, concerning me: But, though the wickedness of the traitor will be over-ruled, by the wisdom of God, to accomplish his own most gracious, holy, and eternal purpose for the redemption of the church; this is no excuse for that man's sin, who acts upon the worst of principles, without any knowledge of, or intention

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Itself was sufficient to prevent any mistake, as if this bread were his real body any more than the paschal lamb was really the passover. (See the note on *Matth. xxvi. 28.*)

† Here is an undeniable figure, whereby the cup is put for the wine in the cup; and this is called the new testament in Christ's blood, which could not possibly mean, that it was the new testament itself, but only the seal of it, and the sign or memorial of that blood which was shed to confirm it.

* This appears to me to be a plain and easy account of the nature and design of this institution; and effectually overthrows the *Papish* doctrine of transubstantiation, which is contrary to the very nature of a memorial, as well as is full of all imaginable absurdities, and direct contradictions.

‡ It seems by the way of the evangelists

Matthew and *Mark's* placing and expressing Christ's discourse on this occasion, as if it was at the paschal supper, and not at the Lord's supper, that he gave this notice: For they both represent this intimation, as made while they were eating the paschal supper, and bring it in before our Lord's proceeding to the institution of his supper: And they tell us, that he notified the person who would betray him, by saying that it was *he who dipped his hand with him in the dish*, which could relate to no other than the paschal supper: (*Matth. xxvi. 21, 23, and Mark xiv. 18, 20.*) And *Luke* himself here expresses it by Christ's saying, that the traitor's hand was *with him on the table*, which seems to refer rather to the manner of eating the passover, than the Lord's supper. See the note on *Mark xiv. 20.*

wo unto that man by whom he is betrayed.

23 And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For whether

tion to fulfil this purpose; and therefore the most terrible of all woes belong unto, and shall be inflicted upon him, who, under a cloak of discipleship and friendship, will treacherously deliver me up to my crucifiers.

23 Upon Christ's giving so plain and moving a hint as this, all the disciples, except Judas, were shocked and grieved to think, that any among them should ever go into so base a villany against their Lord; they were humbly jealous of their own hearts, lest they should deceive them; and were exceeding solicitous to clear themselves, and to know who it was that should be guilty of this horrible wickedness, every one of them saying, Lord is it I? (*Matth. xxvi. 22.*)

24 A little before this time likewise, the disciples, having entertained carnal notions about Christ's kingdom, discovered great emulation, and entered into warm debates, which of them should have the highest posts of trust and honour under him; one and another pretending that the pre-eminence belonged to himself, either on account of his superior age, or talents, or interest in their Master's favour.

25 And * our Lord gave them a gentle reproof for it, saying, In the kingdoms of this world, among the heathens, who have no higher views than what relate to the present life, every one is aiming to be uppermost; kings and emperors are exceeding ambitious of authority and power over their subjects, and over one another; and they that have the greatest interest, influence, and power, and the largest purse, are most highly honoured, and readily submitted to; and in all this they would fain pass for common benefactors.

26 But such a temper and such views must not be indulged among you, the subjects of my kingdom, the nature and design of which is spiritual: If therefore any would be great and eminent under me, whatsoever his standing, privileges, or attainments may be, he must not aim at worldly pomp and authority, but must be willing to condescend to persons of low degree, and submit to the meanest offices of love and kindness; and must labour to promote their edification, and help their joy, as if he himself were the youngest among his brethren, and were indeed their servant.

27 For ye should learn of me, who am meek and lowly

N O T E.

* I see no absurdity in supposing that our blessed Lord, upon washing his disciples feet, reminded them of his late discourse to them against aiming at pre-eminence. (*Matth. xx.*

25,—28, and *Mark x. 42,—45.*) And this naturally accounts for Luke's placing this part of the history in a different order from those Evangelists.

that is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations:

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon,

lowly of heart: Which is most honourable, he who sits at table, and is waited upon; or he who stands, and waits upon him? Ye will readily agree, that the pre-eminence belongs to the former of these: But I, your Lord and Master, am so far from taking state upon myself, or indulging mine own ease, that I have submitted to the form of a servant, and performed all offices of condescension, love, and service to you, as if I were your inferior*. If therefore ye would be truly great in my kingdom, follow my example in all possible condescension, meekness, and kindness towards one another, as there may be opportunities and occasions for them.

28 Ye have hitherto attended me in my trials, abasement, and sufferings, wherein ye have seen nothing like the pomp and glory of this world, or any affectation of it; nor have I given you any promises relating to it; and yet ye have not been discouraged from abiding with me: Go on then, notwithstanding the further sufferings ye may see in me, and undergo yourselves, to maintain your adherence to me, and the interests of my kingdom, in expectation of what is every way better than all the riches and grandeur of this life.

29, 30 And as my Father has appointed to me, in my office-character, a spiritual kingdom on earth, and a glorious kingdom on high†: I, in like manner, appoint unto you honours and blessings of a spiritual nature in my gospel-kingdom here, and in heaven hereafter; that ye may have the dignity and delight of intimate communion with me, like the nobles of a kingdom, who are admitted to eat and drink with their prince at his table; and that ye may have the honour and authority of publishing and enforcing the laws of my kingdom on earth, to bind the consciences of all the tribes of *Israel*, and of publicly approving of my sentence upon them, and consenting to it as righteous, in the final judgment.

31 And yet, to humble them for their contentions about dignities, our blessed Lord forewarned them of the offence which they would take at his approaching sufferings, (*Mat. xxvi. 31.*); and, turning to *Peter*,
he

N O T E S.

* It seems as if Christ were sitting at table when he spoke these words, and that immediately afterwards he rose and washed his disciples feet; an account of which we have *John xiii. 4, 5.*

† These expressions seem to be primarily applicable to the twelve apostles, and secondarily

to all Christ's servants and disciples, whose spiritual powers, honours and delights, are here represented in figurative terms, with respect to their advancement in the kingdom of grace here, and in the kingdom of glory hereafter.

Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

he spoke to him, and by him to them all, saying with great earnestness, *Simon, Simon**, attend to what I am going to tell you: The devil has an evil design upon *(upon)* you and the rest of my disciples; and, being exceedingly desirous to have you all in his power, has asked leave to search and shake you, like wheat, when it is winnowed; and, in a very little time, he will take advantage, from my sufferings and death, to hurry and fright you, that ye may sing up your profession, faith, and hope, and may forsake and reject me.

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren,

32 But as I know that his fiercest assaults and greatest prevalence will be on thee, *Peter*, I particularly assure thee of my having prayed for thee, that how terribly soever thy faith may be shaken, it may not be utterly and finally destroyed: And when thou shalt be recovered, by a sort of second conversion, from thy approaching fall, see that thou improve thine own experience for the counsel and caution of thy fellow-christians and ministers, against temptation, and for their relief and comfort under it, and restoration after they may have been overcome by it.

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee both into prison, and to death,

33 *Peter* replied with too much self-confidence, tho' with an honest heart, which meant as he said, Lord, I fear no temptations of Satan; but am prepared for all events, and fully resolved to stand by thee, and take my suffering lot with thee, though it should be unto imprisonment, and death itself: Be my trials ever so great, I never will desert or disown thee.

34 And he said, I tell thee, *Peter*, the cock shall not crow, this day, before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

34 Then, to warn him of the deceitfulness of his own heart, our Lord said, Notwithstanding all these high professions of resolution and courage, zeal and friendship, I tell thee, *Peter*†, that this very day on which we are now entered, even before the time of cock-crowing in the morning, thou wilt positively deny, three times over, that thou ever hadst the least acquaintance with me.

35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without

35 And, that he might still further lead his disciples to an expectation of a near approach of dangers and sufferings, he reminded them that, when he had formerly (*Mat. x. 9, 10.*) sent them forth to preach the

N O T E S.

* Christ here seems to call him by his former name *Simon*, and not *Peter*, which signifies a Rock, because what he was going to say to him was an argument of his infirmity, and not of his stability or strength: And here is a plain allusion to the history of *Jeb.* chap. i. ii.

† Christ hereby shewed that he knew *Peter*

better than *Peter* knew himself; and that, to humble him, he would suffer him to fall very foully, though he had prayed that his faith should not utterly fail. See the notes on *Math. xxvi. 34.* and *Mark xiv. 30.* for reconciling the different ways, in which the Evangelists expressed the time here referred to.

without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said Nothing.

35 Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me. And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

the gospel, he ordered them not to make any provision for themselves of money, or victuals, or of more shoes or clothes than they had on, or of weapons for their defence; but to depend entirely upon Providence for their supply and safety: And he asked them, whether when they went out, in those circumstances, they they ever suffered a want of any thing that was needful for them? to which they replied, No, none at all.

36 Then said he unto them, But now things will immediately take such a perilous turn, and ye will be so friendless and exposed, that ye had need have both money and food before-hand for the necessities of life, and swords too for your defence against the enemies that are coming upon you: Yea, your danger will be so exceeding great, that ye would be glad even to part with your coats on your backs for a sword to defend you against it*.

37 For I tell you, that there are still antient prophecies, concerning the Messiah's ignominious and bitter sufferings and death, which must be fulfilled in me; as particularly that he must be looked upon, and treated as a transgressor, and must suffer and die under all the infamy of that character, in company with the vilest malefactors: For the time is now just at hand, wherein, according to God's eternal council, all divine predictions relating to my bearing the sin of many, (Isa. liii. 12.) must have their complete accomplishment, that I may finish the work which my Father gave me to do, and that all may end well for me and them.

38 Upon this, the disciples, understanding Christ to have spoken literally of using the sword for defence against their enemies, said to him, Lord, we are ready to obey thy orders; see, here are two swords amongst us: Shall we take care to get more, that we may all be armed against any assault upon thee or us? but he having intended only to intimate, by the symbol of the sword, how great their danger was, replied, These two are sufficient to answer the instructive design for which I mentioned them: Let me therefore hear no more of your providing such sort of weapons for your

N O T E.

* It seems as if what Christ said about getting swords were to be understood not literally, as an order to buy them, but emblematically, as an intimation of dangers coming on, which would be so extreme, that the disciples had need be well provided against them, and would think that they could

not repel them, but by the power of the sword: For he afterwards said, (ver. 38.) that *two swords were enough*, which could not be true, if their armed enemies were to be resisted by force; and when Peter used a sword in that way, Christ reproved him for it. (Matth. xxvi. 52.)

your defence and victory, as if my kingdom were of this world*.

39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

39 After these discourses Christ went out of the room, where he had eaten the paschal lamb, and celebrated the Lord's supper; and, night being come on, he, according to custom, retired to the mount of *Olives*; and all his disciples accompanied him thither, excepte *Judas*, who before had gone from supper, in order to his betraying him into the hands of the *Jews*. (*John* xiii. 30.)

40 And, when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

40 And as soon as he arrived at a place called *Gethsemane*, (*Matth.* xxvi. 36.) which was at the foot of the mount of *Olives*, he found his disciples were heavy for sleep; and, to rouse them, said, This is not a time to indulge yourselves in sloth, while danger is so nigh at hand: beg earnestly of God to keep you from, or in, the distressing trials which are coming upon you, that ye may not be hurried into sin by them, but may be supported, and enabled to behave in a becoming manner under them, and carried safely through them.

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and knelt down and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.

41, 42 Then having taken with him three of his disciples, (*Matth.* xxvi. 37. and *Mark* xiv. 33.) and having afterwards retired from these, to the distance of about a stone's cast, for secret prayer, he kneeled down, and with all humility and reverential fear, and with earnestness and tears, addressed his Father, (*Heb.* v. 7.) saying, O my heavenly Father, the near view I have of the terrible sufferings and death which I see just before me, and what I now begin to feel from the weight of thy hand; and the powers of darkness is so shocking to my human nature, that, were it consistent with the eternal counsels of thy will, relating to thy glory, and the salvation of thy people, I should be glad to escape them: Nevertheless, I freely bow, and submit to thy disposal, renouncing all the will of the flesh, and desiring that not this will of mine, but that thy most holy will may be done, whatsoever it cost me.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

43 And immediately thereupon, an angel was dispatched from heaven, to encourage him in his work, by intimations that the issue of his sufferings should be to his own and his Father's glory, and that they should be crowned with a full reward,

44 How-

N O T E.

* It is too curious to inquire how these disciples came to have two swords among them: But it may be sufficient to say, that it was providentially ordered, to give our Lord an opportunity of using this emblem, and of leading his disciples to understand his meaning in it: And some tell us, that it

was customary among the *Gallileans* to wear swords when they travelled, that they might defend themselves against the robbers and assassins which infested their roads; and as this was lawful, Christ might very well allow of it in his disciples, though he were none himself.

44 And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 And, while he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus, to kiss him.

44 However, as his lively apprehensions of what he was to endure were enlarged; and as his soul then began to feel the terrors of the Almighty, that were due to the iniquities of his people*, his consternation and horror increased; upon which, prostrating himself on the ground, he prayed with still more vehement fervency, to the like purpose as he had before: And the agonizing conflicts and terrors of his mind were so amazingly distressing, that, though it was a cold night, and he was lying on the ground, his blood and animal spirits were thrown into such a violent fermentation, as opened the pores of his body in an extraordinary manner, and forced their way through them in a bloody sweat, which, being thickened by the cold, fell down in clods to the ground.

45 And after he had spent some time in these great conflicts, and in earnest supplications and prayers, he got up from his prostration, and returned to his disciples, who, he found, were all asleep, it not only being very late, but their spirits being also exhausted by grief, at what he had told them. (*ver.* 36. 37, 40. and *Matth.* xxvi. 38.)

46 Then, reproving them in a gentle manner for their own caution, he said, Why do ye suffer yourselves to sleep at such a time as this, wherein I am so full of sorrow, and ye yourselves are so near to danger? is this your love to me, and your care for yourselves? Get up, and pray for help against this unreasonable drowsiness, and against the evils, that are just at hand; lest ye be surprized unawares, and be overcome by the approaching trials.

47 And whilst our Lord was thus talking to them, behold, the very thing he was hinting came upon them: There immediately appeared a large party of soldiers, and of servants and officers, and others (*ver.* 52.) from the sanbedrim, all armed with swords and staves, (*Matth.* xxvi. 47. and *John* xviii. 3.); at the head of which, that perfidious wretch Judas, one of his twelve apostles, appeared as their leader; and, according to the signal he had before agreed to give them, (*Matth.* xxvi. 48.) he marched directly up to Jesus, and saluted him with a kiss. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 49.)

48 But,

N O T E.

* As their iniquities were laid upon Christ, and it pleased the Lord himself to bruise him, and to awaken the sword of justice against him, *Isa.* liii. 5.—12. and *Zech.* xiii. 7. So unless our great Lord had a present view and sensation of this, 'tis to me unaccountable, that he should be in such terrible

distress before his external sufferings came upon him; especially considering, that, at this very time, an angel was sent from heaven to strengthen him, and that so many martyrs have thought of, and gone through, as great corporal sufferings with undaunted bravery and triumph.

47 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

48 But, though Christ did not go about to avoid his sufferings, as knowing that the time appointed for them was then come, he reprimanded the traitor in such a meek and melting, and yet close and cutting manner, as one would think must have affected the hardest heart, saying, What, *Judas*! one of my old and intimate friends and acquaintance, who hast had so many proofs of my divine authority, goodness, care, and kindness, and never found any evil in me, Dost thou come hither to betray me into the hands of my implacable enemies, that they may cruelly destroy me? And what, art thou capable of doing this under the form of friendship, and by the tenderest symbol of love and peace? What canst thou think, *Judas*, of such aggravated hypocrisy, ingratitude, and treachery as this? or how couldst thou find in thine heart to be guilty of it?

49 When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

49 Now when the disciples saw the design upon which this multitude came, with *Judas* at their head, and that they were about to seize their Lord; some of them asked him, whether they should draw upon the enemy, and use their swords in his defence? (*ver.* 38.)

50 And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

50 And one of them, *Peter* by name, being in too much heat and haste to wait for an answer, immediately drew, and aimed at the head of *Malchus*, one of the high-priest's servants; but, missing his stroke, cut off only his right ear. (*John* xviii. 10.)

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

51 But (:) Jesus, observing this, rebuked *Peter* for being so rash, (*Matth.* xxvi. 52.); and then to appease his enemies, he said to them, Do not resent, but pass by this injury and affront, which one of my disciples hath offered without my order, and which I will immediately repair*: And thereupon, to shew his divine power and goodness, he touched the wounded man's ear, and instantly healed it.

52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests and captains of the temple, and the elders which were come

52 After Jesus had shewn all this meekness, mercy, and power, he addressed himself to the chief priests and captains of the temple, and to the elders of the people, who came along with them to apprehend him; and,

N O T E S.

* Some think that our Lord spoke to his disciples to be quiet, and make no further opposition, when he said *sate us vultis, permit, or suffer ye thus far*: But his healing the wounded ear immediately upon his saying these words, makes it probable that (as Dr *Whisby* observes) he spoke to his enemies to pacify them, that they might not revenge the affront which they had so far suffered from *Peter's* hand; and he hereby shewed the excellence of his Spirit, who would for-

give and heal his enemies, above that of *Peter's*, who wanted to destroy them.

Some suppose that these captains of the temple were captains of the several watches which the priests and scribes kept there; and others, that they were captains of the *Roman* soldiers, which usually kept garrison in the tower of *Antonia*, but at the three great festivals were placed at the porches of the temple to keep the peace.

come to him, Be ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves?

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

54 Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain maid beheld him, as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied

and, expostulating with them, said, What means your coming armed with swords and clubs, in this manner to seize me, as if I were some desperate rogue, who must be taken by main force? Have I ever behaved like such a person, or appeared with any guard about me?

53 When I was so often, day after day, publicly teaching in the temple, ye had all desirable opportunities to seize me, if ye knew any evil by me; and yet none of you ever offered, in such an hostile manner, to make me your prisoner then: But I know that the time appointed of the Father, and foretold in prophecy, (*Mark* xiv. 49.) for my sufferings is now come; and therefore his over-ruling providence has taken off the restraints, by which he hitherto withheld you: This is the season in which he has determined to let you have your will against me, and to suffer the infernal powers of darkness to stir you up, as their instruments, to cut me off: I therefore readily acquiesce, submit, and yield myself up into your hands, and am prepared for the worst.

54 Then the soldiers, taking Jesus into custody, led him away like a criminal; and, according to their orders, carried him away to the palace of *Caiaphas*, the high-priest, where, though it was so late at night, the scribes and elders of the people were gathered together, ready to sit in judgment upon him. (*Matth.* xxvi. 57.) And, the rest of the disciples flying, *Peter* followed him at a considerable distance, to see what would become of him.

55 And some time after the company entered into the house, he got admission too, where he found the servants sitting round a fire, which, the night being cold, they had kindled at one end of the hall to warm themselves while the council were examining Jesus at the other; and *Peter* sat down with them*, hoping by that means to conceal himself, and to hear how things went with his Lord,

56 But there was a maid-servant of the high-priest's who observed him, as he sat in company with the rest round about the fire; and, looking wistly at him, said, I am strongly persuaded that this man was one of the friends and followers of Jesus of *Galilee*.

57 At this, *Peter's* courage failed him; and being full of fear and surprize, he in all hurry and confusion denied

N O T E.

* The evangelist *John* says, (*chap.* xviii. 18.) the servants stood there, and *Peter* stood with them. Some of them it seem were standing, and others sitting; and

Peter, being restless in his own mind, was likewise restless in his posture, sometimes sitting, and at others standing among them.

nied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

57 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

58 And, about the space of one hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him; for he is a Galilean.

59 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

60 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice.

61 And Peter went

denied the charge, saying with an air of confidence and resentment, Woman, you do me a great deal of wrong, I am a stranger to him.

58 Soon after this, a man* in the company looked at Peter, and taxed him home saying, Whatsoever you pretend, you certainly are one of the followers of Jesus: But (1.) Peter, still full of surprise and fear, and under the power of temptation, denied it again, saying, Man, I tell you it is no such thing, I do not belong to him, nor do I know any thing of him.

59 And, within the compass of about an hour after this, another of the standers-by was very peremptory in affirming, that Peter was one of the followers of Jesus of Galilee: For, said he, I know by his brogue that he is a Galilean; and besides this, he said he had seen him with Jesus in the garden, when he cut off the ear of one of the high priest's servants to whom this person was related. (John xviii. 26.)

60 Then Peter, in the midst of the utmost terror and consternation, resolving still to brave it out, (as persons are too prone to do, when once they have incurred themselves with a lie) said, with still greater vehemence, and with shocking imprecations and oaths †, (Mark xiv. 71.) I tell you man, I know nothing of the matter. And no sooner had he this third time denied that he knew Christ, but he heard a cock crow; it being early in the morning, which, by way of eminence, was called the time of the cock-crowing. (See the note on Matth. xxvi. 34.)

61 Immediately upon this, the Lord Jesus, who was standing before the high-priest, with his back toward Peter, and by his divine omniscience knew all that had passed, turned himself about, and in much mercy looked upon him, to reprove, shame, and humble him; and this was with such power, that it melted him into repentance: Then Peter instantly called to mind the warning which his Lord had given him, when he said, Before the time of cock-crowing is past, thou wilt three times over peremptorily deny me. (ver. 34.)

62 And Peter, finding how sadly this was verified, got

N O T E S.

* We are told (Matth. xxvi. 71. and Mark xiv. 69. it was another maid that charged Peter, when he the second time denied Christ; whereas Luke here speaks of this person as another man: But it is to be observed, that both Matthew and Mark say the maid spoke concerning Peter to them that were there, or to them that stood by; whereas Luke mentions a second's speaking directly to

Peter himself, and that probably upon what he had heard this woman say concerning him; which takes off the seeming contradiction in these accounts.

† He probably heard volleys of oaths in the company he then kept; and to render himself the less suspected, thought of confirming his denial in their own way.

went out, and wept bitterly.

got out of the high-priest's hall as fast as he could, that he might give free vent to the grief and anguish of his spirit, in some private place by himself; and there he poured out floods of penitential tears, with bitter lamentations and howlings of his self-confidence, weakness, and wickedness, and of his shameful ingratitude to his dear Lord.

63 And the men that held Jesus mocked him, and smote him.

63 Jesus, in the mean-while, being under arraignment, in the high-priest's hall, the *abjects gathered themselves together against him*, (Psalm. xxxv. 15.); the high-priest's servants, who had him in custody, insulted and derided, boxed and buffeted him *.

64 And, when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?

64 And, among other indignities, they hood-winked him, and then, like children at play, sportfully smote him on the face, and, jeering his prophetic office, said, Come, you who pretend to know all things, tell who it is among us that strikes you:

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

65 And to these they added abundance of other blasphemous affronts, to ridicule and revile him, as if he were the fool of a play, and to abuse him with spitings and buffetings, and other rude and scornful barbarities, as if he were the most odious and contemptible wretch upon earth.

66 And, as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests and the scribes, came together, and led him into their council,

66 And a great part of the night having been spent in examinations, and in ludicrous and cruel treatment of our Lord, the Jewish elders, chief priests and interpreters of the law assembled together in full council, after a short recess, very early in the morning, and had him brought before them for further examination, (see the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 1.)

67 Saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe.

67, 68 Saying, Do you indeed profess to be the true Messiah, who is the Son of God? (*Matth.* xxvi. 63.) Tell us plainly whether you do avow and stand to this or not. But ⁽⁴⁾ he replied, If I should affirm and demonstrate it ever so plainly, such is the obstinacy and malice of your prejudiced hearts, that ye would not believe me: And if I should ask you, what ye can object against the proofs that I have already given of it, ye would neither give me a fair answer, nor agree to my being discharged; it is therefore to little purpose to say any thing to you about it.

68 And if I also ask you, you will not answer me, nor let me go.

69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

69 However, this I will tell you, I, who am truly man, shall ere long be enthroned in majesty and glory at my Father's right hand, and my great power and authority

N O T E.

* This sort of ill usage is placed after the council's condemning him in *Matth.* xxvi. 67. and *Mark* xiv. 65. But I see no incon-

venience in supposing that he was abused in this manner, both before and after his condemnation.

thority will appear afterwards with undeniable evidence, in the destruction of your city, temple, and nation, and in the amazing progress of my gospel; and at last in arraigning you and the whole world at my awful bar: Then all your process against me now shall be tried over again; and ye shall be convinced, to your cost, that I am the Christ of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

70 Hereupon they all cried out with tumultuous rage, What then, do you indeed set up for that Messiah and king of *Israel*, who is the Son of God *? And he abiding by his confession, though he knew he should die for it, replied, I do own that I am he, according to the just construction, which ye make of my words †.

71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

71 And as soon as they heard this, they, like a council that pretends to infallibility, cried out with insolence, and without asking how he could make his assertion good, or shewing the least remorse or dread of his great power, (see the note on *Matth. xvi. 66.*) Here is evidence enough for us, as an ecclesiastical court, to condemn him upon; why should we inquire after, or stand to hear any other witnesses? He has by his own confession thoroughly proved enough against himself; for we all have heard direct blasphemy from his own mouth.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

It is hard to say which is most to be wondered at, the lengths of wickedness, that the corruption of mankind, under the instigation of the devil, will carry them to, or the distress and ignominy, that Christ suffered for sin. Covetousness and treachery, infidelity and hardness of heart, malice and rage know no bounds, unless God restrains them; witness the desperate malignity, with which they vented themselves in betraying and conspiring against, apprehending and condemning, reviling and abusing the Son of God. And O what terrible agonies did he undergo in his soul, what fatigues in his body, what rude insults and ridicule in his name and character! But with what matchless patience and resignation to his Father's will, and meekness and compassion to his enemies, did he behave under them! and how amazingly did Infinite Wisdom over-rule the hour and power of darkness, for the accomplishment of antient prophecies, to the glory of God, and the salvation of the church!—Christ our passover was sacrificed for us; and under the gospel-state we have a better deliverance to commemorate, than that of Israel out of Egypt: O with what thankfulness, solemnity, and joy, should all his disciples profess their faith in a redeeming Saviour, and remember his dying love, in affection to his person, in obedience to his authority, and for the honour of his name! He will commune with them in ordinances of his own institution here, till he receives them to nearer intimacies and delights

N O T E S.

* The council's question whether he were the Son of God, occasioned by his having spoke of himself as the Son of man, who should sit on the right hand of the power of God, shews that both these were known characters of the Messiah; one taken from his human, and the other from his divine nature; and that to own him, either as the Son of God, or the Son of man, was to own him as the Mes-

siab, who was both God and man.

† If we compare this passage with *Matth. xvi. 64.* and *Mark xiv. 62.* it appears that ye say that I am, and ye have said, are terms of the same import in the Jewish phraseology, with saying, I am: So that Christ hereby plainly declared himself to be in truth the Son of God.

in his heavenly kingdom; and they who faithfully abide with him, in days of the greatest trial, shall lack nothing that is needful for them in this world, and shall sit on thrones of glory with him in that which is to come: But as all that make a profession of Christ are not his true disciples, what a godly jealousy should we have over ourselves, lest we prove treacherous to him, or have ambitious or temporal views, unsuitable to the humility and spirituality, that belong unto his children! O the danger of self-confidence, and of entering into temptation; and the need of watchfulness and earnest prayer for help against them! But, after all, the security of true believers lies in Christ's intercession for them; that, how much soever their faith may be shaken, it may not utterly fail: And when any of us have found its powerful influence for our recovery, how should we improve our own experience for the cautioning and strengthening of our brethren!—How great is the difference between the sins of believers, and others! They, like Peter, fall into sin by surprize, and under the hurry of temptation, contrary to their habitual dispositions and designs; and a remembrance of it cuts them to the heart, and makes some of them weep bitterly: But others, like Judas, and the high-priest and council, commit iniquity with deliberation and choice, and persist in it with obstinacy and hardness of heart. And how far are they from all hope of recovery, and from sincere inquiries, who ask after Jesus, and his doctrine, only that they may strengthen their own and others prejudices against him! But he will hereafter appear, in all his majesty and glory, to the confusion of those that despise and reject him, as well as to the unspeakable joy of those that believe in him.

C H A P. XXIII.

Christ's trial before Pilate, 1,—5. His examination before Herod, 6,—12. His further trial before Pilate, 12,—25. His crucifixion, 26,—38. The different behaviour of the malefactors toward him, 39,—43. His death, and the miracles that attended it, 44,—49. And his burial, 50,—56.

TEXT.

AND the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

PARAPHRASE.

THE council having condemned our blessed Lord in their ecclesiastical court, as a blasphemer, and finding themselves under a difficulty about their own power of putting him to death, (see the note on *John* xviii. 31.); they proceeded to bind him, as a malefactor, (*Matth.* xxvii. 2.); and the whole multitude attending them, went with him directly to the judgment-hall, to impeach him of high crimes and misdemeanors before *Pontius Pilate*, who, under the *Roman* emperor, was then governor of *Judea*.

2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying, that he himself is Christ a king.

2 And, that they might render him obnoxious to the state, they entered a charge against him as an impostor, pretending that they could prove him to be, not only a notorious deceiver, who misled the people into pernicious notions of religion, but likewise a seditious fellow, who endeavoured to raise insurrections against the government, by dissuading the people from paying any taxes to the emperor, and setting himself up as King of *Israel*.

in opposition to *Tiberius Caesar*, whom they, on this occasion, professed to acknowledge as their lawful and only sovereign. (*John xix. 15.*)

3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answered him, and said, Thou sayest it.

3 Upon their urging this, *Pilate* thought himself obliged, as the *Roman* governor, to take some notice of the matter; and therefore he put our Lord to the question, saying, Do you indeed, as they alledge, profess to be the King of *Israel*? To which he replied, What you say is in a certain sense true. I do indeed own myself to be the Messiah, and so *Israel's* King; but not such a king as to interfere with *Cesar's* civil authority, or to invade his rights, and disturb his government in a seditious manner, as they maliciously and falsely accuse me; for my kingdom is not of this world, (*John xviii. 36.*) but relates only to spiritual and religious concerns.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests, and to the people, I find no fault in this man.

4 When *Pilate* had heard Christ's defence, he went out of the judgment-hall to the chief priests, scribes, elders, and all the people, who would not venture in, lest they should be defiled, (*John xviii. 28.*) and said, Whatsoever ye may have to charge him with, relating to the religious doctrines he preaches up among you, which do not fall under my cognisance as a civil magistrate, I cannot see, upon examination, that he asserts or attempts any thing seditious, or injurious to the government; and therefore it does not belong to me to trouble myself any further about him.

5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

5 And when the *Jews* perceived that *Pilate* was desirous to dismiss him, they cried out with the more vehemence and furious outrage, saying, What, see no fault in him! We insist upon it, and can prove it, that he has taken abundance of pains to raise insurrections among the people, by his rebellious principles, through all parts of our land; and has spread his dangerous notions wherever he has gone, even from his head-quarters in *Galilee* to *Jerusalem* itself*.

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

6 When *Pilate* heard them mention *Galilee*, he hoped he had a fair opportunity to get rid of Jesus; and therefore inquired whether it were true that he was a *Galilean*?

7 And, as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction,

7 And finding that his most usual residence was in that country, and that he lately came from thence, *Pilate* thought that the cognisance of this case might properly belong to *Herod*, who was then governor of *Galilee*, and

at

N O T E

* They seem to have mentioned his beginning from *Galilee*, to stir up *Pilate* so much the more against him, because the *Galileans* were notorious for their inclinations to rebel; and *Judas of Galilee* had before appeared in

that country, and incited the people to throw off the *Roman* yoke, telling them that paying tribute to *Cesar* was a sign of slavery; the account of whom we have in *Acts* vi. 37.

tion, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time.

8 And, when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood, and vehemently accused him.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at naught, and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and

at this very time was come up to the feast at Jerusalem; and therefore Pilate immediately ordered Jesus to be carried before him, that he might ease himself of this troublesome affair: God over-ruling this circumstance, by his providence, to accomplish a remarkable prophecy. (Psal. ii. 2. *)

8 And Herod was mightily pleased at the sight of Jesus: For he had long wished that it might come in his way to see him, because he had heard much of his fame in his own country, (Matth. xiv. 1.); and now he hoped that his curiosity would be gratified, by being an eye-witness of Christ's performing some wonderful work in his presence.

9 Accordingly he put several questions to our Lord, relating to the miracles that were reported to have been wrought by him, with intimations how desirous he was, that, if he could do any strange thing, he would oblige him so far as to let him see it: But as Jesus knew that Herod's desire was not from any good inclination or design, but merely to give himself and his courtiers a little diversion, that they might have something to talk of, he would neither prostitute his divine power to such a vain and ludicrous humour; nor reply to any questions that were put to him about it.

10 And as the chief priests and Jewish doctors had exhibited clamorous accusations against him to Pilate; so they followed him to Herod, and were as noisy, bold, and urgent in the same charges there, fiercely and severely accusing him of publishing infectious and treasonable principles, that they might awaken Herod's fears, lest the people of Galilee, as well as of Judea, should be thereby influenced to make insurrections, and disturb the civil government.

11 Then Herod finding that Jesus would neither satisfy his curiosity, nor answer for himself, he, and his soldiers by his encouragement, treated the Lord of glory with disdain; (Zelusans) they making nothing of him, set him aside as a weak and silly wretch, who could neither do nor say any thing worth minding, and was rather to be despised than feared: And therefore, instead of inflicting any capital punishment upon him, he and his guard made their game of him, derided and insulted him, and, by way of scorn and mockery, put him into a gaudy dress, which resembled the purple robes of princes, to ridicule

N O T E

* This is expressly taken notice of as fulfilled, when Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were ga-

thered together against Christ, to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel determined before us to be done, Acts iv. 26, 27, 28.

and sent him again to Pilate.

12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching these things whereof ye accuse him;

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him.

17 For of necessity he must release

ridicule his kingly office, as if all his claims of that nature were a sham pretence; and, after all these vile abuses, *Herod* sent him back again to *Pilate* to do what he would with him.

12 And the mutual messages and civilities, that passed on this occasion between *Pilate* and *Herod*, were the means of reconciling them, one to the other, who * for some time before had been at variance.

13, 14 Now Jesus being brought back from *Herod*, who had slighted the informations laid against him, and passed no sentence upon him, *Pilate* summoned together the chief priests and elders, with the rest of the council, and the principal persons among the *Jews*, that had appeared to accuse him, and said unto them, Ye have had a fair opportunity of bringing this man to his trial; he has been already before me under the charge of being a pretender to the *Jewish* crown, and a fomentor of tumults and insurrections among the people; and ye see that I have given you fair play, I have openly examined him, and heard all that ye have to say; but, upon the whole, I cannot find that ye have made good your allegations against him.

15 No, nor has any thing of this nature been found upon him even by *Herod* himself, who, being one of your own nation, is better acquainted with your principles, laws, and customs, than I am: For, to oblige you, I sent you to have the cause tried before him; and yet, see how this man's innocence appears! he has ordered nothing to be done to him, that carries the least intimation, as if he thought him to have deserved death.

16 Therefore, for your satisfaction, and to avoid the shedding of innocent blood, I will order him to be scourged as if he were a criminal, though not guilty of a capital offence; and then I will discharge him, at your request, in honour of the solemn festival, which is now returned. This he said to appease the clamour of the people, and to spare Christ's life in a way of as much complaisance to them as possible.

17 For the custom of those times made it necessary, that, at every return of the passover, the governor of

Judea

N O T E.

* Their former quarrels had probably been, either about the extent of their jurisdiction and authority, or on account of emulations that were between them, or of some encroachment which one had made upon the other. And perhaps *Herod* thought *Pilate* had invaded his rights by putting to death the *Galile-*

ans, who were his subjects, when they came up to *Jerusalem* to offer sacrifice, which seems to be referred to in *Luke* xiii. 1. But now they forgot their former grudges, and were reconciled into the friendship of this world, which was enmity with God. (*Jam.* iv. 4.)

release one unto them at the feast.

18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas :

19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why; what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.

23 And they were instant with loud

Judea should gratify the Jews with the release of a prisoner, whom they should desire to be set free.

18 But, instead of being pacified with this proposal, the chief priests and elders persuaded the people by no means to hearken to it; and thereupon they all cried out, as with one voice, Let this man be hanged; away with him from the earth, as one not fit to live; we insist upon it, that, instead of him, you would favour us with the release of *Barabbas*.

19 Now this *Barabbas*, whom they preferred to the holy Jesus, was a notorious malefactor, and was then in prison for a dreadful riot at *Jerusalem*, in which he was one of the chiefs, and had been guilty of murder, as well as of robbery and plunder. (*John* xviii. 40.)

20 *Pilate* therefore finding, by this monstrously base and unworthy demand, that their furious outcries against Jesus proceeded from bitter malice and envy, was the more desirous, if possible, to set him at liberty; and expostulated with them again, persuading them to desist from their impetuous clamours, and to be satisfied with his being smartly corrected by scourging, which was a proper punishment for such as opposed their laws.

21 But they cried out with still more noise and fury, Crucify him, crucify him; let nothing short of that worst of deaths, which belongs to the vilest slaves, be inflicted upon him, who pretends to be our king.

22 And *Pilate* seeing still more thoroughly into their wickedness, and being loth to comply with it, argued with them again a third time, saying, Why do ye so tumultuously call upon me to order an innocent man to be crucified? What capital crime have ye been able to prove upon him? for my part, upon the strictest examination, I cannot see that, according to our law, he has done any thing for which he deserves to die, much less to be put to the infamous death of the cross: And therefore, if ye will be satisfied with it, I will (as I said before) order him to be scourged, and then discharge him*.

23 But, (*d*) instead of yielding to his arguments and intreaties, they grew more furious still; and, urging

N O T E.

* As *Peter*, a disciple of Christ, dishonoured him by denying him thrice, though he believed him to be the Son of God; so *Pilate*, a heathen, honoured Christ by owning him thrice to be innocent, though he did not believe in him: And it seems to me that it was after this third plea for Christ, and be-

fore sentence was passed against him, that *Pilate* ordered him to be scourged, designing thereby to move the pity of the Jews toward him, and so to prevent their further insisting on his being crucified. See the note on *Math*, xxvii. 26.

loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast in to prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

26 And, as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the country; and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

28 But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daugh-

ging him with repeated, loud, and tumultuous clamours, they proceeded to such insolence at length, as even to demand that he should condemn him to crucifixion: And the people, together with the chief priests and rulers, pressed him with such vehemence and high threats, (*John* xix. 12.) that, though he believed Jesus to be innocent, he had not virtue enough to resist their unrighteous importunity, and to overcome his own fears of a further mutiny, and of being exposed to *Cæsar's* resentment.

24 And so *Pilate* yielding to what he took to be the necessity, as well as the iniquity of the times, passed sentence upon Christ, according to their request, tho' directly contrary to his own reason and conscience.

25 And to curry favour with the *Jews*, and go thorough stitch with their dirty work, he, in violation of all right and justice, complied with their demands, both in discharging that notorious villain, *Barabbas*, who was then in prison for a real and known riot and murder, and in condemning the sinless Jesus, and putting him into their power to see the sentence executed upon him. (*Matth.* xxvii. 26. See the notes there.)

26 Hereupon they, together with the *Roman* soldiers, led him as a criminal to be crucified: And though at first they obliged him to carry his own cross, (*John* xix. 17.); yet finding that, through the fatigues he had lately undergone, his natural spirits and strength began to fail, they were afraid of losing the cruel pleasure of seeing him publicly and shamefully executed; and therefore, meeting with one *Simon*, a *Cyrenian*, who was coming out of the country into the city, they seized upon him, and forced him to undergo the irksome drudgery of carrying Christ's cross after him to the place of execution. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 32.)

27 And, as they were going thither, vast multitudes of people crowded after him to be spectators of his crucifixion; and among others there were many women, who wept heartily, as they went, to see a person of his innocence, worth, and usefulness going to be put to so miserable and ignominious a death: Some of them being moved thereto by the common principles of humanity and compassion, others by the respect which his fame, or their own knowledge of him had raised in their minds toward him, and others by a peculiar affection to him.

28 But Jesus turning his head, and seeing the bitter lamentation of some that were near him, was moved with pity toward them, though he himself was in such distressing

Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

distressing circumstances, and said, Ye daughters of *Jerusalem*, my friends, do not weep and take on so much for me, who am entirely resigned to my Father's will in all these sufferings, and freely undergo them for his glory and the salvation of my people; but turn off the tide of your sorrow into tears of lamentation for yourselves and your dear offspring, on account of the sins which in a little time will bring the heaviest judgments upon the inhabitants of your city, whether they be young or old.

29 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

29 For, observe what I say, the days of God's vengeance hasten apace, in which he will execute such terrible wrath on this city and nation, for these and all their other crying abominations, that, instead of reckoning children a blessing, it will then be a sort of common proverb, Happy would it have been for us never to have been born, and happy are those women that never bore and nourished any children to be involved in the dreadful calamities which it would pierce their hearts to behold.

30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

30 Yea, this wicked people, in their anguish and despair, will then wish to be speedily cut off, and even buried alive under the ruins of their mountains, rather than be exposed to the further extreme miseries, which they will find to be unavoidable: And such as refuse to take refuge in the Messiah, shall, like those trembling and amazed sinners of old, (*Hos. x. 8.*) call in vain to the hills and mountains to screen and shelter them from the fierce anger of the Lord.

31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

31 For as dry wood is fitter for the flames than that which is green; so if these *Jerusalem* sinners bring such distress upon me, who am innocent, and have deserved no evil at their hands; how dreadfully will it be repaid upon themselves, who are laden with iniquity, as fuel fully prepared for wrath? If the *Romans* are suffered, by the instigation of these *Jews*, thus to abuse and put me to death, who have never done any thing to offend them; what fury will not God suffer, and even stir them up to shew, in the just punishment of this people, who will provoke both him and them? And if Divine Justice proceeds with such severity against me, who have no guilt of my own, but am only come to be a sacrifice for the sins of others; what will become of those heinous transgressors themselves, whose iniquities will be upon their own heads, through their rejecting me?

32 And there were

32 Now to put the greater indignity upon Christ, which God over-ruled for the literal fulfilment of that ancient

were also two other malefactors led with him to be put to death.

ancient prophecy, *He was numbered with transgressors*, (*Isa. liii. 12.*) his enemies led him in company with two infamous malefactors, who lay under sentence of death for robbery, that he might be crucified together with them, and the people might be induced to think that his crimes were as great and injurious to the public as theirs.

33 And, when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors: one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

33 And when they arrived at mount *Calvary*, which signifies the place of a skull, (see the note on *Mat. xxvii. 33.*) there they nailed him through his hands and feet to the cross; and then set it up, between the two notorious thieves, they hanging one on each side of him, as if he were the worst criminal of the three. (See the second note on *Matth. xxvii. 36.*)

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

34 Then he discovered a most exemplary, compassionate, and gracious temper, even to his barbarous crucifiers, saying, Father, lay not this iniquity to their charge; and instead of revenging my blood upon them, which they are shedding, let it plead for their obtaining repentance and remission of sin: For though their guilt be exceeding great and aggravated, there is room for a pardon, since they do not know that they are crucifying the Lord of glory. And whilst he was thus pitying and praying for them, the four soldiers, who were his most immediate executioners, were busy in dividing his clothes, which were their perquisite: But, as his upper garment was all of one piece, they cast lots who should have it, and so punctually, though not designedly, fulfilled the prophecy, (*Psal. xxii. 18.*) where it is said, *They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

35 And the people stood beholding: and the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ the chosen of God.

35 At the same time the common people standing by, looked at him, and spoke of him, with scorn and derision; and the chief priests and elders, notwithstanding the gravity of their characters, joined with the mob in insulting and ridiculing him, saying, He pretended to heal diseases, cast out devils, raise the dead, and bring salvation to *Israel*; let him now shew his miraculous power in delivering himself from the cross*; if he be indeed the Messiah, as he vainly boasts, now is his time to give proof of it, by saving himself from death.

36, 37 The

N O T E.

* They said this to insult him, to incense the people against him, and to justify themselves in bringing him to this shameful death. But had he added this miracle to all his others, such were the obstinate prejudices of their hearts, that they would not have believed in him: And yet if Christ had designed only

to confirm his doctrine, and not to make an atonement for sin, his delivering himself from the cross, after he was nailed to it, would have undoubtedly answered that end, much more than his undergoing death itself could be supposed to do it. See the note on *Matth. xxvii. 42.*

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over him, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 And one of the malefactors, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

36, 37 The soldiers that attended his crucifixion likewise abused and vilified him; and, instead of compassionately giving him some cooling or intoxicating cordial to ease his pains, they came and offered him vinegar to drink, (see the note on *John* xix. 28, 29.); and, in a way of scornful insult, they challenged him to free himself from the tortures and the death of the cross, and thereby prove himself to be *Israel's* Messiah.

38 And, further to expose him to the ridicule and resentment of the people, *Pilate*, according to the Roman custom of specifying the crimes of malefactors at their execution, wrote a title of this import, *Jesus the King of the Jews*; and this was placed over his head in *Greek, Latin, and Hebrew*, the three chief living languages of the day, that strangers as well as *Jews* might be able to read it: But God over-ruled the inscription to the honour of his Son, it being in fact a declaration of the real truth of his character, and an intimation of the near concern, which *Jews* and *Gentiles*, persons of all languages and nations had in it.

39 One of the thieves also, that were crucified with him, being insensible of his own sin, and of the innocence, worth, and dignity of Christ, reproached him as if he were an impostor, crying out, with daring insolence and mockery, If you be the Messiah, as you pretend, come, let us see what you can do to deliver yourself and us from our miserable and dying circumstances. (See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 44.)

40 But the other thief's heart being touched, and melted by distinguishing grace, was made deeply sensible of the enormity of his own guilt, and brought to believe in Jesus as the true Messiah; and therefore, calling to his fellow-criminal and sufferer, he severely reproved him, saying, What desperate and insolent language is this? How dare you be so horribly wicked, and cast off all fear of God, and of further provoking him, just as you are going to appear at his awful bar; since you are suffering under a sentence of death, as well as Jesus and I?

41 And as for you and me, it is highly just in God, and in the government too, that we should undergo all the punishment inflicted upon us; for the notorious crimes we have been guilty of deserve it: But as for this righteous and holy person, he suffers wrongfully, having committed no fault at all, nor done any thing unworthy of his great and glorious character: See with what meekness, patience, and mercy toward his very enemies he behaves under all their injuries and affronts!

42 And

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto you, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the mids.

42 And having thus, by confessing his own crime, given glory to God, and rebuked his companion in sin, he then, directing his speech to Jesus, confessed his faith in him, and implored his grace, saying, Lord, I believe that thou art indeed the Messiah, and Saviour of all who trust in thee, and that thy sufferings will issue in an advancement to thy heavenly kingdom. O, when thou art exalted upon thy throne of glory there, remember me in the greatness of thy mercy, and grant that I may dwell with thee for ever * !

43 Jesus, in the riches of his condescension and grace, replied, Thy petition is granted ; I assure thee, that this very day, as soon as ever you breathe your last, your soul shall be with me in that state of blessedness, which the separate spirits of the righteous enjoy in the heavenly mansions, and which is a paradise of divine delights, much better than the earthly paradise, which man was expelled for his apostasy from God.

44 By this time it was full noon, which, according to the *Jewish* way of computation, was the sixth hour of the day ; and then there was a thick darkness over all the land of *Judea*, and other countries, which continued till the ninth hour, or, according to the *Roman* way of reckoning, three o' clock in the afternoon, (See the note on *Mark* xv. 25.)

45 And this darkness was occasioned by a miraculous eclipse of the sun, as if that great luminary blushed to behold the wickedness of Christ's crucifiers, and the extremity of his sufferings. (See the note on *Matth.* xvii. 45.) And another prodigy attending his death was, that the hanging between the sanctuary and the holy of holies was torn asunder from top to bottom, as an intimation, that the holiness of the temple was abolished, that the formerly veiled mysteries were explained, that the partition-wall between *Jews* and *Gentiles* was broken down, (*Eph.* ii. 14.) and that a way was opened by the blood of Jesus for all true believers, of what nation soever, to have free access into the holiest of all, even heaven itself. (*Heb.* x. 19, 20.)

46 And

N O T E.

* Here was a surprising degree of knowledge, faith, repentance, and other graces, and abundance of good works, as their true, in this thief's public confession of his sin, renoual of his fellow-criminal, and honourable testimony to Christ, and profession of faith in him, whilst he was in such disgraced and suffering circumstances, as were stumbling even to his disciples. This shows the power and sovereignty of divine grace, and

is a good argument against despair ; but is no encouragement to any to defer their faith and repentance to the last hour, since, as far as appears, this was the first time that this criminal had an opportunity of knowing any thing about Christ : and his conversion was designed to put a peculiar glory upon the Saviour at his death, whilst his enemies derided him, and his own disciples either denied or forsook him.

46 And, when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and, having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 Now, when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned.

49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off beholding these things.

50 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just.

51 (The same had

46 And about three o'clock, to shew how willing he was to yield himself up to death, (see the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 50.) he cried out with a strong voice, in the words of *David*, (*Psal.* xxxi. 5.) *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* q. d. Father, the work is done; I now make the offering of my soul to thee, and pay it down as a price of redemption into thine hand, in confidence that, according to covenant-agreement between us, I shall receive a full reward; and I commit my departing spirit to thy faithfulness, care, and love, in full dependence that it shall be received to glory, and re-united with my body to dwell with thee for ever. And, as soon as he had thus spoke, he resigned his last breath, to teach and encourage his disciples to die submissively and in faith, after his example, with the word of God in their mouths.

47 Now when the *Roman* officer of the band, that had the care of his execution, saw the great eclipse, and the earthquake, and observed Christ's holy, meek, and heavenly behaviour, during his crucifixion, he, the soldiers therein joining with him, could not help saying, to the divine glory, that he verily believed Jesus to be an extraordinary holy man, and even the Son of God, (*Matth.* xxvii. 54.) though he had been charged with blasphemy, and crucified for asserting it.

48 And the generality of the multitude there present, when they saw all the affecting things that attended his death, were struck with grief and remorse at the thoughts of what had been unrighteously done to such an innocent and excellent person; and went away from the sight smiting their breasts, in token of their bitter lamentation and trouble on that account, and in fear of what might be the dreadful consequence to themselves and others.

49 There were likewise a great number of his acquaintance and disciples; and among them several women, who, out of their great affection, had attended him in his ministry and labours, even as far as from *Galilee*; these stood among the spectators, most of them at a great distance from the cross, looking upon their suffering Lord with mournful hearts and weeping eyes.

50, 51 And as he was put to death before many witnesses, in circumstances which punctually accomplished several prophecies concerning him; so it is observable, that Providence ordered his burial to be made *with the rich in his death*, according to the prediction in *Isa.* liii. 9. There was a man of distinction and character,

had not consented to the council and deed of them: he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews: (who also himself waited for the kingdom of God:)

51 This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

52 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

53 And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

54 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how

character, *Joseph of Arimathea**, who was a member of the great council, and a man of probity and religion, who also expected the Messiah's appearing at this time to set up his kingdom in the world, and was a secret disciple of Jesus, though for fear of the Jews, he did not publicly own it, (*John xix. 38.*): This man, when his Lord was examined, judged, and condemned by the sanhedrim, would by no means consent to their cruel and unrighteous consultations and proceedings against him.

51 And he was spirited to shew an honourable respect to Christ, even whilst he lay under the weakness and disgrace of a crucifixion: For, as soon as he was certainly known to be dead, *Joseph* took courage and went to *Pilate*, begging a grant of his body, that he might have power to dispose of it, and so might prevent its being ignominiously buried with the two other criminals that were executed with him.

52 And having obtained this request, he immediately went to the cross with the governor's warrant; and, unnauling the body, took it away, and wrapped it up in a clean sheet, and then placed it in a new tomb, which had been cut in a solid rock, and in which no corpse had ever been interred before; so that the sepulchre could not easily be broke into, nor could any other body be mistaken for that of Jesus, which, with other circumstances of laying a great stone to stop up the door, and setting a seal upon it, and a watch before it, was ordered by Providence for the more unexceptionable evidence of Christ's resurrection, when it should come to pass.

53 Now all this was done on the sixth day of the week, the day before the sabbath; and so much expedition was used in it, that these affairs might not break in upon the religious services of that holy day, which, it being toward sun-set, was then coming on.

54 And during all these transactions about the crucifixion and interment of our Lord, the good women, who had attended him from *Galilee*, followed him sorrowing, first to his cross, and afterwards to his funeral, and particularly observed the sepulchre, where his body

N O T E.

* *Arimathea* was probably *Ramah* in the tribe of *Benjamin*, which is spoken of in *Josh. xviii. 25.* It was also called *Ramatbaim*, and was the place where *Samuel* was born, (*1 Sam. i. 1, 20.*) Some suppose that *Joseph* was one of *Pilate's* council, and others that he was a *Decurio*, or one of the ten chief men

that were set over the affairs of a *Roman* colony. But all the circumstances related concerning him seem rather to intimate that he was a *Jew*; and its being said, that he consented not to the counsel and the deed of the sanhedrim, intimates, that he was one of them, or one of the high-priest's council.

how his body was laid.

56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath-day, according to the commandment.

dy was laid, and in what manner it was deposited there.

56 And, immediately after this, they went their way to get and mix costly spices and (*myrra*) sweet oils, for an embalment of the body of Jesus; and the next day, being the sabbath, they, in obedience to the command of God for resting from servile works thereon, deferred going to perform that office of respect to him.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How worthy is our dear Redeemer to be received and owned as our Saviour and our King! But how great is the power of prejudice against him! It slights and derides him, because he does not gratify curiosity, and answer unreasonable demands; it raises evidently false accusations against him, prefers the vilest of men, and temporal interests to him, and cannot be satisfied that he should reign, or that his name and interest should live in the world. But how did God over-rule all the designs and management of his enemies, for fulfilling the scriptures concerning him; and publicly own him by the prodigies that attended his death! How did he constrain the heathen judge, centurion, and soldiers, that were concerned in Christ's crucifixion, to bear an honourable testimony to him; and make the multitude of spectators, as well as his disciples and friends, smite their breasts in bewailing him! And how were the hearts of high and low inclined to shew tokens of the greatest respect to him! But O the weakness and depravity of human nature, even when it appears to be best disposed! How many, like Pilate, seem to be well affected toward Christ, convinced of his worth, and inclined to savour his righteous cause; and yet through importunity and fear, and through the temptations of this world, violate all the sacred bonds of right and truth, conscience and honour, in their behaviour towards him!—What a day of lamentation and distress was that in which our blessed Lord was crucified; how terrible to him, and with what holy mourning should his people reflect on what their sins then cost him! But our affections may be touched at the moving story of the barbarous usage he met with, and of his dying love, without an effectual change upon our hearts, and without true faith in him, or love to him; and if after all we reject him through unbelief, our lamentation will one day be dreadful for ourselves, on account of our neglects of him, and opposition to him. Ah how little do sinners think what they are doing, while they reject Christ! and yet their ignorance is attended with so many aggravations, as make it highly criminal, and need forgiveness: But how much more aggravated still are sins, committed against light and evidence! What dreadful hardness of heart do these bring upon the sinner; and what insupportable wrath do they expose him to! and yet how compassionate and gracious is a suffering and interceding Saviour, toward the worst of his enemies! How ready to forgive them! And how free and distinguishing is his grace in bringing one malefactor to faith, repentance, and eternal life, and that at the last hour, whilst another is left to persist in the desperate wickedness of his own heart, to his eternal perdition! And when grace makes an effectual change, what confession of sin, and of the justice of our sufferings for it; what honourable thoughts of Christ, and grief at the iniquity of fellow-criminals; what compassion for them, and endeavours to reclaim them; and what concern about, and applications by faith to the Lord Jesus for salvation, will it produce in us! But late examples of mercy should never encourage any to presume.—These souls of ours are immortal; and if we have an interest in Christ, they go, immediately after death, to be glorified with him. With what composure, therefore, in a dying hour, may the believer commit his departing spirit into the hands of a reconciled God and Father, through the great Redeemer, and after his example, in humble confidence that he will accept, and own, and receive it to glory!

C H A P. XXIV.

The resurrection of Christ, as declared to the women, 1,—8. As reported to the disciples, 9,—12. As made known by Christ himself to two of them who were going to Emmaus, 13,—35. To the rest of them assembled together, 36,—49. And, last of all, at his ascension to heaven, 50,—53.

TEXT.

NOW upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.

1 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

5 And, as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN the Jewish sabbath was ended, (see the note on *Matth. xxviii. 1.*) the women, who on the evening before that day had prepared spices and ointment, went and carried them to Christ's sepulchre, about sun-rising of the first day of the week, in hopes of an opportunity for using them in embalming his dead corpse: And some other good women, having been acquainted with their design, attended them to testify their affection, and indulge their grief, and to assist in the work.

2 And when they arrived at the place, they, to their great surprize, found one of their chief difficulties removed, in that the great stone, which they had seen placed at the mouth of the sepulchre, was rolled away by an angel. (See the paraphrase on *Matth. xxviii. 2.*)

3 Then the women came up with a design of going into the sepulchre; and, (*εισελθούσαι*) as they were entering in, they looked and saw that the body of their Lord was removed. (See the notes on *Matth. xxviii. 2.* and *Mark xvi. 5.*)

4 And while they were thereupon exceedingly troubled, in thinking what might become of it, they were surprized with the appearance of two angels, in the form and likeness of men, who (*εισεβύοντες*) presented themselves near to them, and were arrayed in robes of illustrious light and glory; and, being two, were sufficient for a valid, as well as honourable testimony, to their great Lord. (See the last note on *Matth. xxviii. 2.*)

5 At this amazing sight the women were filled with terror, as sinful mortals are apt to be, under a consciousness of guilt at any extraordinary appearance; and in the reverence, awe, and surprize of their minds, they bowed themselves exceeding low, with their faces toward the ground, still looking about for the body of Jesus:

unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words.

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

Jesus: Then one of the angels, speaking in the name of both, (*Matth.* xxviii. 5. and *Mark* xvi. 6.) said unto them, Why do ye take so much pains in coming hither to find a person in a sepulchre of the dead, who is really alive?

6, 7 Jesus, whom ye thus carefully are searching after, and who was dead, is actually risen; and ye need not wonder at this, but should rather have believed and expected it, considering what he himself often told you before-hand about it. Do not you remember how again and again, and particularly when he was with his disciples in Galilee, (*Matth.* xvi. 21. and xx. 19. and *Luke* ix. 22, 44.) he assured them that, according to the determinate council of God, he must be given up into the hands of wicked men, and be put to death by a crucifixion, and that on the third day he should rise again?

8 Upon their being reminded of this, they recollected what they had formerly heard of their Lord's own predictions about it; which was a great evidence that he was risen indeed, though it did not fully silence their doubts. (See the note on *John* xx. 2.)

9 And, according to the direction given by the angels, they immediately departed from the sepulchre to carry the astonishing tidings of all that they had seen and heard to the eleven apostles, and to any other disciples whom they might meet with there, they themselves being struck with a mixture of fear and wonder, as not well knowing what to believe. (*Mark* xvi. 7, 8.)

10 Now the names of these women, who were the first witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, and the first messengers of it to the other disciples, were *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had cast seven devils; and *Joanna*, the wife of *Chuzas*, *Herod's* steward, (*Luke* viii. 2, 3.) ; and another *Mary*, who was the mother of *James* the less, (*Mark* xv. 40.) ; with the other women, who attended them to his sepulchre *. (*ver.* 1.)

11 And when they came and delivered their message, the disciples were so full of prejudices against the doctrine of Christ's resurrection, so thoughtless about it, so ignorant and unbelieving with regard to the intimations he had given of it, and so overwhelmed with dejection, disappointment, and despair, that they looked upon these women's report, as a silly, fanciful, weak, and unlikely story, and could not give any credit to it.

12 How-

N O T E.

* These were the first witnesses and messengers of his resurrection, to shew the confirmation of Christ, and to take off all suspi-

cion, as if either force or fraud had been employed in the management of this important affair.

11 Then arose Peter, and ran in to the sepulchre; and, stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

12 However, (2^d) Peter, upon hearing this strange account, hastened away to the sepulchre, together with John, (John xx. 2, 3.) to see whether there were any appearance of its being true; and going in (John xx. 6.) he saw the linen clothes in which the body of his Lord had been buried, but could not find the body itself. And when he had thoroughly searched the sepulchre, and observed that the orderly position of the burial-wrappers had no appearance of such haste or hurry, as might be expected in clandestinely removing the dead corpse, he returned full of astonishment and perplexity of mind, not knowing what to conclude from all these circumstances; nor yet understanding and believing the scripture-prophecies, or Christ's own former words about his resurrection. (See the note on John xx. 8.)

13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs.

13 Soon after these things, observe another remarkable testimony to this great fact. Two other of Christ's disciples were walking together that very day on which he rose from the dead, to a certain village called Emmaus*, which was about seven or eight miles distant from Jerusalem.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

14 And as they were on their journey, the conversation turned upon the late sufferings and death of Christ, and upon the reports which they had that morning heard concerning his being risen again.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together, and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

15 And while they were thus talking over the mournful story of his death, and arguing about the probabilities or improbabilities of his resurrection, he, knowing their hearts, and the straits they were in, graciously took that opportunity to come and join company with them, like a stranger who was going the same way, that he might manifest himself to them.

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

16 But as he designed for a little while to conceal himself, that he might give them the fairer occasion of telling their own sense of things, and might afterward, with the greater advantage, reprove, convince, and comfort them; so he miraculously affected their sight in such a manner, that they had not a just discerning of him, and little suspected him to be their Lord †.

17 And

N O T E S.

* They might be going thither, either upon business, or on a visit, or rather to get from the noise and heats, insults, reproaches, and dangers of their enemies, with a design of retiring still further into Galilee, because of the disappointment they had met with, and the confusion they were in, relating to their crucified Lord and Saviour.

† This is very consistent with its being said (Mark xvi. 12.) that he appeared in another

form to them; for this alteration upon the air, or upon the organs of sight, gave his appearance a different form from its own: but that the distinguishing form of his body, and features of his face themselves, were not altered, is evident, because then there would have been no occasion to with-hold their eyes from knowing him; and as soon as that obstruction was removed, they knew who he was.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are there that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

17 And he, like a fellow-traveller providentially cast into their company, asked them in a courteous and friendly manner, What are ye so earnestly talking about in your journey, that gives you so much uneasiness, as discovers itself in your countenances, language, and behaviour? Pray be so kind as to tell me, that I may sympathize with you, or offer something for your relief.

18 Then one of them, named *Cleophas**, replied, Do you ask what makes us so sad? Alas! we have cause enough for it; and methinks you might easily imagine what it is: Surely you, who seem to have come directly from *Jerusalem*, cannot but have heard the dismal news, which all the city rings of, relating to the most shocking and amazing transactions that had fallen out there within these two or three days last past. If you are ignorant of these things, you are certainly the only person there that is so.

19 Our Lord, making himself look still more like a stranger, answered, What surprizing and melancholy things do you mean? to which *Cleophas* replied, Why, if we must tell you, we mean the cruelty, even to the most shameful death, that has been exercised upon him, who was commonly called *Jesus of Nazareth*, and who, to say the least, was certainly a great prophet, as appeared by the excellent, heavenly, and holy doctrine, which he preached, and by the many great and glorious, merciful and divine miracles, which he evidently and often wrought to confirm it: So that he was highly owned and honoured of God, and had obtained a great reputation and esteem among the generality of the people.

20 And yet, alas! to go on with the account, it is notorious that the chief priests and elders of the people, not being able to bear the purity of his doctrine, and its opposition to their authority and interests, were so full of envy against him, that they apprehended him, tried and condemned him in their ecclesiastical court, as an impostor and blasphemer; and then, delivering him up to the *Roman* power, they accused and prosecuted him, as a seditious person, and an enemy to *Cæsar*, till they got a sentence of death passed upon him, and took care to see him actually crucified. Is not this

a very

N O T E.

* This *Cleophas* seems to have been *Alpheus*, who was the husband of *Mary*, the mother of *James* the less, which *Mary* attended Christ to his cross, and went that morning with *Mary Magdalene* to the sepulchre, ac-

appears by comparing *ver.* 10. with *Matth.* x. 3. *Mark* xv. 40. and *John* xix. 25. And *Eusebius* tells us from *Hegesippus*, that *Cleophas* was the brother of *Joseph*, the reputed father of our Lord. *Euseb. Eccl. Hist.* L. 3. *cap.* 11

a very sad and affecting case, enough to make any one's heart ake to think of it! You therefore need not think it strange that we are troubled in our reflections upon it, and talk about it.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and, beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

21 But even this is not all with respect to *us*, who have met with a dreadful disappointment: For we own ourselves to have been two of his disciples, and to have received, and firmly depended upon him, as the Messiah, the Saviour of *Israel*, expecting that in a little time he would have set up his kingdom with great power and glory amongst us: But what are all our hopes come to now? alas! they are dead and buried with our crucified Master. And yet there are some circumstances which throw us into vast perplexity, between hope and fear: We remember he talked something about his rising again on the third day; but, though that day is now come and far spent, (*ver.* 29.) none of us have seen any thing of him.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre:

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

22, 23 We have indeed (*αὐακὸν ἤκου*) heard something this very morning, which looks a little like his being risen; but this increases our perplexity, as not knowing what to make of it: For some good women, who were his affectionate disciples, surprized us with an account, that they went to his sepulchre a little after break of day, with a design to embalm his body; and when in order thereunto they searched for it, they could not find it: Hereupon they came back to several of us full of this story, like persons in an ecstasy of wonder, mixed with fear and joy, and added withal, that, to their further amazement, they had been favoured with a vision of angels, who informed them that their Lord was really risen again: But we are apt to look upon all this, as merely the fancy of weak and credulous women, it not being likely to us, that angels should be sent with such an important message to them, rather than to the apostles of our Lord.

24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not.

24 And yet we have had a further confirmation, that by some means or other his body is removed from the sepulchre: For, immediately upon this report, some of our number, two persons particularly, being desirous to see what appearance of truth there might be in it, ran with all speed to his tomb, and were themselves eye-witnesses that, as the women had said, the body of Jesus was not there; but, alas! they neither saw him alive, nor heard what was become of him, as might have been expected, if he indeed were risen from the dead: And therefore, upon the whole, we are in great confusion and fear, lest all hopes of this kind

kind be vain; we doubt the news of a risen Saviour is too great and too good to be true.

15 Then he said, unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

25 Then our Lord, though still concealing who he was, thought it high time to reprove and instruct them, saying, How prodigious is your folly*, and your backwardness of heart to reflect, and depend upon the various testimonies of God by the ancient prophets concerning these very things! Had ye but considered and believed them, ye could not have been so distrustful and suspicious about these events as ye are, but would have been well satisfied that your crucified Saviour is risen from the dead.

16 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

26 Was it not necessary for the divine honour, according to the clearest determinations of prophecy, and the eternal counsel of God made known therein, that the Messiah should undergo the sufferings, reproaches, and death, which of late have befallen your Lord, and that afterwards he should rise again to enter upon his kingdom, and to be exalted in a state of immortal glory, suitable to his own merit and dignity? Why then should ye be stumbled at his ignominious death and sufferings, or doubt of his resurrection to compleat his great designs?

17 And, beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them, in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself.

27 And having thus referred them to the Old Testament-writings, he began with the five books of *Moses*, and then went on to the succeeding prophets, and other parts of the scripture, particularly reciting and explaining the principal types and prophecies, that related to his own sufferings and death, resurrection and glory, and thereby proving that they were all necessary in their proper place and order.

18 And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went; and he made as though he would have gone further.

28 Whilst our Lord was talking to them in this instructive and moving manner, concerning himself, and still seemed to be a stranger, they arrived at *Emmaus*, whither they were going; and when the disciples stopped at a certain house there, Jesus made no offer of turning in with them, but behaved as if he were travelling further, that he might give them an opportunity, either of letting him go, or of desiring his continuance with them.

19 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with

29 But they were so affected with his excellent and seasonable discourse, that they could by no means think of parting with him; and therefore importunately in-

treated

N O T E.

* They were fools, as they refused proper evidence, and acted against their own comfort and interests by their inadvertence and unbelief. And Christ's calling them so, by way of just reproof, for their conviction and

recovery, is no breach of his own rule, (*Mat. v. 22.*) where he forbids calling our brother, fool, which is to be understood of doing it, by way of censures contempt and injurious reproach, to censure and expose him.

with us; for it is towards evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem.

and

treated him to favour them with more of his good company, urging that it grew too late for him to go much further, and, that they should be extremely obliged to him, if he would please to tarry with them: And he, who is always ready to be found of them that seek him, yielded to their importunity, staying some time with them*.

30 And a supper having been ordered for their refreshment, he, sitting down at table, took bread, and asked a blessing upon it, and then brake and gave it to them to eat, just as he had used to do at ordinary meals, as well as at miraculous and religious feasts.

31 Hereupon they, beginning to suspect who he was, looked at him more intently; and, the obstructions to their sight being then removed, they saw plainly that it was Jesus himself; and as soon as they were thoroughly satisfied of this, and consequently that he was indeed risen from the dead, he suddenly slipped away from them†.

32 And, immediately upon his disappearing, they, reflecting on all that had passed, said, each of them in their turns, and with mutual agreement, What an instructive, quickening, and comforting discourse had we from our blessed Lord, as we came along in the way hither! with what force and sweetness did he explain the scriptures to us! how home did he bring things to our case and consciences! and what divine energy was his words attended with! Were they not spirit and life? Did not we feel their power? and did not our hearts glow with a divine and heavenly warmth while we heard them? how strange is it, and what fools were we indeed, that we should not understand him, nor perceive who he was then, or should ever think that any but he could have spoke in such a suitable and effectual manner to us!

33 And, being full of rapture and joy at this discovery of Christ, they presently got up from table, and, late as it was, hastened away with all speed back again to Jerusalem, to give vent to their own transports, and

to

N O T E S.

* There was no dissimulation, as some have suggested, in our Lord's conduct on this occasion; for he only behaved herein, just as common rules of civility would have obliged any stranger to do, that he might not seem to thrust himself upon other company, but might leave it to them to invite him or not, determining in his own mind to stay with them, upon their discovering a desire of further conversation with him.

† He might, at that instant, make himself invisible to them by a miraculous interposition of a cloud upon their eyes, or upon his body, to conceal it from their view till he got out of the room; by which he gave them to understand, that they were not to expect such a continuance of his company with them in his risen state, as they had been used to before his death.

and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

36 And, as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

to comfort the hearts of their brethren; and there they found the greatest part of the eleven apostles, with others that used to associate with them, assembled together. (See the note on *Mark xvi. 14.*)

34 And the two disciples, at their entering the room*, heard some of the company saying, O blessed tidings! we have had several reports that our dear Lord is risen from the dead; and *Simon Peter* has had the honour of a visit from him.

35 Then the two disciples, still further to confirm their faith, gave them a particular and full narrative of all that had passed between Christ and them that afternoon, in their way to *Emmaus*, and how, when they got thither, he plainly discovered himself to them, while they were sitting together at table, and he, like the Master of the feast, was breaking the bread, which had been provided for their refreshment.

36 And whilst all these disciples were thus conferring about the resurrection of their Lord, in a private house, *the doors of which were shut for fear of the Jews*, (*John xx. 19.*) Jesus himself appeared on a sudden among them, and pronounced all happiness upon them; thereby assuring them that he came, not to resent their late unworthy treatment of him, when they all forsook him in his extremity, but to satisfy them of his resurrection, and of his abiding love to them, and to comfort and bless them.

37 But instead of being delighted with this appearance, they were surprized, and terribly frightened at it, because Christ came so unexpectedly among them, and without making any noise, though the doors were shut. And, in the hurry of their thoughts, forgetting the many proofs they had formerly seen of his divine power, and the several evidences they had but just before received of his resurrection, they presently fancied it was only a spirit, which formed the appearance of a body among them §.

38 Then

N O T E S.

* The construction of the Greek (*αποστολῶν* being the accusative case) plainly shews that these were the words, not of the two disciples that came from *Emmaus*, but of some of the company which they found at *Jerusalem*, who were either speaking in this manner one to another; or else saluted the two disciples as soon as they appeared, with the good news they had received from *Peter*: And we learn from *1 Cor. xv. 5.* that Christ was seen of *Simon Peter*, before he was seen of the twelve

apostles; by which it is evident that Jesus, in his wonderful condescension and grace, had taken an opportunity on the former part of that day to shew himself to *Peter*, that he might early relieve his distresses and fears, on account of his having so shamefully denied his Lord; though where, or in what manner this was done is not recorded. See the note on *Mark xvi. 13.*

§ It is vain to inquire how Jesus came among them, the doors being shut, or to imagine

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled; and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 And, when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb.

43 And he took it, and did eat before them.

38 Then, to quit and satisfy them, he, in a free and friendly manner, said to them, What means all this confusion, which discovers itself in your countenances and behaviour? and why do ye give way to such unreasonable fears and terrors, as I know distract and distress your minds, as if what you saw were an imaginary and not a real body? but to convince you of the contrary,

39 Observe the marks of my crucifixion, and examine my hands, and feet, and side, (*John* xx. 20.); look carefully upon my body, and feel it with your own hands for your satisfaction, that it is I myself, your Lord and Master, who am risen from the dead: For a spirit, with all the appearances it can make, has not such a corporeal substance, as may be seen and felt, and distinguished to be a body of flesh and bones, and as your own eyes and touch may prove this to be, in which I now appear before you.

40 And at the same time he held out his hands and his feet, and shewed them his side, (*John* xx. 20.) that they might both see and feel the scars of the nails which had fastened him to the cross, as well as of the spear that had pierced his side; which proved, beyond all contradiction, that there could be no deceit in the appearance he then made to them; who had been so long acquainted with him, and had so lately seen him crucified.

41 And while their ecstasy and astonishment were so great, that they hardly knew what to believe, he, to give them more time, and still further evidence, asked them to set something before him, that he might eat in their presence.

42 Then they gave him a part of such fare as they had with them, which was a piece of broiled fish, and of an honey-comb.

43 And though his risen body had no need of animal refreshment, yet he eat part of this food in their company, for the confirmation of their faith, and to give an advantage to their future testimony concerning him *.

44 Our

N O T E S.

Imagine that his body penetrated other bodies; since it was as easy to his divine power to open a door indiscernibly, and without noise, as to have come in at a door opened by some other hand; and to pretend that his body penetrated any door or wall, without opening or breaking it, is to suppose that his body was not a real human body of flesh and bones, though the reality of its being so was the very thing which he designed by this appearance to convince his disciples of.

* The apostle Peter afterwards insisted on this part of the evidence, that he was *seen openly* to his disciples, *who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.* (*Acts* x. 41.) To ask what became of this food after he had eat it, is as useless and over-curious, as to ask what became of the meat which the angels eat with Abraham and Lot, (*Gen.* xviii. 8. and xix. 3.) But as Christ eat with his disciples on this occasion only to demonstrate his resurrection; so he could easily dis-

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

44 Our Lord having, on this, and afterwards on other occasions, given them unquestionable proofs that he was really the same person whom they formerly used to converse with, proceeded, time after time, till his ascension, to give them more clear and extensive instructions, than ever before, concerning the necessity and design of his sufferings, death, and resurrection, saying, These are the very things which I intended to suggest to you, by the several intimations I heretofore gave you, whilst I was daily conversing with you: I then assured you, that every thing relating thereunto must be accomplished, which had been antiently foretold * in the several parts of the Old Testament concerning me, as the Messiah; and now ye see they are all exactly come to pass.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

45 Then, as he had before opened the scriptures to some of his disciples in a doctrinal way, and made their hearts burn within them †, (*ver.* 27, 32.); so he furthermore took off the vail from all their hearts, by the special illumination of his Spirit, who removed the darkness, doubts, and prejudices of their minds, that they might readily apprehend, and fall in with the true meaning of the scriptures, especially in what related to their accomplishment in him.

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

46 And in this manner he evidently demonstrated to them, that, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, and according to the eternal counsel of God, with respect to his own glory, and the salvation of his people, it was necessary that he should die for their sins, and rise again for their justification:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached

47 And that, upon this foot, the great evangelical doctrines of ingenuous repentance of all iniquity, and forgiveness of sins through faith in him, as inseparably connected in the gospel-dispensation, should be published

NOTES.

solve the food, or discharge it invisibly by his divine power, as soon as he had eat it, since the state of his risen body did not need it for nourishment and support, as the same body, whilst it was mortal, did before his death.

* The general division of the books of the Old Testament in those days, was into these three parts. (1.) The Law, which contained the five books of Moses: (2.) The Prophets, which contained not only those books that were merely prophetical, but those likewise which were historical, and were wrote by prophetical men: And (3.) The Hagiographa, which contained divine hymns, and moral instructions for the conduct of life,

and went under the general title of the Psalms, because these were esteemed as the most eminent, and were placed at the head of that sort of writings: And to Christ, by mentioning these three, took in the whole of the Old Testament, which, in several places, spoke of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow.

† Though the two disciples hearts burned within them while he opened to them the scriptures; yet there was more warmth than light; and it do not appear that they duly understood those scriptures, or believed in a risen Saviour according to them, till after they came to Emmaus.

ed in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

ed by his authority, power, and efficacy, and in the virtue of his merit, among all sorts of people, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, beginning at the city of *Jerusalem*: And this he particularly took notice of, that, according to antient prophecies, the word of the Lord might go forth from thence; that the *Jews* might have the privilege of the first-born; that the elect of God among them might be called in great numbers there, as the first-fruits of the gospel-ministry; that Jesus might the more evidently prove himself to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah, at that very place where he was crucified; that the glad tidings of salvation might have the quicker spread from thence to other countries; and that the greatest of sinners, even such as were concerned in his crucifixion, and all others, to whom this gospel should be afterwards preached, might be encouraged to hope in the riches of divine grace through him, for their recovery and salvation.

47 And ye are witnesses of these things.

48 And ye, said he, my apostles and disciples, are the persons whom I appoint to bear witness in your ministry, that, according to what ye yourselves have seen and heard, all things which were predicted of old, concerning the death and resurrection of the Messiah, have been punctually accomplished in me.

49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

49 And, for your encouragement, observe, Soon after my ascension to heaven, I will shed down the Holy Ghost upon you in an extraordinary manner, according to my Father's promise, (*Joel* ii. 28.); and therefore I order you not to go forth immediately to preach the gospel, but to continue, for a while, waiting together at *Jerusalem*, till ye shall have this plentiful effusion from the throne of the Majesty on high, to enrich you with all needful gifts and graces, and supernatural powers, for the work on which I send you, and to confirm your testimony, and succeed you in it.

50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany: and he lift up his hands, and blessed them.

50 Having in this manner given them many infallible proofs of his resurrection, and various instructions relating to his kingdom and their ministry in it, he, at the end of forty days, conducted them out to the mount of *Olives*, which lay in a tract of land called *Bethany*, not far from the village of that name*; and having brought them thither, he, lifting up his hands toward

N O T E

* The town or village of *Bethany*, where *Lazarus* dwelt, and was raised from the dead, was about fifteen furlongs from *Jerusalem*: (*John* xi. 18.) But there was a tract of ground called by that name, which reached from thence to the mount of *Olives*, within

a sabbath-day's journey of *Jerusalem*, which is supposed to have been about eight furlongs. And this was the place to which Christ led his disciples, and from which he ascended, as appears from *Acts* i. 12. *Vid.* *Light. Her. Her.*

toward them, as *Aaron* did toward the people, (*Lev. ix. 22.*) authoritatively and effectually commanded a blessing upon them, to shew his affection to them, and to assure them of what they might further expect from him.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

51 As soon as he had taken this gracious and solemn farewell, he left them, and visibly ascended up into heaven by his divine power; they all looking at him, till a glorious cloud received him out of their sight. (*Acts i. 9.*)

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy;

52 And as he was ascending, they, beholding his glory, adored him as their God and Saviour, and went back to *Jerusalem*, according to his order, being filled with exceeding joy in reflection on what they had seen, heard, and felt, and in expectation of an accomplishment of his parting promises, which would issue in the advancement of his kingdom on earth, and in their being at length received up to glory after him.

53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

53 And they attended religious services in the temple *, day by day, resorting thither at the hours of prayer, and blessing God, in repeated praises, for the glory he had displayed in their crucified, risen, and exalted Redeemer: And in this manner they continued waiting in faith and hope of their Lord's making good his promise of the Holy Ghost. *Amen*, said they; *Amen*, says the writer of this gospel; and *Amen*, says every true believer: So let it be, and may God be ever magnified for all this!

RECOLLECTIONS.

What sure and blessed tidings are the resurrection of Christ! And how often does he surprize the most unlikely and unworthy with such discoveries of himself as they are apt to think are too great and good to be true! But early seekers of him shall find him; and while they are conversing together about him, he will honour them with his presence, open their understandings, and make their hearts burn within them to their exceeding joy: Though their hopes may sometimes be ready to fail, yet in due season he will make himself known to them, and clear up what the scriptures say concerning him, as a suffering and exalted Saviour; and they that are importunate for his abiding with them, shall be favoured with further manifestations of himself to them; and when they find him to the satisfaction of their own souls, they cannot but be desirous that others should be comforted with their comforts. But O the folly of unbelief, as it lies against the clearest evidence, and against our own best and truest interests! How groundless

NOTE.

* Some suppose that all this while, the disciples dwelt, and continued together for supplication and prayer, in some upper chamber or apartment of the temple, by the permission of some priest or Levite, to whom it belonged; and that what is here called their being *ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ*, continually in the temple, praising and blessing God, is much of the same import with what is said, (*Acts*

i. 13, 14.) about their going *εἰς τὸ ὕψωμα* into an upper room, and *κατακλιθεὶς* abiding and continuing with one accord there, in prayer and supplication: And admitting this, the seeming difference between those two passages is easily reconciled, since all the buildings in the temple were called the temple. (*2 Kings xi. 2, 3.*) See this argued *pro* and *con* in *Hammond and Wither* on *Acts i. 13*.

groundless are the fears of Christ's disciples; and yet how does he condescend to their infirmities to relieve them! And how endearing is the constancy of his love, who, after all, will bless them, and send the promised Spirit to them, that they may be fitted for every trial and service to which he calls them! Yet, how exceeding and abundant are the riches of his grace to the worst of sinners, like those of *Jerusalem*, that had embroiled their hands in his blood! And what blessed grounds of hope are there even for such, that they may obtain repentance, and remission of sins through faith in his name! And O how should our faith and hope, hearts and affections follow the ascended Head and Redeemer into heaven, looking after him; adoring and worshipping him, blessing God for him, living in daily expectation of all needful blessings from him here, and of ascending up to him in our own persons hereafter, that where he is, there we may be also! Amen and amen; so let it be to every one of us.

A P P A C;

A PRACTICAL EXPOSITION OF THE

Evangelist JOHN,

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

C H A P. I.

The Evangelist's testimony concerning the eternal Godhead, the office and incarnation of Christ, 1,—14. John the Baptist's testimony concerning him, 15,—37. And Christ's calling of several to be his disciples, 38,—51.

TEXT.

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

PARAPHRASE.

IN the beginning^a of the world, when God created the heavens and the earth, a Divine person, styled emphatically the *Logos*† or word, necessarily existed; and so the Word was co-eternally present with God‡ the Father, and the Word himself, though personally distinct from him, was in a strict and proper sense God[¶] par-

N O T E S.

^a The first *Socinians* understood this of the beginning of the gospel; and so interpreted all that follows, as relating to the gospel-reformation: But a bare reading of the following verses with attention, is sufficient to confute that interpretation, as exceeding unnatural and forced; accordingly there are few, if any now, that plead for it.

† The term *Logos*, translated word, signifies wisdom or reason, as well as word; accordingly Christ is called both the *Wisdom*, and the *Word* of God, (*Prov. viii. and Luke xi. 49. Rev. xix. 13.*) He is the *Wisdom* of God, say several of the fathers, considering him in his pre-existence before all worlds; and so he is compared to silent thought resting in the mind: And he is the *Word* of God, considering him in his incarnate state; and so he is compared to outward speech, whereby he reveals the Father to us. And that this word is more than an attribute, or operation of the Father, is evident from the personal characters under which he is spoken of in this and several following passages, where he is expressly called *God with God*, (*ver. 1, 2.*) is distinguished from *John the Baptist*,

(*ver. 8.*) is said to *come after him*, and to *come to his own*, (*ver. 11, 15.*) to be the only *begotten of the Father*, to be made *flesh*, and to *dwell amongst us*. (*ver. 14.*)

§ The term *God* in this passage is plainly meant of God the Father, as *personally* distinguished from the Word; though he is not here called the Father, because the Evangelist had not yet spoke of Christ under the title of the Son: And this *Word*, who in the close of the verse is called *God*, was with God; not as one God with another God, but as one divine person with another in the same Godhead.

• The chief objection against this interpretation is, that in the *Greek* the article is added to the word *God*, when spoken of the Father, which is left out when applied to the Son: But this is no more than the rules of grammar made proper to determine the nominative case in the sentence, which, if the article had been added, would have been more naturally rendered, *God was the Word*, than *the Word was God*; and there are several places in this very chapter, where the word *God* is applied to the Divine Being absolutely

partaking of the same divine nature and essential perfections with the Father.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

5 And, the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

2, 3 This divine person had all along an inseparable existence with God the Father, not only before he was born of the virgin, but even from everlasting, before there were any creatures, he being the author of all made things whatsoever: So that by him, as their Creator, they were brought forth into being; and without his efficiency no one of them, from the highest to the lowest, was formed at all †.

4 He not only created all inanimate, but likewise all animate things, whether of the sensitive or rational life, and that by a vital principle, which was originally and necessarily in himself; and this was the spring and source of all kinds and degrees of life, that are communicated to others, and particularly of all the reason and understanding, that is, or ever was found among men, and of all that can be called the light of life.

5 The light of natural conscience, which proceeds from God the Word, glimmers amidst the moral darkness that is brought upon the minds of men by sin; but this darkness is so great, that it overpowers and stifles it, instead of being overpowered by it: And the light of revelation, which he communicated with a gradual increase through various dispensations of grace, shines now at length in all its lustre amidst the darkness of a degenerate world; but such is the blindness of men's hearts, that they naturally do not understand it, but shut their eyes against it, hate and oppose it, and will not receive it, having *loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* (Chap. iii. 19, 20.)

6 The

N O T E S.

solutely, or to the Father personally, without the article, as particularly ver. 6, 13, 18. At other times 'tis applied with the article to the Son, (chap. xx. 28.); and at others, even to false Gods, (Acts xiv. 11. and 2 Cor. iv. 4.) So that no stress can be laid upon the omission of the article here. And that Christ was properly God by nature, and not by office, is evident, because he was God before any creatures were made, and consequently before any dominion could be exercised over them.

† 'Tis not sufficient to object against this, that by *him* denotes only an instrument, or under-agent, in the making of all things, and not properly the efficient or author of them: For an instrument, or under-agent to God, in creation-work, do not agree to any notions of creating power, which must be strictly and properly divine and infinite, and is always spoken of in scripture, as immediate and entirely peculiar to God, *who stretched*

forth the heavens ALONE, and spread abroad the earth BY HIMSELF, (Isa. xlv. 24.); and of him, *through him, or by him,* (1st. Cor. i. 24.) *are all things,* (Rom. xi. 36.) And Christ is spoken of, as the Lord, or Jehovah, who, by his own proper efficiency, in the beginning *laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are said to be the work of his hands,* (Heb. i. 10.) These exalted characters of the Logos cannot agree to any, the most glorious creature, that can be imagined; since that must be a *made* being, and all such beings are here distinguished from the Logos, who made them: and therefore he cannot be himself made. Nor can they, I think, agree to a supposed pre-existent, created soul of Christ; since the Divinity and the power, here and in the following verses ascribed to him, are distinguished from all made things, and are peculiar to Godhead, as will appear in the Evangelist's further account of them.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

6 The opening of the last and clearest of these dispensations began in the ministry of *John the Baptist*, who was really a man, and no more, though an extraordinary one in his birth, gifts, qualifications, and remarkable sanctity, and a man, who was thereby proved to be sent of God, that he might be the forerunner of the glorious person before spoken of.

7 This *John* came among the *Jews*, as a witness from God, and for God, to speak of Christ, and point them to him, as a divine person, in whom were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and who was just ready to appear, and diffuse a glorious light among them: And the great design and tendency of his testimony was, that through his ministry, as a moral and appointed means, all sorts * of men might be induced to believe in Jesus, as the proper object of their faith, (ver. 12.) whether they were *Pharisees*, *Sadducees*, or the common people among the *Jews*, or publicans and soldiers among the *Gentiles*.

8 It might be truly said of *John*, that, by the clearness of his preaching, the fervour of his spirit, and the holiness of his life, he was ministerially (*ἐκ φωτός*) a burning and shining light, (*John* v. 35.) But, as he himself confessed, he was not that divine person, who, by way of eminence, is (*ὁ φῶς*) the light, from which all others are derived, but was sent of God to shew him to the people, who really was so, and to assure them that he, as the Sun of righteousness, was then rising upon them.

9 This matchless person was, by way of eminence and excellence, the true light, in opposition to the false lights, of the *Gentile* philosophers, and the corrupted, as well as the faint typical light of the *Jews*; and in distinction from *John the Baptist*, and the apostles, who bore a more direct witness to him, and derived their light from him. He is indeed the original fountain-light, from whom all kinds of natural and divine knowledge are communicated to every man, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, who has been partaker of them in former ages, or now is, or ever shall be so to the end of the world §.

10 He

NOTES.

* All men in this place cannot possibly mean every individual of mankind, because the Evangelist here speaks of the design of *John the Baptist's* personal ministry, to prepare Christ's way, which ministry was confined to the land of *Judea*, and but few, comparatively speaking, heard his testimony. See the notes on ver. 29. and chap. iii. 16.

§ Or these words may be rendered, He

was the true light, which, coming into the world, enlighteneth every man. And so coming into the world, refers not to every man, but to Christ the true Light, who is usually styled *ὁ ἐκ φωτός* he that cometh; and then it most peculiarly relates to his appearing in the world to spread the light of the gospel among *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, or amongst all that are enlightened by it.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him; and the world knew him not.

10 By him, as was said, (*ver. 3.*) the whole creation was formed, and he has ever since been present in the world by his Being and Providence, *upholding all things by the word of his power*; and by several dispensations of light and grace in different degrees through all ages. And yet such is the blindness, sensuality, and depravity of mankind, that the *Gentile* world neither understood nor owned the characters of the Deity, which he impressed on his works, as the Creator of all things; nor did the generality of men observe and believe the characters of grace, which he discovered by tradition, or by his word, as the only Saviour.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

11 Yea, in the fulness of time, he personally appeared, in his incarnation and ministry, among the *Jews*, and manifested himself with more abundant light and power, by his doctrine and miracles to them, who were his own people and property, not merely in common with the rest of the world, by right of creation, but likewise in a more peculiar manner, as he was the God of *Israel*, and they were his covenant and professing people, and his own kindred *according to the flesh*, (*Rom. ix. 4, 5.*) And yet so ignorant, obstinate, and perverse, were the generality of them, who were thus his own, that they wilfully rejected their Creator, their natural and special obligations to him, and would not receive him as their Messiah.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

12 But there was a remnant, according to the election of grace, (*Rom. xi. 5.*) who embraced him as the free gift of God, with hearty approbation of him, and of the way of salvation alone by him, as their prophet, priest, and king, and with an entire trust and dependence upon him for themselves, that they might have life through him: And on all who thus by faith received him, he bestowed (*ἐκέντισεν*) the dignity and prerogative, right and privilege of being the children of God, not in name and title only, but in noble dispositions and enjoyments, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, weaker or stronger believers*, they being *all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus*. *Gal. iii. 26.*

13 Which were born, not of blood,

13 He, as the fountain of honour, bestows this glorious privilege on them, who are new begotten or born again, (*οὐκ ἐστὶν αἱματώδης*) not by natural descent or pedigree, from

N O T E.

* Though formerly the adoption pertained only to the *Jews*; yet under the gospel-state, it is no longer confined to them, believing *Jews* and *Greeks* being *all one in Christ Jesus*, (*Gal. iii. 28.*) And as the name of Christ is often put for Christ himself, ac-

ording to the discoveries we have of his person, offices, works, and benefits in his word. So to believe in his name is to believe in him, which is the same with receiving him, as it is expressed in the former part of the verse.

blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

from *Abraham*, nor by the blood of circumcision, which was the sign and seal of *Israel's* covenant relation to God; nor by the intention of parents in begetting them, nor by the ceremonial observances of *Jewish* carnal ordinances, nor by any inclinations of corrupt nature, which, in a moral sense, is called flesh; nor is it according to the way of man's willing, in adopting such as are in themselves worthy to be his heirs for want of natural issue, nor according to any principles of a natural man, whereby he gives a turn to his own will, nor yet according to the mere power of moral swasion, which one man may use with another: This spiritual birth does not proceed from any of these principles, which are indeed either contrary to it, or insufficient to produce it; but, on the other hand, it is entirely of God, as the free, sovereign, and efficacious cause of that divine and heavenly principle, which is infused into believers by regeneration, that they might live in all righteousness and holiness to him.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

14 And in order to the saving design, for which God the Word appeared on earth, he was made man, by assuming human nature into personal union with himself*; and he tabernacled in flesh with a divine presence and glory, like the *Jehovah* of *Israel* in the *Shechinah*, as all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt in the temple of his body, with a continued abode for a season amongst us men, and amongst us particularly who were his disciples, till at length he removed from earth to heaven: And his appearance amongst us, was full of grace, in opposition to the law, as a ministration full of wrath and terror, and as, at best, only a shadow of good things to come; and it was full of substance

N O T E S.

* The term *flesh* is often used in scripture, by a *Synecdoche*, for the whole man, as in *Matth* xxiv. 22. *Acts* ii. 17. and *Rom.* iii. 20. and several other places; and so the Word or *Logos*, being made flesh, is the same in sense with his being made man, or having a true human soul, as well as body: But his human nature is most usually called flesh, or a body, to express his infinite condescension and grace in taking upon him, even the meanest part of man, with all the natural infirmities of the body: to shew that he came to recover that flesh from corruption, which by *Adam's* sin was made obnoxious to death, and that not the soul only, but the body likewise should be raised to eternal life: and to assure us, that he had a true human body, or real flesh, in opposition to such as, in early days, pretended that it was only a phantom or appearance of flesh. But his being made flesh,

was not by his divine nature's being changed into the human, but by the human nature's being personally united with the divine in himself; by which personal union he did not cease to be what he was before, *viz.* God, but became what he was not before, *viz.* man; and so both natures constituted but one person in him, God-man. Accordingly it is said, that he was made or became flesh, as *Adam* was said to be made or become a living soul. (*Gen.* ii. 7.)

§ ΕΒΘΕΝΩΤΗΤΙΣ ΤΗ ΜΕΤΑ, he dwelt amongst us, evidently refers to the *Shechinah*, in which God dwelt in the tabernacle that was pitched among the *Israelites*, and was a figure of the incarnation of Christ, and of his abode for some time on earth, by which God's appearance, in the manifestation of his glory among men, was the most visible and remarkable, that had ever been made before.

stance and *truth*, as he thereby completely answered all his own engagements, and was *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes*, and as all the promises, types, and prophecies were fulfilled in him : And though his divine glory was vail'd by his tabernacled in flesh amongst us, yet it was not lost, nor totally hid ; but we, his disciples, were *eye-witnesses of his Majesty*, and beheld by faith, as well as with our bodily eyes, some radiant beams, which discovered the Saviour and the God : We saw the glory of his divine wisdom, power, holiness, and grace, which, on various occasions, displayed themselves in him ; we saw the glory of his Godlike miracles, and of his sovereign way of performing them ; we saw the glory that shone in his transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension to heaven ; (*ἰδουσαντες*) we stedfastly considered and observed it with the closest attention, and highest wonder*, as the glory that was really becoming the Son of God, and was proper and peculiar to him, who is originally the same in nature with the Father, and eternally begotten of him, in such an inconceivable manner, as none ever was besides him.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This

15 † Of this wonderful person *John the Baptist*, that great and extraordinary prophet, was only the fore-runner, to give notice of his coming, and lead the people, unto him : This he freely owned was all the honour he pretended to ; and in the abundant zeal, and fervour of his Spirit, he lifted up his voice, to proclaim the incarnate God, saying to the people, after he had seen Jesus at his baptism, The long looked-for Saviour is now come ; he whom I have shewn to you is the very person

N O T E S.

* The particle *as* in this place, is not designed to signify a bare resemblance of the Son of God, but what was really becoming him, and was proper to him : Thus we say of a king when he acts up to character, or appears like himself, he acts as a king, or he appears as with the majesty of a king : And the scripture often uses such forms of speech to declare the reality of things, and their suitableness to character. See *Matth. xiv. 5. 2 Cor. iii. 18. and Eph. v. 8.* And how naturally does this mixed consideration of Christ as God-man, and as Mediator between God and man, account for all the high and low things that are spoken of him ; for all the absolute characters of divine glory, that are ascribed to him as God, and for all the characters of weakness and dependence, that are ascribed to him as man ; for all the exalted powers and honours that are said to be given to him as God-man Mediator, and for all the infinite capacities he has to re-

ceive those donations from his Father, and to exercise the powers, and wear the honours, that belong to him in that consideration of him ! And how aptly does this mixed view of Christ account for all those passages of scripture, that on one hand speak of him absolutely as God, whilst he is considered in his original nature, and essential perfections and rights ; and all those places on the other hand, that distinguish him from God, whilst he is spoken of in his office, as mediator in human nature between God and man.

† This and the next testimony, (*vrr. 19. &c.*) which *John* gave to Christ, seem to have been during the time of our Lord's temptation in the wilderness ; for as soon as he was baptized, he was led by the spirit into the wilderness, (*Matth. iv. 1. and Luke iv. 1.*) and *John* saw Jesus coming to him again, the next day after the priests and Levites from Jerusalem had been with him at *Bethsara*. (*vrr. 18, 19. of this chapter.*)

This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me.

person of whom I before told you, that he indeed appears after me in the exercise of his ministry, but is every way my superior in himself, and in his office too; he is so not barely in my esteem, but likewise in the account of his Father, and of all the prophets who wrote of him; and he shall be so in the account of all those whom he will send to bear witness to him, and of all that believe in him: And it is highly fit that he should be preferred before me; for he had an eternal existence as a divine person with the Father, and was set up from everlasting in his office-character, before all worlds, and therefore undoubtedly before I bare witness of him, and before I was born.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

16 And as * he is superior in dignity to *John*, so he is in fulness and sufficiency to all apostles and New-Testament believers; he receives nothing from them, but they derive all from him: For as he has an essential fulness of all divine perfections, as the God who inhabits the man *Jesus*; so he has a communicative fulness treasured up in him, by the Father's appointment and his own merit, as the head of the church: And of this inexhaustible fulness all of us, who believe in him, have received, and continue to receive all spiritual blessings, multiplied one upon another, according to our capacities and wants, as an empty vessel receives the water that is poured into it from the fountain; and we receive abundance of grace, as a beggar receives an alms, from the treasures of his grace, heap upon heap, according to the measure of his gift; and all that we derive from his fulness, is answerable, in nature and kind, to the grace which is in him; so that it bears the image of his grace, as the wax does of the seal, line for line §.

17 For the law was given by *Moses*,

17 This divine person is likewise superior to *Moses*: For he has done more than that famous law giver could do; and the glory of his ministration excels that which was under him. *Moses* indeed, as a minister of the law, delivered the mind and will of God to the *Jews*, in a manner suitable to their circumstances, in a ministration of death and condemnation, and in obscure types

N O T E S.

* Some suppose that this and the two following verses are *John the Baptist's* further testimony concerning Christ: But they seem to be rather the Evangelist's own words, as appears by the variations of the words themselves, and the propriety of their application to Christians, rather than to *John's* hearers, who were mostly ignorant of Christ, and had, at that time, received little or nothing from

him; as also by the agreement of the sixteenth and seventeenth verses, with what the Evangelist had said, *ver. 12*, and further says, *ver. 18* and 1 *John* iv. 12.

§ These I take to be the most genuine senses of this expression. The reader may see several other interpretations in *Ligatus* on the place.

ses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

types and figures, which were insufficient to make the worshippers perfect: But the incarnate Son of God is the Lord and giver of the better things of the gospel, has brought in the richest and plainest discoveries of divine love and grace, and is the real substance of all Judaical types and predictions, as they are accomplished in and by him; and all the great and good things, which he is come to bring in, proceed from his grace, and have their performance from his truth, in a ministration of life and righteousness.

18 No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

18 Yea, this adorable person is superior to all creatures whatsoever, and his revelation excels all that any other could be supposed to make. No mere man could ever see the invisible God, who is a Spirit, and no mere creature, (*ut*) not one, whether man or angel, was ever privy to God's counsels, as they lye in his own mind, or ever knew any thing of them but by revelation: But the Eternal Word, having communion with the Father in Godhead, and in counsels, perfectly understands him, and all his designs; he being, in an ineffable and peculiar manner, his only begotten Son, of the same nature with the Father, and infinitely dear to him, is, as he always was, and will be, intimately present with him, and thoroughly acquainted with his whole heart, like a bosom-friend, *the Father being in him, and he in the Father*, (*John* xiv. 10.) He accordingly has revealed all that is known, or was needful to be known concerning him, and particularly relating to his infinite wisdom and grace in the redemption and salvation of lost sinners; whatever the prophets of old, and his forerunner *John*, have said about these things, was by his Spirit; and now he himself has come to make still further discoveries of them in his own personal ministry, and with still greater evidence and extent by his Spirit in the apostles, whom he sent forth in his name.

19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews

19 And*, at another time, *John the Baptist* gave the following testimony concerning Jesus, when the great council of the *Jews* at *Jerusalem* sent to him: They having heard much of *John's* fame, and how he was honoured among the people, for the strictness of his life, the excellence of his doctrine, and the solemnity of his baptism, deputed some of their number, who

N O T E.

* They who take the foregoing verses to be *John's* testimony, suppose that this record refers to what was there said: But I rather think that the history is here re-assumed, and

that this refers to what follows, in the discourse between *John* and the messengers from *Jerusalem*. See the notes on *ver.* 15, and 16.

Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us: what sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet *Esaiah*.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

who were priests and Levites, men of high account for their piety and knowledge in the law, to examine him about the character he assumed, and to demand of him whether he professed to be the Messiah or not.

20 To this inquiry *John* answered in plain terms, and with great earnestness, freely confessing, and by no means denying the truth; and (*241*) what he so strongly confessed was, that he neither was, nor ever pretended to be the Messiah, nor would have any one entertain a thought of him as if he were.

21 Hereupon they further asked him, What then do you profess to be? Are you the great prophet *Elijah the Tishbite*, who our doctors say is to appear in person immediately before the coming of the Messiah? to this he answered, No, I am not that *Elias* whom ye expect. They replied, Are you then *Jeremiah*, or any one of the ancient prophets, (*Matth. xvi. 13.*) who before the coming of *Elias* we expect will rise from the dead? to which he frankly answered again, No, I am not.

22 Then, like persons that knew not what to think of him, they said, If you are none of these, who do you pretend to be? we insist on a direct answer, that we may know what account to give of you to the sanhedrim, by whose authority we are come, and to whom we must make our report. As for us, we cannot imagine who you are, or by what authority you take upon you at this rate; tell us therefore in plain terms what you call yourself, and what sort of commission it is that you pretend to.

23 To this their peremptory demand *John* replied, I am the Messiah's harbinger, whom *Isaiah*, (*chap. xl. 3.*) described in prophecy, as *the voice of him that cries in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God*. Ye see that I appear in the wilderness, and not in populous places, like one who seeks his own glory; and my special commission is to lay myself out with zeal and fervour, in rectifying the errors of the people, and making way, by my doctrine and baptism of repentance, for their receiving the Messiah, who is *Israel's Jehovah*, and whom I openly proclaim, as just ready to appear among you.

24 Now it is to be observed, that these messengers from the council to *John*, were of the sect of the *Pharisees*, who were a captious sort of people, wonderful tenacious of their ceremonies and traditions, and such proud self-justiciaries, as thought they needed no repentance.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you whom ye know not;

27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of

25 And therefore they expostulated with him, saying, If this is all that you pretend to be, what is the reason of your making so many proselytes, and baptizing them into your new doctrine? A mere harbinger surely has no right to set up for himself as you do, and to make such extraordinary innovations as these: Since then you confess, that you are neither the *Messiah*, nor *Elias*, nor *Jeremiah*, nor any other of the antient prophets raised from the dead, we wonder at your presumption, and would fain know by what authority you do these things.

26, 27 John replied, Ye greatly mistake the matter: I do not make disciples to myself, nor baptize them into the profession of any new doctrine of my own: I only baptize with water, as a sign and emblem of a better baptism. But there is one, who already lives among you, and lately stood at *Jordan* in the midst of you, (*ver. 15*) tho' he has not yet fully appeared in his public character, and ye have not known him; he will shortly baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost; and my great business is to consign the people over to him, that they may receive him, and his doctrine, together with all the supernatural gifts, and graces, and blessings of his kingdom: He is that Divine person, of whom I have before publicly declared, (*ver. 15*) that, though he succeeds me in the manifestation of himself, and in the exercise of his office; yet he is infinitely more excellent than me, and had an eternal existence before me, who does not deserve to be employed in the meanest office about him, no, not so much as to take off his shoes: But as I, though unworthy, have the honour of God's commission to be his forerunner, according to *Isaiah's* prophecy, I have sufficient authority in this manner to make disciples unto him, and this is all that I pretend to.

28 This conversation, between John and the messengers from *Jerusalem*, was held publicly at *Bethabara*, which signifies *the house of passage*, and lay a little beyond that part of *Jordan*, where people used to go over it, and which was the place where John had been for some time baptizing the multitudes that came to him.

29 The next day after this, John seeing Jesus, who then returned back from the wilderness, (*see the note on ver. 15*.) pointed to him, and said to the people then present, Behold, here is the very person of whom I have spoke so much, now appearing before your eyes; look with attention upon him, and look by faith unto him, for the remission of sins; receive, admire, and prize him, who is, by way of eminence and preference

of God, which
taketh away the
sin of the world.

to all others, the Lamb of God; this is the true and only effectual propitiatory Sacrifice, chosen, set apart, and sent of God, devoted to him, and accepted by him, and prefigured, as by all the typical sacrifices of atonement, so particularly by the paschal lamb, and those that were offered *for a continual burnt-offering, every morning and evening*, (Exod. xix. 38, 42.) Behold, God has now provided a most excellent Lamb for himself, which is no other than this holy, meek, and humble Jesus, *a Lamb without blemish, and without spot, who was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but is now manifested*, (1 Pet. i. 19, 20.) to take away the guilt and punishment, power and pollution of all sin, both original and actual, and that with abiding efficacy from everyone, whether Jew or Gentile, that believes in him *.

30 This is he
of whom I said,
After me cometh a
man which is pre-
ferred before me:
For he was before
me.

30 This is the great Messiah; see there he comes, of whom ye have heard me say before, that a mighty man, (*anap*) *the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong for himself*, and *the man his fellow*, (Psal. lxxx. 17. and Zech. xiii. 7.) was just ready to appear after me, as his forerunner; a man every way superior in excellence, dignity and authority, to myself, and indeed God as well as man, and therefore infinitely to be preferred to me; for he had a divine and eternal existence before I had a being.

31 And I knew
him not: But
that he should be
made manifest to
Israel, therefore
am I come baptiz-
ing with water.

31 And, to tell you the truth, in all the former part of my life and ministry, I had no manner of personal acquaintance or correspondence with him, to bias me in his favour, or to give me the least opportunity of concerting any measures with him, about going before him, to give testimony concerning him: But, according to my commission from above, I at first only declared (as ye all know) that the Messiah would quickly appear among you; and the reason of my baptizing with water into the faith of him was, to awaken your expectation of it, and to prepare the way for a more particular and express discovery of him afterwards to his people *Israel*, that they might then take special notice of him, and might own and believe in him.

32 And John
bare record, say-
ing,

32 And the way in which I myself came to know
this

N O T E.

* The terms *world*, *all men*, and the like, when used to denote the persons concerned in the saving benefits of Christ's death, most generally signify in the writings of the New Testament, and particularly of our Evangelist, not every individual of mankind, but all nations, inclusive of *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, (see the notes on ver. 7. and chap. iii. 16. A very early intimation of which was given

in *John the Baptist's* ministry, when he declared that *all flesh should see the salvation of God*; and when the *Roman* soldiers and publicans came to be baptized of him, (Luke iii. 6. 12, 13, 14.) And here he seems to speak of the Lamb of God, as taking away the sin of the world, in opposition to the typical lambs that were offered in the stead of the Jews only.

ing, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: But he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

35 Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples:

36 And, looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God.

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?

this very person to be the Messiah, was by the heaven's opening in my sight, and the Spirit of God descending in a visible appearance, and hovering over Jesus, after the manner of a dove, till it rested upon his head. (See the note on *Matth. iii. 16.*)

33 Before this time, I again insist upon it, that I had no manner of personal knowledge of him: But the same God who commissioned me to baptize with water, revealed to me likewise, when Jesus was coming to my baptism, that I should presently know the true Messiah by a certain miraculous token, saying, On whomsoever ye shall see the Spirit visibly descending and resting upon his head, he, and no other, is mine anointed, who shall baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost.

34 Accordingly, I plainly saw the Spirit descending and lighting in that visible form upon Jesus, and, at the same time, heard a voice from heaven, which gave a still further testimony to him, saying, (*Matth. iii. 17.*) *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:* And being hereby fully satisfied, that the extraordinary signal before given was then exactly answered, I immediately did, and could not but declare, that this very person, who now appears among you, is indeed the eternal Son of God, and the true Messiah; and thenceforward I have, on all occasions, solemnly repeated that testimony concerning him.

35 On the day immediately after this, *John* was again teaching and baptizing the people; and two of his disciples, who were not only hearers but believers of his doctrine, were with him:

36 And, Jesus passing by in their sight a second time, *John*, designing particularly to make him known to those two disciples, fixed his eyes upon him, and said to them, in the hearing of all the company, Observe, there the person now appears again: See, there he walks; look by faith to him, who, as I yesterday told you, is ordained and sent of God to be the only true propitiatory Sacrifice, as a spotless Lamb of his own providing, that ye might believe, and receive remission of sins thro' him.

37 And, upon hearing *John* repeat these words, the two disciples looking were enlightened, and their hearts were touched and moved to go after Jesus, that they might be particularly acquainted with him.

38 Then he, who observes and encourages the first motions of the soul toward himself, turned about; and seeing them come after him, began a free and friendly conversation with them, saying, What is the design of your thus following me? What is your petition? Come, tell

ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We

tell me what ye want, and it shall be done unto you. They replied with great esteem and veneration, * Rabbi, by what we have heard from *John the Baptist*, we look upon you to be a great master in *Israel*, and beg leave to wait upon you at home, or (*παραυτίς*) wherever you lodge or stay any time, that we may be further acquainted with you, and fully instructed in the things that belong to our peace.

39 Thereupon Jesus, to shew his willingness to receive all that come to him, affectionately invited them to go along with him, that, according to their desire, they might have his company and counsel, might know where to have recourse to him, and might see by the meanness of his habitation, that no great things for this world were to be expected from him: And they, encouraged by his grace, went and saw his place of abode, and were so taken with him, that they thought it good for them to be there; and they tarried with him all the remainder of that day, it being then, according to the *Roman* way of reckoning, about ten o'clock in the morning †.

40 Now one of the two disciples of *John*, who was induced in this manner to follow Jesus, by what they had heard their master say concerning him, was *Andrew*, the brother of *Simon*, who was afterwards surnamed *Peter* §.

41 *Andrew's* heart being much affected with the convincing and engaging discoveries that he had received in his converses with Jesus, immediately went in search of his friends and relations, that he might bring them into an acquaintance with Christ: And first of all meeting with his brother *Simon* **, he told him, with great earnestness and ecstasy, That he and another of

N O T E S.

† Rabbi was a title of high respect, by which it was usual to compliment the doctors or teachers of those days; and these disciples of *John* saluting Christ under this appellation, was at once an honourable way of addressing him, and an intimation of their desire to be taught by him.

‡ It seems that this Evangelist, writing after the destruction of *Jerusalem*, commonly uses the *Roman* computation of the hours of the day, as here, and in chap. iv. 6, 32. and xix. 14. and so the tenth hour is ten o'clock in the morning: But others think, with Dr. *Lightfoot*, that he follows the *Jewish* computation, and so make the tenth hour to be four o'clock in the afternoon; and the doctor supposes that these disciples abode with Christ all that night, and that the next day was the Sabbath, which they likewise spent with him.

But the former account appears most probable to me, as more agreeable to this Evangelist's way of reckoning the hour in other places. See the note on *Matt* xv. 25.

§ And the other probably was *John* himself, the writer of this gospel, who usually conceals his own name. This disciple and *Andrew* were called before *Peter*; and *Andrew* was the means of bringing *Peter* to Christ, instead of *Peter's* bringing him.

** Or this first finding of *Peter* may relate, either to *Andrew's* finding him before the other disciple had met with him; or before that other disciple had found any of his own friends to bring them to Jesus: For as soon as the grace of God reached these disciples' hearts, they were desirous that it might spread in the hearts of all their friends too.

We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

41 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jonah: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone.

42 The day following, Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

43 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

of John's disciples had been directed by their master to, had been in company with, and were fully satisfied that they had at length found the great and promised Redeemer of Israel, who, in the Hebrew language, was stiled the Messiah, which is of the same signification with the Greek word, the Christ, or the anointed *.

42 And Andrew, having recommended the Saviour in the best manner he could to his brother Simon, conducted him to Jesus; who, taking particular notice of him, shewed that he thoroughly knew him, though a stranger, saying, Your present name, which signifies a hearer or learner, is Simon, and you are the son of Jonah: But hereafter you shall be more commonly known by the name of Cephas in the Syriac, or of Peter in the Greek tongue, which signifies † a rock or stone; and so will better express your religious temper and behaviour, as a firm believer in me, a steadfast maintainer of my gospel, and a patient sufferer for it.

43 Our Lord, having now begun to make disciples to himself, was so intent upon this work, that the very next day he went into the province of Galilee, to search and find out his sheep: And there, meeting with Philip, he first began with him, and, in his preventing mercy, said to him, Come along with me, yield yourself up to my authority and grace, counsel and conduct, and follow my example; and his words were attended with such divine light and power, as made an effectual impression upon Philip's heart; so that he was immediately brought over to Christ, and became one of his disciples.

44 Now this Philip lived at Bethsaida ‡, which was situated on the east of the lake of Genesareth, and was a very wicked place, (Matth. xi. 21.) ; and yet even here God had some chosen vessels, Andrew and Peter being likewise inhabitants of this city, and called from thence.

N O T E S.

* As the antient prophets, priests, and kings were anointed to their respective offices, this title, being by way of eminence applied to our Lord, intimates that they were types of him, and that God his Father anointed him with his Spirit above measure for the discharge of all those offices.

† It is observable that this Evangelist gives us the interpretation of the Hebrew and Syriac words in the Greek, more frequently than any of the other evangelists: the reason of which seems to be, that he wrote after the destruction of the Jewish nation, and after many of the Gentiles were called, when the

Greek was more commonly used, and those other languages were less known than they had been before.

‡ Bochart in his Geogr. Sacra. speaks of Bethsaida, as signifying a house of sitting. Mr. Lightfoot in his harmony says, it was a place of hunting, because it stood in or near the tribe of Naphtali, which abounded with deer: And this, which was at first but a little town or village, was afterwards changed by Philip the Tetrarch into the state of a city, which he called Julia, in honour of Cæsar's daughter.

43 Philip found Nathanael, and said unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip said unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and said of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.

45 Philip having been fully convinced that Jesus was indeed the Christ, as the other disciples had been before, he likewise presently went to seek out some of his friends, to whom he might communicate the glad tidings; and, meeting with *Nathanael*, said in a transport of joy to him, I with some others have at last certainly found out the person, having been first found of him, whom we have earnestly longed to see, even the true Messiah, whom * the books of *Moses*, and the rest of the prophets described by those very characters which we find in him! It is † Jesus of *Nazareth*, the son of *Joseph*.

46 *Nathanael* supposed *Philip* to mean, that Jesus was born at *Nazareth*; and knowing from scripture-prophecy that the Messiah was to come forth from *Bethlehem*, (*Mic. v. 2.*) and being under the power of a common prejudice against *Nazareth*, (see the note on *chap. vii. 52.*) he objected to this account, saying, How is it possible, that any considerable prophet, and especially the great and only Saviour of *Israel*, should come out of such a mean, despicable, and wicked town as *Nazareth*? *Philip* being ignorant of the true state of the case, and not knowing how to solve this difficulty, replied, Come along with me, and talk with him yourself, as I have done, and he will certainly answer this, and every other objection, that you can raise against him: Whereupon *Nathanael*, being desirous to know the truth, so far laid aside his prejudices, as to go and converse with Jesus himself.

47 And when Jesus saw *Nathanael* approaching, he spoke of him to the company with high commendation, saying, Observe, and admire the man who is now coming to me; he is a true son of honest *Jacob*, plain-hearted like him, an inheritor of his spirit, as well as a descendant from him by birth; he is, what an *Israelite* should be, a man without prevailing or allowed hypocrisy in his dealings with God, or with his fellow-creatures.

48 Na-

N O T E S.

* It is probable that our Lord himself had referred *Philip* to the predictions of the law and the prophets concerning himself, and had explained them in his discourse with him.

† Though *Bethlehem* was the place of Christ's birth, and not *Nazareth*, where he afterwards dwelt; and though he was only the supposed son of *Joseph*; yet, as he was commonly called Jesus of *Nazareth* the son of *Joseph*, *Philip* described him by that name, and this occasioned *Nathanael's* prejudice against him.

§ Our Lord here seems to refer to *Nathanael's* private retirement for religious exercises, (*ver. 48.*) where no humane eye saw him, and to his willingness to come to him and judge for himself, notwithstanding the mistaken prejudices he had conceived against him; for Christ knew all that had passed between *Philip* and him. He likewise seems to refer to *Nathanael's* known character among his neighbours; otherwise this good man's modesty and humility would hardly have allowed him to ask, how Jesus knew him under that character.

48 Nathanael said unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

48 *Nathanael*, being within hearing, was much surprized at this high encomium, and said to our Lord, How is it possible for you, who are a perfect stranger to me, and, I suppose, never once saw me before, to know who or what I am? How can you tell my character, and what I am in heart and truth? alas! I fear I do not deserve the praise you have given me. Jesus replied, How much soever you may wonder at this, and how low thoughts soever you have of yourself, I have thoroughly known you long before we had any personal interview; and to satisfy you of this, I will tell you of what none but God and yourself were privy to, which is, that before *Philip* met you, and asked you to come to me, I observed you, and saw the inmost temper and thoughts of your heart, at a certain remarkable season, (you know when) while you retired to a private place under a fig-tree, and there was employed in religious exercises*.

49 Nathanael answered and said unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the king of Israel.

49 *Nathanael* being fully convinced of Christ's divine knowledge, as the searcher of the heart, by this evident and affecting instance of it, answered with profound humility and reverence, Worthy art thou of the title of *Rabbi*, in the highest sense possible; my prejudices against thee are all overcome; and, by what thou hast now told me, I am thoroughly satisfied, that thou art more than a mere man: I verily believe thee to be the Son of God, and the promised Messiah, *Who shall sit on the throne of David, and reign over the house of Jacob for ever*, (Luke i. 32, 33.); as such I receive thee, and trust in thee for all salvation.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

50 To this noble confession of his faith, Jesus replied with an air of approbation and wonder, Hast thou so high and steadfast a faith in me, as the Son of God, and the Saviour of *Israel*, because I told you what I knew and observed of you in one instance only, relating to your secret retirement under the fig-tree? Great is your faith: And, for your further encouragement, you shall have still much more extraordinary and assuring proofs of my knowledge and power to confirm it.

46 And

N O T E S.

* Our Lord here seems to remind him of some solemn secret transactions, that passed between God and him, when he was under a fig-tree, in which *Nathanael's* own heart was conscious of its being most sincerely and unreservedly devoted to him; and so the reminding him of this was an evidence of Christ's omniscience, and of his own integrity. And it is highly probable that *Nathanael*

was then reading, or meditating upon, and considering the meaning of *Jacob's* dream, (Gen. xxviii. 12.) which our Lord recites and explains as referring to himself, (ver. 31.) and thereby satisfied *Nathanael's* inquiries about it, and gave him an undeniable proof of his knowing what were then the particular thoughts of his heart.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily verily I say unto you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

51 And thereupon he said to him *, I, the Amen, who am Truth itself, certainly assure all of you, my disciples, that in a little time ye shall see the accomplishment of Jacob's vision in me. As he beheld the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder set upon the earth, the top of which reached to heaven, (Gen. xxviii. 12.); so while I, the mediator between God and man, am in my human nature on earth, my Godhead reaches to heaven; and ye shall see such manifestations of my glory, in the great and wonderful miracles I shall work, in the divine wisdom and knowledge I shall display, and in the friendly intercourse I shall set on foot between God and men, that all things in heaven and earth shall as evidently appear to be under my command, as if ye saw the angels of God perpetually coming and going from heaven to me, and from me to heaven, to carry on a correspondence between my Father above, and me the † Son of man here below; and as if they were visibly bringing messages to me, and executing orders according to my will: And some time hence ‡, ye shall really see the angels, in a literal sense, attending to pay their honours to me.

R E

N O T E S.

* It is observable that our Lord here changes the number, from the singular to the plural, (ἀληθινὸν λέγων ὑμῖν) which shews that this was said to all the disciples, as well as to Nathanael. Verily, or Amen, was never used by any under the Old Testament, but in the form of a wish; and in that manner the Jews, and afterwards Christians often used it, and sometimes doubled it at the close of their prayers. But our blessed Lord constantly used it at the beginning of a sentence, and in the form of a solemn asseveration, to intimate that he is the Amen, (Rev. iii. 14.) and the God of truth, πᾶσι τῷ (Isa. lxxv. 16.) and that therefore his own authority was sufficient to confirm what he said; and it is peculiar to this Evangelist to represent Christ, as doubling the asseveration, though he himself probably used it singly. But the reason of the apostle John's repeating it, in this manner, might be to express the double sense that is included in our Lord's use of the single words: the true meaning of which, as proceeding from his mouth, is, that He who is Truth itself, speaks the truth; and so the double form of expression being best adapted to keep this Evangelist's great point in view, relating to the divinity of Christ, he constantly represents it in that form. And I have accordingly, for the most part, kept up its meaning through the paraphrase; though perhaps, as says Dr. Lightfoot, St. John be-

ing to write for the use of the Hellenists, might write the word in the Hebrew letters, wherein Christ used it, and in the same letters wherein the Greeks used it.

† Though Nathanael owned our Lord to be the Son of God; yet he called himself the Son of man, to shew his own great humility, and to check his disciples' expectation of temporal grandeur in his kingdom, as also to let us know that he was the promised Messiah, foretold under that title, (Psal. lxxx. 17. and Dan. vii. 13.) who was to be as truly man as God, and that it was most suitable to his state of humiliation, to call himself by his lowest name. Accordingly, he usually spoke of himself in this stile, as the Son of man, though others did not use it concerning him. His enemies did not, that they might not seem to own him under this known character of the Messiah; and his disciples did not, lest they should seem to speak too little of him, who was so glorious in himself, and in their eyes.

‡ This the disciples saw at the ascension of our Lord; but as the word ἀναστῆναι, rendered hereafter, properly signifies henceforth, which intimates that this discovery of Christ's glory was just then commencing; and as the angels, that attended him at his ascension about three years afterwards, are no where said to ascend and descend upon him, I rather prefer the metaphorical sense of this passage, which, from the very time of his speaking

RECOLLECTIONS.

How solemn and sublime, magnificent and awful is the account here given of our blessed Lord, as God co-eternal with the Father, a distinct and yet inseparable person from him, and as intimately present to him, as thought is to mind; as the Creator of all things without restriction or limitation, the proper fountain of life and honour, and the true light, who was in the world to illuminate, uphold, and govern it, ever since it was created by him; and as the object of faith, the divine author of evangelical truth, whose own, *Verily I say unto you*, demands our faith and obedience, and who is the discernor of the thoughts, and the ruler of the heart! How adorable is the constitution of his incarnate person, as the eternal Word made flesh, the Son of God and the Son of man! And what dignity and honour does his divinity put upon his condescension, who tabernacled in flesh among men, full of grace and truth; and died a sacrifice to take away their sins! Behold this Lamb of God; look to him and be saved; look and love, and follow him. And O how should we exalt him, and abase ourselves before him, as thinking it honour enough to be employed in the meanest services for him! How evidently divine were the testimonies given to this wonderful person! To him give all the prophets witness, and the eternal Father himself discovered him to *John*, and miraculously owned him from heaven, by an express notification and infallible signal at his baptism; and, to prevent all possible collusion in *John's* testimony, the wisdom of providence ordered that he himself should not personally know Jesus, till he came to be openly manifested to *Israel*. How excellent is a gospel-ministry, which leads us not to man, but to Christ, as God-man Mediator, the great prophet of the church, and the only propitiation for sin, that all who believe in him might receive of his fulness, grace for grace, and as the author of all the efficacy of gospel-ordinances by the baptism of the Spirit! And yet alas, how many remain in darkness, in the midst of noon-day light; and how many of his own professing people reject him and the gospel! But, blessed be God, there are some that receive him with a true and saving faith, by an assent and approbation of the mind, and by a full consent of the will: And O how great is their happiness! They are made partakers of the dignity and privilege of sons of God by adoption, and of a divine nature by regeneration, as the gifts and effects of sovereign grace, which begins with us before we begin with Christ. We are indeed brought to know and believe in him by the ministry of his servants: But, it is a divine power, going forth with his word, that sweetly overcomes the soul, and makes it willing to follow him; and he will ever encourage early and earnest inquiries after him: Whatsoever objections or prejudices they might before have in their hearts against him, how will a true acquaintance with him effectually cure and answer them all! The soul that finds Christ, finds enough in him to determine it to abide with him; yea, they that, relying on his testimony, believe in him, shall see still greater things, for his glory, and their own consolation and establishment. And O how happy is it to have his approbation of us, as *Israelites* indeed, in whom there is no prevailing deceit, or allowed guile! And what a grateful and generous turn does the grace of God give to the temper of a man's heart! He wants to have Christ exalted in every soul, and fain would have all his acquaintance, friends, and relations, as well as himself, brought to a saving knowledge of him, and interest in him. And how securely may we depend upon the infinite merit of his blood, commit our all to him, and surrender up ourselves entirely to his authority, guidance, and grace, as God manifested in the flesh, and as able to save to the utmost, all that come unto God the Father by him!

N O T E.

Speaking these words, immediately began to be fulfilled in his miracles and preaching, with increasing light and efficacy.

C H A P. II.

Christ turns water into wine at Cana of Galilee, 1,—11. Goes to Capernaum, 12. Goes from thence to keep the passover at Jerusalem, where he casts the traders out of the temple, vindicates what he had done, and declines trusting himself with pretended disciples, 13,—25.

TEXT.

AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.

1 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

2 And, when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

3 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour

PARAPHRASE.

THREE days after Christ's coming into Galilee, and beginning to gather disciples there, a wedding was celebrated at a village called *Cana*, in that country, at which *Mary* the mother of Jesus was present *.

2 Our Lord likewise, being at that time in the neighbourhood, with the few disciples he had called, was invited, as they also were for his sake, to the marriage-entertainment; and that he might not refuse the common offices of civility and friendship, nor slip so seasonable an opportunity of putting an honour upon marriage, as the ordinance of God, he accepted of the invitation for himself and them.

3 When by this increase of company there was not wine enough for all the guests; the mother of our Lord, being concerned at a disappointment of that nature, on such a joyful occasion, told him privately that the wine provided for the entertainment was just spent; intimating that it would be kind in him to supply the present necessity, which she apprehended he could easily do, and which, he having just begun to appear in his public character, she hoped he would do †.

4 Jesus replied, Though I am willing to pay all becoming filial duty to you, and to do good on all proper occasions to others; yet, what obligation am I under to regard this motion, for exercising my divine power, which I have not, as your son, but as the Son of God §? You are not to meddle in the affairs of my kingdom; nor are you to suppose that I must obey you, as my mother, more than any other woman, in performing miraculous works: Besides, the time ** for the public manifestation

N O T E S.

* It is probable that this was a marriage of some near relation of *Mary*, because she is not spoken of as an invited guest, as Christ himself and his disciples were; and because she concerned herself so much about a recruit of wine for the feast.

† As she could not be a perfect stranger to the greatness of his power, of whom she had heard such magnificent things spoken by angels and inspired men; so it is not improbable but that, during his private life, he had miraculously relieved the wants, either of his own family, or of some of his friends, though

care was taken to prevent its being known abroad.

§ What a reproof is this to the idolatry of the papists, in praying to the Virgin *Mary* to command her son!

** I take this intimation to relate, rather to the time of his openly manifesting his glory shortly after at *Jerusalem*, (ver. 13, &c.) than, as some suppose, to the time of turning the water into wine, as soon as the other wine should be quite spent, this interval being so very small.

honor is not yet come.

nifestation of my glory, is not yet fully come, whatsoever I may do more privately, in the mean-while, among my friends. I gave this matter therefore entirely to me.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

5 Hereupon *Mary*, his mother, silently submitted to the reproof; but, though he seemed to be angry, she hoped in his power and goodness, and desired the servants in-waiting to obey any orders that he might give, without disputing or objecting against them.

6 And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

6 Now as the *Jews* were wont to have vessels in their houses to keep water, which they daily used, and especially at their public entertainments, for washing hands and cups, and for various ceremonial purifications, some of divine and others of human institution, there were in this house six large jars, or cisterns of stone, each of which contained two or three large measures*.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

7 Jesus therefore, to clear his designed miracle from all suspicions of fraud, spoke to the waiters themselves to fill the six stone jars with common water: And they, remembering *Mary's* advice, readily complied with his directions, filling them up to the very brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

8 And when they had done this, our blessed Lord, as the sovereign God of nature, who could work his miracles how, when, and wherever he pleased, by a mere act of his will, ordered the servants to draw out of the vessels, and carry some of the liquor to the person† who had the management of the feast, that he might taste of it; and they did so.

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

9 But though the servants, who at Christ's command put in water and‡ drew out wine, saw the wonderful change which was made, in that it was no longer water but wine; yet the manager of the feast knew nothing of the matter, nor whence the servants had it: And when, upon tasting, he found it to be more pleasant and generous wine than they had drank before, he called out to the bridegroom;

10 And,

NOTES.

* What these (*measures*) firkins were, is very uncertain to us, who know so little of the ancient *Jewish* measures: But all agree that the water-pots, which held two or three of them, must be of a pretty large size.

† The governor of the feast was either the chief guest, who sat at the upper end of the table, or one whose office, like the *Symposiarchus* among the *Greeks*, was to take care that there were neither any want, nor any irregularities or excess. See *Lightf. Harm.*

‡ If Jesus turned all this water into wine, it is not to be supposed that the whole of it

was drank at that time; but that a considerable quantity was left for the use of the family, and for an abiding proof of the miracle, which had been wrought in this supernatural change upon the water: Or perhaps, as the widow's pot of oil increased in the pouring of it out, (1 *Kings* iv. 4.—6.) so this water was turned into wine in the drawing it out of the vessels; and Christ ordering them all to be filled, might be only to intimate that, whatsoever quantity of wine there should be occasion for, he could easily supply the want without restraint.

10 And fifth unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

10 And, returning the thanks of the company to him, he said, The usual custom at feasts is to begin with the richest wine, while the palate is nice, and can relish it with the greatest pleasure and advantage; and afterwards, when the guests have drank enough to pall their appetites, and raise their spirits, a poorer sort of wine is generally set before them, which will easier go down, and be less intoxicating: But you, Sir, though our wine has all along been very good, have, by an uncommon generosity, furnished us now at last with some, which is every way better than any that we have drank before*.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory: and his disciples believed on him.

11 This miracle, at the wedding in *Cana of Galilee*, was the first that Jesus performed, after his entrance on his public ministry; and by this he gave a clear proof to the whole company of his divine power, which now began to break forth, as a pledge and earnest of what would be more illustriously displayed afterwards: And the disciples, whom he before had called, and who were present at this manifestation of his glory†, were hereby confirmed in their faith in him as the true Messiah.

12 After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and

12 After this, our Lord went to *Capernaum*, which lay about a day's journey eastward from *Cana*, and was the place, where, after a few months, (see the note on chap. iv. 1.) he had his most usual residence, (*Matth. iv. 13.*); and thither his mother, and his other relations, (see the note on *Matth. xii. 46.*) together with his four or five disciples, which he had before called in *Galilee*, went along with him, to observe what further discoveries he would make of his power and glory§. But their

N O T E S.

* This is a very different case from the pretended transubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ: For the most competent judges saw and tasted that, after this change, the water continued no longer what it was before, but was really and evidently wine. Whereas, after the *Papal* consecration, every capable judge sees and tastes that the elements continue to be what they were before, not flesh and blood, but bread and wine.

† This could not be said of the miracles wrought by any of the prophets and apostles: They did not therein manifest their own glory; for it was not by their own power or holiness that they did them; they only manifested the glory of that God, whose power alone wrought those wonderful works. But Christ, in the performance of his miracles, manifested his own glory as God, to-

gether with his Father's glory, as his great deputy in our nature: He was their proper efficient cause, by virtue that went out from him; and he most usually wrought them in a sovereign, godlike manner, with an air of independent power and divine Majesty, by a thought as well as by a word, according to his pleasure, just in such a manner as the eternal Father himself might be suspected to act, had he been incarnate; and all this was a manifestation or display of Christ's own divine glory, as the fulness of the Godhead thereby appeared to dwell in him.

§ His relations themselves seemed to be affected at the sight of his first miracle, however afterwards, some of them at least, (*chap. vii. 5.*) slighted his wonderful works, when the frequency of them took off their surprise at them.

and they continued there not many days.

13 And the Jews passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, sitting:

15 And, when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers money, and overthrew the tables;

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

17 And his disciples remembered

their continuance together there at this time, was only for a few days.

13 And the reason of this was, because the first passover after Christ's baptism drew near; and, being made under the law, he, in obedience to its appointment for all the males of *Israel*, repaired to *Jerusalem* as usual, that he might celebrate the approaching festival there.

14 When he came thither, he, having entered on his public office, went directly to the temple, to engage in prayer and preaching; and as he passed through the court of the *Gentiles*, he found the people had turned that holy place into a market, stored with oxen, sheep, and doves, and the like, which were exposed to sale there for sacrifices: He likewise found several stalls of persons, who traded in bills of exchange and in furnishing those with half-shekels, that were to offer them for the service of the sanctuary. (*Exod. xxx. 12,—16.*)

15 And as this was a profanation of the temple, occasioned by the avarice of the priests, who had their share of rents and fees for the people's standing there, our Lord, making a * whip of small cords, drove away the oxen and sheep; and at the same time turned out all the traders with them, and threw the stalls of the bankers, with the money upon them, down to the ground.

16 And that he might not set the doves a flying, to the loss and injury of their owners, he ordered them to remove their goods from thence, saying, I can by no means allow that the temple, which, by the appointment of my heavenly Father, is peculiarly dedicated to his service, and to the honour of his name, should be turned into a place of common traffick, to the disturbance of those who come to worship here, and to the prostitution of this sacred house to covetous and worldly views. And his divine power impressed the spirits of all the traders with such an awe of his majesty and authority, that they submitted to his commands, though he had no human aid to enforce them.

17 And his disciples observing with what undaunted courage, and fervent zeal of the glory of God and the purity of divine institutions, he exposed himself to the

rage

N O T E.

* Christ probably found these cords in the temple; which might be such as had been used by the owners of the cattle, either to drive or lead them thither: And as it was

not lawful to bring a staff into the temple, he used a scourge, which seemed to have been in the emblematical, rather than in the forcible way.

bered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

18 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou dost these things?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and

rage of his most powerful enemies, called to mind that prophetic passage, relating to the Messiah, (*Psal. lxxix. 9.*) where it is said, *The zeal of thine house has eaten me up*; and, seeing this so remarkably fulfilled in Jesus, they were confirmed in their belief that he could be no other than the true Messiah.

18 The common people of the Jews being hereby disturbed in their profitable trade, and their chief priests and rulers being highly displeased, both at the loss of their own gains, and at this open attack upon the prerogative, who pretended to have the only right of ordering all things about the temple and its services, joined together in objecting against the lawfulness of his taking upon himself to do, what they could not deny but was lawful, and commendable in itself to be done; and therefore they expostulated with him, saying, By what authority have you done this? If you pretend to an immediate commission from God for it, where are your credentials? By what miraculous works do you prove it, that we may believe it?

19 Our Lord Jesus having just before given a very surprising proof of his divine power, by the awful and irresistible influence he had exerted upon all their minds; and knowing that their design in this demand was to cavil, rather than to receive conviction, did not see fit to gratify their perverse humour by working a miracle at that very instant, but referred them to one in figurative terms, which ere long would be the greatest of all others, saying, *Destroy * this temple, and in three days I will raise it up*: By which he meant, that, as they had profaned that sacred place, and he had by his own power cleansed it from their defilements; so they would wickedly destroy his human body, of which the temple was a type; and then, by a still more eminent act of his own divine power, he would, in the space of three days afterward, certainly raise it up again from the dead, and thereby undeniably demonstrate himself to be the Son of God. (*Rom. i. 4.*)

20 Then these rulers and people of the Jews, taking it for granted that he spoke literally of the temple at Jerusalem, cried out, in a way of indignation, contempt, and scorn, This strong and magnificent edifice, though many thousands of hands were employed in the work

con-

N O T E

* 'Tis more than probable that, at speaking these words, he pointed to his own body, or gave some other intimation by which a careful observer might discern his referring to it: And it seems as if the Jews themselves

had either then, or afterwards, some notion of what he meant, though to serve a turn they put another construction upon it. See the note on *Matth. xxvii. 53.*

and six years was this temple in building, and with thou rear it up in three days?

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

23 Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, ^{the feast day}, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men;

continually, was no less than * forty-six years in building; and what! if it were now to be demolished, do you pretend that you alone could erect it again, in so very short a time as three days? This is absolutely impossible, and a ridiculous conceit indeed.

21 But though, if he pleased, he could easily have done what they took to be so very absurd; yet it is certain that he spake only of the death and resurrection of his body, which was the true temple of God, prefigured by that at *Jerusalem*, as he was holy to the Lord as the true *Shechinah*, even all the fulness of the God-head dwelt substantially in him, and as he is the grand appointed medium of all communion between God and his people, and all the acceptance of gospel-worship depends on its relation to him;

22 This therefore being his real meaning in that remarkable expression, the Spirit of God, after his resurrection, brought it to the remembrance of his disciples in its true light; and they reflected upon it, as a prediction of what was then clearly accomplished, and were abundantly confirmed in their faith in him thereby, and by comparing the Old Testament-prophecies of the Messiah's death and resurrection with these and other words in which Christ himself had foretold them.

23 Now whilst our blessed Lord tarried at *Jerusalem*, daily preaching and working miracles, ^(ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ) during the whole time of the paschal feast, many of his hearers, when they came to see how his excellent doctrine was witnessed to by his wonderful deeds, could not but own that he was at least some great prophet sent from God; they assenting to his doctrine as true, and to his miracles as divine.

24 But as these were only temporary, or at best weak and unsettled believers, who professed their faith in Christ, under the power of a sudden surprize at his mighty works, he was too wise and cautious to trust his person in their hands, or to converse too freely and familiarly with them; because he was perfectly acquainted with the very heart of every man, and so foresaw that few, if any of these upstart disciples could be depended upon; but that

N O T E.

* Great pains have been taken by several learned men, to shew that the time spent in building *Zerobabel's* temple, was just forty-six years; and that the same number of years had run out in rebuilding it, from the time that *Herod* began the work, to the time when these words were spoken, the temple, or at least its out-buildings, not being then quite finished: But whether it were exactly so or

not, it no way affects the credit of the sacred history, which only gives a true relation of the sense of the *Jews* about this matter; and it seems that it was then forty-six years, from the time when *Herod* began to build it: Accordingly they mentioned it to suggest the absurdity of Christ's pretending that, if it were again destroyed, he could build it up again in three days.

that some of them would be turbulent and mutinous in attempting to set him up for a temporal king, that others would be so discouraged and offended at his sufferings and reproaches, as to desert him, and that others would betray him into the hands of his enemies.

25 And need-
ed not that any
should testify of
man; for he
knew what was
in man.

25 And his divine knowledge of all men's make and frame, of their present and future principles and designs, temper and dispositions, motives and actions, was so entirely immediate and intuitive, that he had no occasion for any information about them from any one whomsoever; or for staying till they appeared in external behaviour, to direct his judgment about them: For he infallibly knew of himself before-hand, the sincerity or hypocrisy, the weakness or wickedness, the courage or cowardice, and all the most secret thoughts and turns that ever were, or would be, in the heart of every man; so that there was no imposing upon him.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What happy weddings are they that are graced with Christ's presence! and how innocently may friends feast together, when they manage with a due regulation under his eye! In all our wants he is able to give us the best supplies; but we must not go about to prescribe to him in our expectation from him, lest he say to us, What have I to do with you? The way to receive any favour from him is, to follow his directions and commands, who will, in due time, show us his glory; and the more we see of this, the more firmly will our faith be established in him, and the more we shall want to be with him. And O what solemn and exalted thoughts should we have of him, whose miraculous works were manifestations of his own glory, who vindicates the honour, and maintains the purity of divine institutions, without injuring civil property, who knows all that is in man, and can over-awe the spirits of his most sturdy enemies, and who had all the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in his human body, as in its temple, and by his own power raised it from the dead! What an undoubted confirmation is all this of his divine character and doctrine! and yet how perverse is unbelief in its opposition to him! and how soon is a carnal heart offended at a reformation of worship and manners by his single authority! But how should a remembrance of these things, and a comparing them with antient predictions concerning him, encourage our faith in him, and engage our obedience to him! and with what godly jealousy should we see to it, that we be sincere in our professions of his name, and attendances on public worship after his example, since he, whose eye is always upon our hearts, perfectly knows whether we be so or not, and will treat us accordingly!

C H A P. III.

Christ's discourse with Nicodemus about regeneration and faith in himself, 1,—21. John the Baptist's discourse with the people concerning Jesus, 22,—36.

TEXT.

There was a
man of the
Pharisees named
Nico-

PARAPHRASE.

NOW among the many, who professed to believe in Jesus at Jerusalem, there was one man of great note and eminence, namely *Nicodemus*, who was of

Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews :

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God : for no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be

the sect of the *Pharisees*, the most bigotted, proud, self-conceited, and superstitious of all other sects among the *Jews*; and was one of their rulers, being a member of the sanhedrim, (*chap. vii. 50.*)

2 This man, whose principles, as a *Pharisee*, lay in direct opposition to the doctrine of Christ, and whose power, as a ruler, made him capable of acting against it, was nevertheless convinced by his miraculous works, that there was something extraordinary in him: And therefore being desirous of further satisfaction, and yet ashamed to be seen in company with him, and afraid of the resentment of his brethren of the great council, in case they should know it, he went privately to Jesus in the night, and said to him, *Rabbi*, (see the note on *Matth. xxiii. 7.*) It is evident by the wonderful things you have done, and many of the people, as well as I, are well satisfied, that you are a great prophet sent immediately from God to us; for without doubt the amazing miracles, which you have wrought in confirmation of your doctrine are such, as it is absolutely impossible for any man to perform, unless he were in an extraordinary manner assisted and approved of God: Be pleased therefore to inform me of the chief points that you are come to teach.

3 Jesus replied, I, who am Truth itself, assure you, one of my principal doctrines is this, that no man, considering his present state of corruption and degeneracy by the fall, can truly understand or enjoy the blessings of that kingdom of grace which I am come to set up here, and of the kingdom of glory, which it leads the way to, and will issue in hereafter, unless he pass under a new birth by a supernatural power from above*: Meaning thereby, that whatsoever may be any man's moral attainments, religious advantages, or external privileges, all will be ineffectual to his partaking of the blessings of grace here, and glory hereafter, except his heart and life be thoroughly changed in their principles, course, and ends, and he become a new man, by the regenerating operation of the Spirit of God.

4 But *Nicodemus*, taking Christ's words in a literal and carnal sense, answered, What! am I to suppose, that after one has descended from so worthy a progenitor as *Abraham*, and has lived so long as I have in the

N. O. T. E.

* *Aboven*, here translated *again*, properly signifies *from above*, and is frequently used in that sense, and particularly in *ver. 31.* and

chap. xix. 11. and so Christ intimates, that this new birth is wrought by a supernatural power from heaven,

be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

the world, he must be conceived again in his mother's womb, and be a new-born infant as at first? This is surprizing doctrine indeed! it seems an impossibility, even by any power of God himself; I can neither understand it, nor imagine what could be the advantage of it.

5 Jesus answered, Verily verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

5 Our Lord replied, It is not a corporal, but a moral and spiritual birth that I speak of: and I, whose words are truth, solemnly assure you, that every man, be he young or old, must be renewed in the spirit of his mind, and have a new vital principle formed within him, by the powerful agency of the Holy Ghost, which, like water, cleanses and refreshes the soul, and produces fruits of righteousness in the life, and is signified by *John's* baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins, and by the washing with water, which is to be used henceforward, as the initiating ordinance of God's covenant: In this sense, I say, every one must be born again from above; or else he cannot be capable of enjoying the spiritual and saving blessings of my kingdom.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

6 Were it possible, according to your gross notion of things, for a man in a natural sense to be born of his mother again, this would indeed be of no advantage to him in his spiritual concerns: For as nothing can rise higher than its principles; so whoever is born, though it were ever so often, of fleshly parents, who are themselves corrupt, must be himself corrupt still, (*Job* xiv. 4. and xv. 4.); and whatsoever proceeds from him, according to this his depraved nature, must be depraved too, and so unfit for the kingdom of God. But, on the contrary, whoever is new formed, in all the powers and faculties of his soul, by the regenerating Spirit, is himself a spiritual man, possessed of a principle, which is suited to the holy nature of its author; and whatsoever he does by that principle, and according to it, is of a spiritual nature too, and so he is made meet for the holy duties and enjoyments of the gospel-state, and for the inheritance of the saints in light.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

7 Do not therefore wonder that I spoke of this great work of heart-changing grace in such strong terms, and laid such stress upon it, as absolutely necessary to your own, or any other person's being a happy subject of my kingdom; and do not think it impossible to be thus born again.

8 The wind bloweth

8 Though you are not able to conceive how, or in what manner it is to be brought about, that is no objection against the thing itself: For, even in the world

bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

of nature, there are manifest effects, the immediate cause of which, and the manner of their productions, you are utterly ignorant of; and so there are in the world of grace; as for instance, the wind blows when, and wherever the God of nature orders it, without confinement or controul; and you feel its force and hear its sound, by which you are fully assured that there is such a thing as the wind; though you are not able to assign the causes of its blowing at one particular time more than another, or from one determinate point to its opposite, rather than in another course; and though you cannot account for the manner of its motion, how it begins and ends, how it proceeds, or what becomes of it: So the Holy Spirit, who in scripture is compared to the wind, (*Gent. iv. 16.*) works like a free agent, with wonderful power and sovereignty, upon some men's hearts rather than upon others; and they themselves are evidently sensible of the thing by its happy effects upon them, by its enlightening, quickening, sanctifying, and comforting their souls; tho' they are not able to conceive by what manner of secret operation he produces these effects, nor to what glorious heights and issues he will carry them.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

9 *Nicodemus* having been trained up in the self-sufficient notions of a legal pharisaical righteousness, and being ignorant of the corruption of his own heart, and of the powerful operations of the Spirit of God, was full of prejudices, and objected against this doctrine, even in its spiritual sense, as unreasonable and unlikely, saying, I am still as much at a loss as ever to conceive your meaning. How is it possible that these things can be true? For my part, I can never believe such incomprehensible and unintelligible mysteries.

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

10 Jesus replied, Are you not only, as an *Israelite*, daily conversant with the oracles of God; but are you likewise one of the great *Rabbies*, whose business * it is to explain them to others; and yet cannot you take in what I say about a new birth in a moral and spiritual sense, relating to the thorough change which must pass upon the soul? what a shame is this † to one of your character? And how defective, trifling, and useless have

N O T E S.

* By a master in *Israel* is meant a teacher of the law to *Israel*, either as a public preacher in their synagogues, or in their divinity schools; or as a member of the sanhedrim, who undertook to explain the law, and determine its meaning: *Nicodemus* was one of these, and probably a divinity-professor too, who, like *Gamaliel*, taught it in their schools; and all these were called *Rabbies*.

† Our Lord, say some, expressed his admiration, that *Nicodemus* should be so ignorant of his meaning about the new birth, and should think it an impossible thing; because the Jews themselves used to speak of baptized proselytes, as new-born infants. But as all their notions about that sort of new birth related only to external, ceremonial, and pharisaical purifications, those notions rather hindered,

all your knowledge and instructions been, while you are ignorant of so necessary and important a truth, which you might and ought to have learnt from what the scriptures say of God's *sprinkling clean water, and giving a new heart and a new spirit*, (Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26.) and of *a nation's being born at once?* (Isa. lxvi. 8.)

11 Verily verily I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

11 I, who am the faithful and true Witness, solemnly assure you, that, as to what I speak from my Father, and under the anointing of his Spirit, who speaks these things together with and by me, and that, according to what the inspired prophets of old, and my forerunner *John the Baptist* have said before, we * certainly know these things to be true, and in various methods bear witness to them: And yet such blindness and prejudices have spread through your own and others minds, that neither you nor they understand, believe, and embrace our doctrine, which is so infallibly true, so plainly delivered, and so divinely testified.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?

12 If therefore I, with all this concurring evidence, have discoursed of the nature and necessity of a work of grace, which must be wrought and experienced in the souls of men upon earth, in order to their salvation: And if I have familiarly illustrated the matter in language taken from earthly things, which ye are daily acquainted with, such as a human birth, and the wind, and yet ye cannot take in, and give your assent and consent to what I say; how much less would ye be able to understand and give credit to my testimony, were I to declare unto you the still more sublime mysteries of my gospel, relating to the dignity of my person and offices, the glorious design of my incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, and exaltation, relating to the spiritual nature of my kingdom, and the blessedness of the world to come? were I to talk to you of these heavenly things in a stile suitable and proper to their own nature; how amazing and stumbling would they be to your carnal minds?

N O T E S.

13 Now

hindered, than forwarded his conceptions of that internal, spiritual birth, which Christ spoke of; and therefore it was no such matter of wonder, that *Nicodemus* was not led by these notions to understand our Saviour's meaning, as it was that he should be so entirely ignorant of it, though he was professedly an expounder of the word of God, in which this doctrine was so clearly revealed. And this shews that, by being born again, *Nicodemus* himself understood our Saviour to mean much more than being baptized with water: otherwise his notions of proselytes by baptism must necessarily have taken off all his amazement at, and objections against, this doctrine of the new birth.

* Here Christ changes the number from *I* and *thou*, to *we* and *ye*, to add the greater weight to his testimony, and to aggravate the unbelief of all that reject it: By *we* who testify, some have thought he meant himself, together with the ancient prophets and *John the Baptist*, who preached the same doctrine, others suppose he meant himself, together with his Father and Spirit, who had been spoken of in the foregoing verses, and who testified these things by him, and together with him. And by *ye*, who receive not our witness, might he meant *Nicodemus*, together with his brethren of the great council, and the generality of the Jews.

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

13 Now to instance some of these, no mere man whatsoever has entered, or can enter into the secrets of God's heart in heaven, relating to the great mysteries of salvation, so as immediately and perfectly to understand them and make them known to others: But this privilege is peculiar to the Messiah, who is spoken of under the character of the Son of man, (*Psal.* lxxx. 17. and *Dan.* vii. 13.) and * always had an existence in heaven as the Son of God, and who came from thence into an incarnate state, that he might reveal God's counsels to men, and even now, while in his human nature he is on earth, still continues in his † divine nature to be in heaven.

14 And, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

14 And I further tell you, that, great and divine as the Messiah is in himself, he must be put to an ignominious death, in order to his bringing salvation to sinners, according to an eminent type of him under the law: For as when the children of *Israel* were bitten by fiery serpents in the wilderness, *Moses* made a serpent of brass in their likeness, though without their venom, and set it on a pole in the midst of the camp, as God's ordinance for healing all that were wounded, and should look to it for a cure; and as they that did so were perfectly healed, how weak soever their sight, and how great soever their wounds might be, (*Numb.* xxi. 6,—9.) So the Messiah, who appears in the likeness of sinful flesh, though there really is no sin in him, must be lifted

NOTES.

* The *Seripian* sense of the words, *He ascended up to heaven*, as signifying his local ascension thither, to be fully instructed into the mind and will of God, before he entered on his public ministry, is entirely unscriptural and groundless, there being no hint of it in any other part of the word of God; and it is as entirely needless, because he was unmeasurably anointed with the Spirit at his baptism, as well as had the divine nature dwelling in him: If therefore this passage is to be understood of a local ascension, it expresses in prophetic style what certainly would be after Christ's resurrection, as if it were already past, in like manner as it is said in prophecy, (*Psal.* lxxviii. 18.) *Thou hast ascended on high*; and so these words of our Lord intimate, that though *Enoch* and *Elias* had ascended to heaven, yet no man had ascended, by his own power and merit, to open heaven's gates for the reception of sinners as he should. But these words seem rather to refer to *Deut.* xxx. 12, 13. where it was said of the commandment of God, *Who shall go up to heaven, and bring it to us? i. e. who shall enter into God's secret counsel, and learn*

it by immediate knowledge in heaven? And so what Christ here said of himself is of like import with what *John the Baptist* had said concerning him, *chap.* i. 18.

† As the divine and human natures were united in the person of Christ, attributions are made of the properties of one nature to him, whilst he is spoken of under a title which relates to his other nature. Thus when it is said, (*1 Cor.* ii. 8.) *The Lord of glory was crucified*, and (*Acts* xx. 28.) he is called *God, who purchased the church with his own blood*: The meaning is not that he, as the Lord of glory, was crucified, or, as God, shed his blood, as if the divine nature could be crucified and bleed; but that the person, who was the Lord of glory in one nature, was crucified in the other; and the person, who was God in one nature, redeemed the church with his own blood, which belonged to his other nature: So when it is said, *The Son of man is in heaven*, the meaning is not that he, as the Son of man, was there whilst he was on earth, but that he, who was here in his human nature, was there in his divine.

ed up on the cross, and, in consequence thereof, be afterwards exalted in heaven, and proposed as God's ordinance in the gospel, for sinners to look to by faith for salvation :

15 That who-
soever believeth
in him should
not perish, but
have eternal life.

15 That every one, of what rank, degree, or nation soever he be, who, under an affecting sense of his sinfulness and obnoxiousness to divine wrath, shall, according to God's appointment, look to, and humbly trust in him alone for salvation, may be healed of his soul's diseases, may be delivered from his perishing condition under the guilt and power of sin, and may be made partaker of eternal life ; and whoever shall thus with the heart believe in the only true Messiah, though his faith be ever so weak, he shall certainly be saved, how great or many soever his sins have been.

16 For God so
loved the world,
that he gave his
only begotten
Son, that who-
ever believeth in
him should not
perish, but have
everlasting life.

16 For the great and blessed God, even the Father, who delights in mercy, looking with compassion upon the lost and miserable state of mankind, under their dreadful apostacy, conceived such a surprizing, matchless design of mere love and grace, from all eternity, toward sinners of this wretched, guilty, and rebellious world *, not of the *Jews* only, but of the *Gentiles* also, that he freely gave his dearly beloved and only begotten Son, to be his salvation to the ends of the earth, and gave him up to be crucified, and thereby made a propitiation for their sins, that whoever shall by faith cordially receive and trust in him, as the Son of God and the Redeemer of lost sinners, may not perish for or by his iniquities, but have a full remission of them, and be delivered from the wrath to come ; and not only so, but may be entitled to, and in due time put in possession of everlasting blessedness and glory.

17 For

N O T E.

* To understand what is meant by the *world* in this and the following verse, we are to consider that it is used in opposition to the prevailing notion of the *Jews*, as if God loved only their own nation, and the Messiah would come to save only them, and to pour confusion upon all other nations for their sakes : And therefore when this word is used, especially in the writings of this Evangelist, to express the objects of God's love, and of the benefits of Christ's redemption, it commonly signifies the world, as inclusive of the *Gentiles*, to guard against that vain conceit, and to shew that the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom were not to be confined to the *Jews* ; but to have an equal respect to *Gentiles* of all sorts together with them. And as *Nicodemus*, like the rest, was full of that conceit, our Lord used this expression to confute it, and to give him a larger view of the

gospel-salvation, as extending to other nations, as well as themselves : And to it intimates that all the elect among the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, are the objects of this great love of God, in the gift of his son for their salvation : For the world here spoken of, is the world which God designed to be saved through him, (ver. 17.) and these are the samewith those that should believe in him, and are opposed to those that, not believing in him, should be condemned, (ver. 18.) Now these may be called the world, because they are originally of this fallen world of mankind, in opposition to fallen angels, and are scattered through the whole world, Rev. v. 9. and even thro' those nations of the earth, which, by way of distinction from the *Jews*, are stiled the world, in Rom. xi. 12, 13. See the notes on chap. i. 7, 19.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world thro' him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

17 For God, according to this gracious design, has now at length sent his own Son into this lower world, not, as the *Jews* through the power of their prejudices and self-love suppose, to pass and execute a sentence of condemnation upon all others beside themselves; but that persons of all nations may be effectually saved from the ruins of their apostacy, and blessed with eternal life, even all and every one of them, that shall believe in him.

18 So that things are now brought to this point, that whosoever, *Jew* or *Gentile*, believes on the Son of God, as manifested and proposed in the gospel, is freed from the condemning sentence of the law, its curse standing no longer in force against him: But whosoever rejects, or neglects the crucified Saviour, remains under a sentence of condemnation; and persisting therein to the end, he shall certainly be cast in the day of judgment for all his iniquities, and especially for the great sin of unbelief, in refusing his only remedy; because, notwithstanding all the light, endearments, and obligations of this last dispensation of grace, he has not by faith embraced God's own eternally begotten Son, and the only method of salvation brought in and revealed by him.

19 And this is the greatest and surest cause of men's ruin, and the highest aggravation of their sin and misery, that, in this glorious dispensation of mercy, the way of salvation opens, and is shortly to be set with the clearest evidence before them, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and yet the *Jews* prefer their vain traditions and corrupt glosses on the law, and the *Gentiles* their ignorant devotions to an unknown God; and both one and the other prefer their own dark, superstitious, carnal, and mistaken notions of religion, to the pure light of the gospel: And the real reason of this is, because these spiritual, heavenly, and holy doctrines lye in direct contradiction to their beloved lust and evil practices, which they will by no means abandon, and which their self-flattering and erroneous conceits put them upon indulging.

20 For every one that is wedded to his sins, and resolved not to part with them, has a secret enmity in his mind against the truths of divine revelation, that oppose and condemn them: and, as they are deeds of darkness, he does what he can to stifle convictions, and shun the light of that knowledge, which exposes his darling corruptions in their shameful, hideous, and dangerous forms, lest his conscience should be so stung with remorse,

remorse, as not to dare any longer to gratify them, and take such pleasure, as he used to have, in acting according to them.

21 But he that dash truth contrary to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

21 But * an upright man, who desires to be approved of God, is sincerely willing to be searched and tried, and to know the Divine will, how contrary soever it may be to his own natural notions, inclinations, and worldly interests; and he lyes open to conviction, that whatsoever he thinks, says, or does, may be regulated, and appear with evidence, to his own mind and conscience, as well as to others, that it is the effect of the regenerating power of God, according to his will, and to his glory, and that it proceeds from the vital union and communion which he himself has with God.

22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

22 When our Lord Jesus had thus discoursed with Nicodemus, who afterwards appeared to be a real convert, (*chap. vii. 50, 51. And xix. 39.*) he retired from Jerusalem to the country of Judea, together with those disciples whom he designed to make his constant attendants, and to call to the apostleship: And he continued there, they accompanying him, for some time, preaching the gospel, working miracles, and converting many, whom he thereupon baptized, not by his own hand, but by the ministry of those disciples, (*chap. iv. 2.*)

23 And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized.

23 And at the same time, while Jesus was thus employed in Judea, John continued still to preach to the people, and to baptize them into the faith of him who now appeared openly among them. But, that he might not seem to combine with Jesus, he did not associate with him, but went on with his work in distant parts, and removed to Enon † near Salim; because there were many streams of water, which made it a convenient situation for baptizing all the people that might be wrought upon by his ministry: And they came, and were baptized by him there.

24 For

N O T E S.

* As light was before opposed to error and mistakes; so doing the truth is here opposed to doing evil, and respects a man's acting with sincerity and godly simplicity, in opposition to his being influenced by a love of sin.

† Expositors are much at a loss about this Enon, because it is no where else mentioned in scripture, nor found in the geography of the ancients: Some apprehend it was on one side of Jordan, and others on the other: Some think that it was a town or city; others that it was a river; and others, that it was a large tract of ground full of fresh springs and small rivulets of water; and that as Enon signifies

a fountain, so the words, *because there was much water*, or as *υδατα πολλα* more literally signify, *because there were many waters*, give the etymology of the word Enon, or the reason why that place was so called, rather than the reason why John baptized there: The argument therefore drawn from hence for baptizing by dipping, is very uncertain, because none of these rivulets might be deep enough for that purpose: And because such an open country, overspread with small streams, was very convenient for baptizing vast multitudes, placed in proper order, by way of pouring water upon them.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

24 For all the transactions of Christ, hitherto rehearsed, passed before the time of *John's* being committed to prison by *Herod*, on account of the reproof which he gave him for marrying his brother *Philip's* wife. (*Matth. xiv. 3.*)

25 Then there arose a question between some of *John's* disciples and the Jews, about purifying.

25 And while both *Jesus* and *John* were thus engaged in different places, some of *John's* disciples, and some of the carnal *Jews* entered into a debate, on this occasion, about the preference of *John's* baptism to the legal and pharisaical purifications, that had been long in use; his disciples pleading that their master's baptism was to be preferred to all those washings and cleanings; and the *Jews*, on the other hand, contending that his baptism was needless, or at best insufficient for purification, because there was another person who had pretended to set up a new and better baptism, and was more followed than their master; and that therefore there would be no end of going into dangerous innovations, but that it would be much better to abide by their ancient customs*.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

26 And *John's* disciples being puzzled with this difficulty, for want of having duly attended to what he had so often told them concerning Christ, applied to him, saying, Master, the man, who not long since came like a disciple to you, and was baptized by you, on the other side of *Jordan*, and to whom you gave a most honourable testimony to recommend him to the people; this very man, to the surprize of many, has taken an advantage, from your high encomiums, to set up already for himself, and to baptize and make disciples in his own name: He even supplants you in your work; and the people are so fond of him, that they generally run after him, while you take no care to restrain them: This sinks your credit, especially among your enemies, who hereupon object against the authority, the usefulness and sufficiency of your baptism; and as for us, we are troubled to think that any other should arise to lessen you, and cannot tell what to say to these things.

27 John answered and said,
A

27 *John* replied, This is no just objection against my office, nor ought it to be a trouble to you: There is no inconsistency between *Jesus's* baptism and mine, which tend to the same end; mine is only subservient to his, and his improves and perfects mine; as I bear witness to him, so what he is now doing proves the truth of my testimony concerning him; and whether ye consider the matter

N O T E.

* This appears to have been the subject of their debate, from the question which *John's* disciples hereupon put to him in the following verse.

A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

matter with relation to him or me, it is all of God * : For neither could I have done what I have, in pointing the people to him, as the long-looked for Messiah, who was just ready to appear, and in baptizing them into the faith of him; nor could he have done the still greater things, which he does under this character, in baptizing and making disciples to himself, without a commission from heaven; and the objection, which his enemies make against him and me on this account, as well as your own stumbling at it, after all that I have so often, and so plainly told you before-hand about him and myself, is an evident demonstration, that no man can heartily embrace the plainest doctrines of divine revelation, unless he be enlightened and enabled from above to understand and receive them.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

28 I appeal to my former testimony on this head, which might have satisfied you: Ye yourselves may remember, and ought to bear me witness, that I was so far from pretending to be myself the Messiah, that I frankly and openly declared before you and all the people, (*chap. i. 19, 20, 23.*) that *I was not the Christ*, but was only his forerunner to prepare his way, according to ancient prophecy concerning him and me.

29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bride - groom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

29 A bride, every one knows, is the peculiar property of the bridegroom; but the bridegroom's friend has the honour and the pleasure of doing all that in him lyes to help forward the match, and court for him: He herein chearfully pursues his directions, and rejoices when the bridegroom tells him, that he has at length obtained the virgin's consent, and espoused her to himself. So Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church, which is to be for him, and for no other: But I make no pretences to such an interest in her; I have only acted the part of his hearty friend, who with well to his cause, and have been laying out myself, with all alacrity and faithfulness, in wooing the people for him, by telling them what a great and glorious person he is, on what a blessed design he came into the world, and how willing he is to receive and save all that cordially consent to be his: And now I exceedingly rejoice to hear that he is already enthroned in so many hearts, and I gladly deliver them all over to him, who has the only right to them.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

30 It is necessary that Jesus should increase in the manifestations of his glory, and in the number of disciples to be made to him, and that I should decrease in

N O T E.

* Some refer this to the commission which Christ and John received for their several offices; and others, to the peoples receiving

and entertaining what they did, by virtue of their respective commissions; and we may take them all in.

in my reputation among men, and in the importance of my office as a forerunner to him, who will no longer have any occasion for my testimony: His honour will eclipse mine every day still more and more; and when my work shall cease, his will ever abide with rich and growing advantage; and it is highly fit that it should be thus.

31 He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all.

31 He being of divine original came down immediately from heaven, and therefore is infinitely superior, in his person and administration, to all others: For as I, and every other prophet that appeared before me, had our original from the earth, like our first common father, we being of earthly parents, and of an earthly frame; so we naturally are most affected with, and speak of earthly things, and can of ourselves say nothing of heaven, but in a gross and earthly manner; and what we speak of the things of God, even under some degrees of inspiration, is low and flat, and savours of the earth, if compared with the sublime mysteries of Infinite Wisdom, as they lye in God's own mind: But this divine person naturally speaks of heavenly things, and that in the most surprizing and exalted strains like himself, like one intimately acquainted with them, as they lye in the divine counsels, and as they are in themselves; and so he, who came down from heaven, is every way superior to me and all other prophets whatsoever.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

32 And the doctrines, which he reveals and delivers with divine authority, are no other than * he has been originally and thoroughly acquainted with, by his intuitive knowledge of God; like one who lay in the bosom of the Father, and was in counsel with him about them; and even his human mind has seen and heard them, by the immediate illumination and dictates of the Spirit, which dwells unmeasurably in him. Though ye therefore are apt to be grieved and filled with envy at his having so many disciples, none of them embrace his blessed and glorious gospel, from any principle naturally in themselves; and alas! the number is comparatively small, and next to none, that heartily entertain, or believe and receive it:

33 He that hath received his testimony.

33 But every one of the happy few that believe in him according to his word, thereby subscribes, and puts his *Amen* to the truth and faithfulness of God himself, as believing that he has fulfilled his promises concern-

N O T E

* This may relate either to the original knowledge of Christ's divine mind, as God over all, who came down from heaven, (ver. 31.) or to the acquired knowledge of his hu-

man mind, as God gave not the Spirit by measure to him, (ver. 34.) and I have taken them both in.

testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true.

34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God ; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life ; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

ing the Messiah, and speaks the most important truths by him, and that he will certainly fulfil all the rest of his promises to his people through him, in whom they are all yea, and amen, to the glory of God.

34 For this Divine person, who was sent by God the Father immediately from heaven, not only declares the mind and will of God at certain seasons, relating to some particular points ; but, having all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him, he doth this in every thing that he says, and is come to make known the whole of that revelation, which is ever to be communicated to the sons of men : For God, who gave his Spirit only in certain degrees, and on special occasions to other prophets, *Moses* himself not excepted, has, in an unlimited manner, anointed Jesus, in his office-capacity, with the Holy Ghost, who resides perpetually in him as an infallible and abiding principle of truth, holiness, and goodness ; it having *pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell.*

35 Yea, such is the infinite superlative love of the Father to his own Son, as he is of the same nature and perfections with himself, and as he freely came to do his will, that he has committed to his management all affairs, relating to the kingdoms of providence, grace, and glory, that he may subdue his enemies, distribute all blessings amongst his people, and judge angels and men at the last day.

36 The conclusion of all then plainly comes to this, that whoever receives the doctrine of Christ, and trusts in him according to it, as the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners, has a right and title to eternal life, together with the beginnings, securities, pledges, earnest, and foretastes of it, which shall certainly issue in his completely enjoining it ; And, on the contrary, whoever wilfully rejects Christ, and finally persists therein, shall never be admitted to that blessed life ; but, whilst he obstinately continues in unbelief, all his sins are bound upon him with high aggravations, a righteous sentence of wrath stands out in the law of God against him, and he daily lies exposed to a dreadful execution of it ; so that, unless it be prevented, through faith in the Son of God, there is no remedy, but divine wrath must certainly come upon him to the uttermost, and he must bear it for ever.

REC O L L E C T I O N S

How could anyone do such miracles as Christ did unless he and his doctrines were owned of God ! and how plain and important were the doctrines of regeneration and faith in him, which he preached as necessary to salvation ! and yet how natural is it for carnal minds to misjudge of spiritual things, to disbelieve them, and to be prejudiced against them, because, after all, there will be something in-

comprehensible in them ! For who can tell the reason, and the manner of the sovereign and holy Spirit's acting upon, and effectually changing one sinner's heart rather than another's ? Or who can tell how the divine and human natures are personally united in the God manifested in flesh, who, as the Son of God, always was in heaven, whilst, as the Son of man, he was only upon earth ! and O how surprizing is the thought of the Lord of glory's being lifted up on the cross, that he might be proposed in the gospel as a proper object for a sinner's faith, and that we, under a sense of guilt and danger, as wounded by sin, might look to him, and be as effectually healed of our soul's diseases, as Israel were of their desperate wounds by looking to the brazen serpent in the wilderness ! And how inexpressibly rich and free is that love, which is the original cause of salvation, and has displayed itself in the gift of Christ to our world, to Gentiles as well as Jews, that whoever believes in him, whether it be with a weaker or stronger faith, may have everlasting life ! With what esteem and preference to all others should we think of the dear and only Saviour, who was originally from above, and was anointed with the Holy Ghost, for office-performances on earth, without measure, who is the object of the Father's highest love, and who is the great Lord and Husband of the church, and is Head over all things for its welfare ; and what an honour and delight is it to be instrumental in espousing souls to him ! What his servants do in holy ministrations, by his authority, is as valid, as if it were done personally by himself ; and they should go on in his work according to the ability and opportunity he gives for it, without envying others that excel them in gifts and graces, and success, as knowing that no man can receive any good thing for the service of others, or the benefit of his own soul, unless it be given him from above ; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. But, alas ! how much more are formalists in religion concerned about an external baptism and purification, than about being baptized with the Holy Spirit, and having an experience in themselves of a real work of heart-changing grace !—How great is the sin of unbelief ! It rejects the testimony of God concerning his Son, and is envious at Christ's glory ; and it proceeds from unreasonable prejudices against him, from a love of evil ways, and unwillingness to be reformed, and from a hatred of the pure light of God's word, lest it should disturb the soul's peace and pleasure in an indulgence of beloved lusts ! and how dreadful are its effects, as it binds all a man's other sins upon him, refuses his only remedy, and subjects him to condemnation and wrath with the highest aggravations of guilt ! But O the excellence of true faith ! It receives the Lord Jesus, sets to its seal that God is true, and depends upon his faithfulness for the performance of all that he has said about his Son, and said to us in a way of grace and mercy through him ; it rejoices in the prosperity of his interest, in the espousal of souls to him, and in every thought of his being exalted ; it proceeds from a desire of coming to the light of God's word, and from the discovery that is thereby made of the sinner's own vileness, and of the relief there is in Christ for him, and from a willingness to be saved from his sins, as well as from the curse of the law, and the wrath of God ; and by means of this faith the sentence of condemnation is reversed, and the soul is entitled to eternal life. Which of these states is mine ? and in which of them am I like to be found at death and judgment ?

C H A P. IV.

Christ goes from Judea into Samaria, 1,—6. His discourse with the woman of Samaria, 7,—26. The effect it had upon her, 27,—30. His discourse with his disciples, 31,—38. Many Samaritans believe in him, 39,—42. And he goes to Galilee, and heals a nobleman's son there, 43,—54.

TEXT.

When there-
fore the Lord
knew

PARAPHRASE.

JESUS having stayed and preached a considerable time

knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

² (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)

³ He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

time in Judea *, it was no longer safe for him to continue in that country: For, as nothing could be hid from him, he knew that his most powerful and malicious enemies, the *Pharisees*, when met in council at *Jerusalem*, had received informations, and were provoked to hear that he made more proselytes, and entered more disciples into his religion by baptism, than ever *John* had done before him; though in reality, Jesus himself, for good reasons, baptized none with his own hands, but only by the ministry of his disciples†: And therefore as he ordered his servants when they should be persecuted in one city to flee to another, (*Matth. x. 23.*) so, the course of his ministry not being yet fulfilled, nor his disciples fit as yet to be exposed to hardships and dangers, he retired from *Judea* into *Galilee*, where the Pharisees would be less disturbed, and less capable of observing him, or of doing any thing against him, and where *John's* ministry had prepared his way, and *John's* imprisonment, by this time, had made room for him. (*Mat. iv. 12. and Mark i. 14.*)

⁴ And, as *Samaria* ‡ lay between *Judea* and *Galilee*, there was a natural necessity of Christ's going through some part of that country in his journey to *Galilee*, unless he would take a compass round about; and, as he had special work to do in *Samaria*, there was a moral necessity of his going through it, that he might bring some of his sheep there into his fold.

⁵ Accordingly, in his passage through those parts, he went to a *Samaritan* city called *Sychar* **, bordering upon

⁴ And he must needs go through *Samaria*.

⁵ Then cometh he to a city of *Samaria*, which is called *Sychar*, near

N O T E S.

* It seems that he continued there about half a year, or more, he having gone into *Judea* soon after the passover, (*chap. iii. 12.*) and returned to *Galilee* four months before harvest, *chap. iv. 35.*

† We may suppose Christ to have taken this method, that he might maintain the dignity of his own character, as Lord of the Church, and every way superior to *John*, who was merely a servant, and baptized only with his own hands, without commissioning others for it: as also that he might not seem to act with impropriety, and to seek his own honour, by baptizing in his own name; that he might shew himself to be sent, not to baptize with water, but to the more excellent work of preaching the gospel, and baptizing with the Holy Ghost; that he might prevent disputes and emulations amongst his disciples, on account of some being baptized by himself, and others only by his commissioned servants; and that the validity and efficacy of baptism might not be supposed to depend on the worthiness of the person who administers it, but only on the authority and

blessing of Christ upon the administration according to his will.

‡ *Samaria* was inhabited by *Gentiles*, mixed with apostate *Jews*: And that mongrel people received the law of *Moses*, and worshipped the God of *Israel*; but denied the divine authority of the rest of the Old Testament, and mingled many heathen idolatries and superstitions in their worship. See *Prid. Connect. Bro. Vol. 1. pag. 30.—33.*

** This *Sychar* is supposed to be the same with *Shechem*, which is mentioned *Josh. xxiv. 31.* and in several other places of the Old Testament; but which the *Jews*, in their enmity to the *Samaritans*, called by way of reproach *Sychar*, which signifies the drunken city: And near to this was the valley of *Achor*, which was given as a door of hope with respect to the calling of the *Gentiles*, (*Hos. ii. 15.*) the first specimen of their believing in Christ was now to be given here: and here (as *Dr. Lightfoot* observes from *Gen. xxiv. 9. and xxxv. 2.*) were made the first proselytes to the church of *Israel*.

near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water; Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?

for

upon a piece of land, which the patriarch Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, and gave at his death to Joseph, as an inheritance for him and his children, and in which Joseph's bones were buried. (*Gen. xlviii. 22.* compared with *Josb. xxiv. 32.*)

6 Now in this ground near the city, was a certain well, which by long tradition was called *Jacob's well* * : And our Lord being a man of like natural weakness of body and animal spirits with other men, and having, suitable to his state of humiliation, travelled as usual on foot, he was tired and spent with his long journey, and therefore, like a weary, hungry, and thirsty traveller as he was, he sat down by the side of the well to rest him; and it was about six o'clock in the evening. (See the note on *chap. i. 39.*)

7 Whilst he was there, the providence of God so ordered it, that a certain woman came from the neighbouring city to fetch water from thence: And as *Rebecca, Rachel, and Zipporah*, got their several husbands, *Isaac, Jacob, and Moses*, by going to draw water at a well, (*Gen. xxiv. 11, &c.* and *xxix. 2. &c.* and *Exod. ii. 15. &c.*) so this woman unknowingly met with Jesus at this well, that she might be espoused to him. In order to which he, in the greatness of his condescension and preventing mercy, began first with her, saying, Pray give me a little water to quench my thirst.

8 And this was a proper opportunity for asking such a favour, and talking with her alone: For as he did not ordinarily live by miracles, and had no friend in Samaria to entertain him, he had sent his disciples into the city to buy food for himself and them.

9 Then the woman, knowing him by his speech and habit to be a Jew, replied with wonder and scorn, How comes it to pass, that you, who are a Jew, should thus unusually, for people of your nation, condescend so far as to ask, or to be willing to receive any kindness at my hands, who am a Samaritan? Or how can you imagine that I should comply with your desire by giving you so much as a drop of water for your relief, whatsoever your necessity may be? for it is well known that there is such an old and irreconcilable grudge between the Jews and Samaritans †, that one will neither

N O T E S.

* *Jacob's well* is no where else spoken of in scripture; and it is uncertain why it was so called, whether because he dug it, or whether only because he was the proprietor of it, and used it for himself and family, (*ver. 12.*) or for what other reason.

† The Jews and Samaritans were inveterate enemies to one another, on account of ancient injuries that had passed between them, and of their different temples and religions; and the enmity had rose to such an height, that they treated one another with the utmost

abhorrence

for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank

ther ask, nor receive the least civility of the other; nor, if he would, will the other shew it to him.

10 Jesus answered, If you had but known how important a gift the great God, of his own mere love and grace, has bestowed upon sinful men, and * now presents to you in sending me hither; and had you but known what sort of person I am, who have asked you to give me a little water to drink, you would soon have laid aside your prejudices against me, as a Jew; and, instead of refusing so small a request, would yourself have immediately become an earnest suitor to me, and I would not have upbraided or repulsed you, but would readily and freely have given you the most excellent living water; thereby meaning his Spirit, who was promised under this metaphor, (*Isa.* xliv. 3. and *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25, 27.) and whose gifts and graces are more refreshing to a necessitous, thirsty soul, than the best water can be to a weary, drouthy body.

11 The woman understanding Christ to speak of spring-water in a literal sense, and being ignorant of his power and grace, replied in a way of disdain, You, Sir, give me the most excellent spring-water! that is a likely matter indeed: What occasion then had you to ask for any of mine? As for the water of this deep well, you cannot possibly come at it; for you have no vessel to draw with: Where then do you pretend to get the fine living-water you talk of?

12 Besides, though you seem to speak great things of yourself, and I know not who you are: yet I suppose you are not a greater, a wiser, or more holy man than the patriarch Jacob was, from whom we Samaritans, as well as you Jews, claim a descent as his posterity: And he, as tradition informs us, left us this well, as the best for its water in all the country, he himself,

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abhorrence and contempt: And though in cases of necessity they sometimes traded together; yet they refused all acts of friendship, humanity, and common civility to each other, as the last words of this verse intimate, compared with ver. 8. Many learned expositors suppose these to be, not the words of the woman, because they think there was no occasion for her to mention a thing so universally known to both nations; but the words of the Evangelist, which he added for our better understanding the reason of her question to our Lord: And yet, as this was a pertinent support of her question, I cannot see why she herself might not alledge it: for the more the fact was known, the might

think it the more to her purpose to remind Christ of it.

* Somethink that by *the gift of God* is here meant the Holy Spirit, who is spoken of in the close of the verse, under the metaphor of *living-water*, which was a Hebrew phrase for spring-water, *Gen.* xxvi. 19. But others take it to be meant of Christ himself: and this seems most natural to me, because in the next words, which may be taken as explanatory of these, he evidently speaks of himself who would give this living-water; and because in the foregoing chapter (*ver.* 16.) he had spoke of the great love of God in giving him.

drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto

himself, and his children, as well as his cattle, having made use of it, and been refreshed by it: How then can you propose to give me better water than this?

13 Jesus answered her, saying, You are under a great mistake, in imagining that I spake of common water, like this of *Jacob's well*, which, how much soever it may be esteemed and used, can only refresh the body, and that but for a little while: For when any one has drank ever so freely of this water, he will soon grow as thirsty as ever*; and many other wants will still attend him to render him unhappy; and though he drink it ever so often, it will not make him immortal, but after all he will languish and die.

14 But the blessing which, under the figure of water, I spake of giving, is so excellent in its nature, that whoever is made partaker of it, shall find such abundant and abiding satisfaction in it to his soul, as will take off all insatiable appetites and inclinations for other things; so that he will think this alone sufficient for his happiness: and though he will be desirous of still more of this, yet he shall never so thirst for it, as to languish or perish for want: But the living-water which I will give him, shall abide in him, as a perpetual and sufficient source for his supply, and shall daily spring up in fresh supports and consolations, to an overflowing, till all his wants and uneasinesses shall be entirely removed, and all his desires shall be completely satisfied in the enjoyment of eternal life.

15 But the woman still, like *Nicodemus* in the case of the new birth, (*chap. iii. 4.*) understood Christ in a gross and carnal sense, as if he meant some extraordinary water of the elementary kind; and therefore replied †, Sir, I beg, if you are able, that you would let me have some of this wonderful water, that I may have no further occasion to give myself the trouble of coming time after time to fetch any from this well.

16 Our Lord, finding how her mind was overspread with ignorance, stupidity, and insensibility of her spiritual wants, waved any farther explanation of his meaning about this living water; but proceeded to awaken a sense of guilt in her conscience, and then to discover himself to her as the Messiah, that the riches

of

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* *Thirsting again, and never thirsting*, are here to be understood of such a thirst as makes one faint, languish, and die, for want of sufficient relief; as where it is said of *Israel*, (*Isa. xlviii. 21.*) *They thirsted not, when the Lord led them through the wilderness, i. e.* though they were very thirsty, they did not

perish for thirst, being miraculously supplied with water, to satisfy their drought.

† She said this either with scorn, as supposing what he mentioned to be ridiculous and impossible; or with seriousness, as thinking that he spoke of some unknown benefit pertaining to the body.

unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither,

of his grace might be the better understood, and the more valued by her: And to introduce this merciful design, he said to her, Go home, and fetch your husband to me.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

17 The woman, though she lived adulterously with a man; as if he were her husband, immediately replied, Why do you talk of bringing hither my husband? I am a single person, and have none; thereby designing to evade a discovery of her reproach, and any further conversation on that head: But as Christ, by his infinite understanding, perfectly knew all the circumstances of her life, he answered, What you say is very true; you have indeed at present none that can justly be called your husband, whatsoever you may have pretended among your neighbours.

18 For thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

18 For you have indeed had successively five*, that were your lawful husbands; but the man, with whom you at present cohabit, is not so; it is an adulterous life that you lead with him: You have therefore owned the real truth in saying that you have now no husband at all, and you have so far done well.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

19 The woman's conscience being touched with this close reproof, and yet willing, as far as possible to shift it off, and divert to another subject, she replied, Sir, as I cannot suppose that any man hath ever acquainted you with my manner of life all my days, I verily believe, by the particular account you have now given of it, that you are some extraordinary prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain: and

20 I would therefore gladly know what you have to say upon a grand question in debate, between the Samaritans and the Jews, about the worship of God. We, the Samaritans, insist upon it, that mount Gerizim †, on which our temple is built, and which is not far

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* Some suppose that she had buried five husbands successively; others that she had been divorced from five for her adulterous practices, or had by indirect means, contrary to law, obtained a divorce from one or more of them, that she might cohabit with another man, as if he were her husband: But I rather think the first of these suppositions to be the most probable, because Christ seems to allow that those five were her lawful husbands.

† There was a temple on mount Gerizim, and the occasion of building it was this: Soon after the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem under Darius the Persian, one of the sons of Jehoiada the high-priest, whom Josephus calls Manasseh, having married the daughter to Sanballat the Heronite, Nehemiah, that great reformer obliged all who, contrary to the law,

had taken strange wives, to put them away, or to quit the country: Whereupon Manasseh, being unwilling to part with his wife, flew to Samaria, and with many others in like circumstances, settled under the protection of Sanballat, who was governor of that place: And Sanballat, at his instigation, built a temple on mount Gerizim, like that at Jerusalem, and in opposition to it; and Manasseh was the high-priest there. From that time forward Samaria became the receptacle of all discontented and apostate Jews, and bitter contentions were carried on, from age to age, between the two nations about the true place of worship; the Jews, that had not revolted, pleading for Jerusalem, as the place which God himself had expressly appointed for the temple, and honoured with his special presence;

and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

far from this well, is the place where sacrifices and offerings are to be presented to the Lord, and our ancestors have all along stuck to this place of worship; and on the other hand, ye the *Jews*, as earnestly plead, that *Jerusalem* is the only place where sacrifices are to be offered, and practise accordingly. Be pleased to inform me which of us are in the right, and which in the wrong.

21 In answer to this, Jesus said to her, Woman, as you own me to be a prophet, observe and believe what I am going to say, How important a controversy soever this has been hitherto between the two nations, it will soon be entirely put to an end: For ere long all sacrifices themselves shall be abolished, and none shall be offered by any appointment of God to him, who is worshipped under the notion of a Father*, either by you at mount *Gerizim*, or by the *Jews* at *Jerusalem*; and then all religious distinction of places will cease, and God may be acceptably worshipped every where alike.

22 However, to come to your point, I must tell you, that hitherto the *Jews* have been right, and the *Samaritans* wrong, as to the place which God had appointed for offering sacrifices: As for you *Samaritans*, your notions of God, and your worship of him are corrupted by the beathenism of your ancestors, *Who knew not the manner of the God of Israel*, (2 Kings xvii. 26.); and the homage you pay him is not according to his institution, but according to your own inventions; and so it is all ignorant, superstitious, random work, without a divine warrant and rule†. But as for us *Jews*, who have the sacred oracles entire, have had the benefit of a succession of prophets, and pay our religious homage, according to divine prescription, we are acquainted with the true God, who is the object of our worship; and we know where, and in what manner it is to be performed, and upon what grounds we proceed therein: For the promises of salvation in a particular manner belong to the *Jews*, as his covenant-people, the means of salvation are found among them, and the Saviour himself, according to the promises, proceeds from them,

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presence; and the *Samaritans* pleading that *Abraham* and *Jacob* built altars on mount *Gerizim*, and offered sacrifices there long before the temple was built at *Jerusalem*; that God himself had appointed mount *Gerizim* (*Deut.* xxvii. 12.) for blessing the people; and that *Joshua* had built an altar there; for the support of which notion they had corrupted their copy of the pentateuch. See *Prid.* Vol. I. p. 412, 413, &c.

* God and the Father are put promiscuously in this context for each other, which intimates that by the Father is here meant, not the first Person in the Trinity only, but the Divine Being.

† And some have thought that the *Samaritans* still continued to worship the true God, rather as a local deity, like the gods of the heathens round about them, than as the God of the whole universe.

them, and comes first of all to bless them, in turning them from their iniquities.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

23 But the time is just at hand, when, under a new dispensation of grace, the worship of God shall be no longer performed by burnt-offerings and sacrifices, nor salvation be restrained to the *Jews*, as has been the case hitherto; but the acceptable worshippers of the Divine Being, who is the common Father of all mens spirits, as well as the peculiar covenant-Father of his people, are those who, wherever, or of what nation soever they be, serve him, not in ceremonial observances, but in spiritual ordinances, with their whole hearts, in an exercise of spiritual graces, and by the aid and influence of his Spirit, according to his own appointment: For God requires, owns, and approves of such worshippers: and though the number of them is small, he will form and find such as these by the grace of that dispensation, which is already begun to be set up, and shall hereafter mightily prevail in the world.

24 God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

24 For God is an infinitely pure and perfect Spirit, an incorporeal, invisible, inrelligent, free, and active Being, possessed of all possible perfections; and therefore they that would worship him acceptably, and suitable to his spiritual nature, must worship him after a spiritual manner, in the sincerity of their souls, and with believing, spiritual, and holy dispositions, by the assistance of his Spirit, and in conformity to his revealed will.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come he will tell us all things.

25 The woman having nothing to object against this answer, and yet not being fully satisfied with it, replied, How far what you say may be true, I am not able to determine; but I am perswaded that, according to the general expectation of this age, among the *Samaritans* as well as *Jews*, the Messiah, who is by way of eminence called the Anointed, is just ready to appear; and when he comes, he will certainly adjust all our disputes, clear up our doubts, and give us a perfect revelation of God's mind and will about these things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

26 She being thus brought to express her faith in the Messiah, as ready to appear, and her willingness to receive instruction from him, Jesus took that opportunity to manifest himself to her, saying, I assure you that the Messiah, whom you expect, is already come; and you now see and converse with him: For I, who have been talking in this close and convincing manner, to you, am he.

27 And upon this came his disciples,

27 Immediately upon this, the disciples returned from the city, where they had been to buy provisions, (*ver. 8.*), and they, being under the power of national prejudices

ciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

29 The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

29 Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

32 But he said unto

prejudices, were much amazed to find him discoursing in so friendly a manner, as he seemed to be, with a poor ordinary woman of *Samaria*: However, such was their reverence of their Lord, and satisfaction in whatsoever he thought fit to do, that none of them durst find any fault with him, or ask him what he wanted of that woman? or why he so freely conversed with her?

28 Our Lord having so expressly, and with such convincing evidence, told this woman of his being the Christ, and the conference between him and her breaking off by his disciples coming up to them, she in the greatness of her joy and zeal to make him known to others, ran back to the city in great haste, leaving her water-pot behind her †; and in a sort of rapture said to all she met with;

29 I bring you blessed tidings of the Messiah, whom we are all expecting as just ready to appear; I have certainly had a long conversation with him, in which he, though a stranger, told me abundance of such secret passages in my life, and impressed a sense of them with such power upon my conscience, as I am very sure none but the Messiah himself could do: I am therefore fully convinced that this is he, as he himself likewise told me: However, do not take my word for it; but come along with me, and I will conduct you to him, that ye yourselves may talk with him, and judge whether such an extraordinary person as this be not the Christ.

30 Upon this surprizing report, though made by so inconsiderable, infamous and unlikely a woman, multitudes of the citizens readily went with her to see and talk with Jesus, that they might satisfy themselves concerning him.

31 While the woman was gone to call her neighbours, and Jesus and his disciples were alone, he seemed so far to forget his weariness and want of food, as to discover no inclination to eat; and therefore they importuned him to it, saying, Master, we beg that you would please to refresh yourself with the provisions we have brought, after your long fasting, and great fatigue in your journey hither.

32 But, his heart being set upon the good work that lay

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* Possibly at their coming up, they heard him saying to her, *I thus speak unto thee* &c. be: If so, it might increase their wonder to think that he should make himself known with greater openness and freedom to her, than he was wont to do to the Jews themselves.

† She left her water-pot, either as not thinking of it, or not willing to incumber herself with it, or as designing that Christ should make as much use of it as he might have occasion for in her absence.

unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the disciple one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat.

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

36 And he that reapeth

lay before him, he replied, I have much better food to eat than yours, which ye little think of; meaning, that the great business he had begun, and was going further to engage in, for the salvation of the *Samaritans* souls, by bringing them to know and believe in him, was inexpressibly more desirable, entertaining, and delightful to his mind, than the most necessary and agreeable repast could be to his body, though he were ever so hungry.

33 His disciples not understanding what he meant, but supposing that he spoke of corporal food, said in a sort of surprize one to another: What! has this woman, or some other person privately brought him any provisions, while we were gone to buy some? what meat is this that he speaks of?

34 Jesus knowing how they mistook him, and what they whispered among themselves, corrected their error, saying to them, The meat I spake of is not of a corporal, but of a spiritual nature, and is to be understood in a figurative sense: What I mean by it is this; No gratification of the most hungry appetites of the body can afford me so much satisfaction, as I find in fulfilling that special will of my heavenly Father, for which he sent me into the world, and sent me hither, by bringing about the conversion of these *Samaritans*.

35 Then, to explain himself still further, he added, Is not this, literally speaking, the seed-time, in which the husbandman is sowing his corn, and from which ye commonly reckon four months before the harvest will come, when he hopes to reap the fruit of his labour? And do not even this distant prospect make him diligent, and give him a great deal of pleasure, in casting his seed into the earth? But, said he, (the *Samaritans* just then appearing, and flocking toward him) Behold! the spiritual harvest of souls, which lies before me, is much nearer at hand: I have no sooner begun to sow by the conversation I had with the woman, who is just gone from me, but I am ready to reap; and to allude to the white appearance of the corn-fields when harvest is near at hand, look yonder, (pointing to the *Samaritans*;) see what vast crowds are coming out of the town, many of which shall soon, by means of my preaching, believe and be gathered in to me: The converting of these is that necessary and important business, which I take so great delight in.

36 And this is a specimen of the pleasant work, in which ye shall be employed, The time is now at hand for gathering in of people unto the promised *Shiloh*; and

reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him, for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

40 So, when the Samaritans were

and as the labourer, who sows and reaps, receives a reward from his master, so shall ye from the Lord of this harvest: He will own you, and give you a noble satisfaction in the very service itself; and hereafter ye shall reap the most precious fruits of it, in the eternal salvation of your own and their souls, that shall be converted by your ministry: And then both ye, and all the ancient prophets, and *John the Baptist*, yea, and the Lord of the harvest himself, who have gone before you in sowing the good seed of the word, shall rejoice together in the numberless souls that shall be gathered to him, and they shall be your joy, and crown of rejoicing, in the day of his glorious appearing. (1 *Thes.* ii. 19.)

37 And, for your greater comfort and encouragement, I tell you, that the common proverb, *One sows, and another reaps*, shall be remarkably verified, to your advantage, in the great success of your labours, for which both I and my servants, who prophesied of me, have prepared the way by our preceding ministrations.

38 I am about to send you (*ἀποστείλα*) with a commission to preach the gospel; and when ye go into one place and another, ye shall be the reapers of this spiritual harvest, which was sown by others, and is now ripened for you to gather it with richer abundance, than either I by my personal ministry, or any of my former servants by their preaching, ever did before you. So that ye will have the advantage and the increase of all preceding labours, as well as of your own, and be instruments of perfecting the blessed work, which they only began to the conversion and salvation of multitudes of souls*.

39 But, (*ὅτι*) to return, the *Samaritans* of *Sychar* having heard the amazing account that the woman gave of Christ's divine knowledge, and of the power with which his words came to her heart, and of the declaration he made to her concerning himself, many of them were wrought upon, by means of her testimony, to believe that he really was the true Messiah, who they expected would soon appear in the world.

40 And this faith of theirs had such an effect upon them, though they were *Samaritans*, that they hastened

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* As the writings of the prophets, the preaching of *John the Baptist*, and of our Lord himself, laid the foundation of the numerous conversions that were made by the ministry of the apostles among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and had facilitated their work, and in a manner half done it to their hands, especially among

the *Jews*: So the number of converts in a few years, under the ministry of the apostles, vastly exceeded all that had been made for many ages before, under the ministry of the prophets, and of *John the Baptist*, and of Christ himself.

were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

ed with great desire, to converse with him themselves; and when they came to him, they were so affected with what they saw and heard, that they laid aside their prejudices against him, as a *Jew*, and earnestly entreated him to go into their city, and continue for some time at least with them, that they might shew him tokens of respect, and receive his heavenly instructions about their own salvation: And as he is good to the souls that seek him, so he went into their city, and staid two days preaching to them, and thereby giving an earnest of his mercy to the *Gentiles*.

41 And many more believed believed because of his own word;

41 And, whilst he was at that place, many others, who were not convinced by the woman's testimony, were brought to believe in him, when they themselves came to hear his excellent doctrine, and feel the power of his grace upon their own hearts*.

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

42 And both the fresh converts, and those that had before believed upon the woman's report, said to her, Now our faith is not founded upon your testimony: For we ourselves have heard such divine and important things from Jesus, and they have come with such evidence and authority to our minds and consciences, as fully assure us, that he is in truth the promised and long-looked-for Messiah, even the Saviour, whom we, as well as the *Jews*, may claim an interest in, and in whom, as God promised to our Father *Abraham*, all nations shall be blessed†.

43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee;

43 Now when he had spent two days at the city of *Sychar*, preaching and converting many there, he pursued his intended journey from thence to *Galilee*; but declined going to *Nazareth*, where he was brought up, and which lay in that country.

44 For Jesus himself testified that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

44 For as he himself had declared §, when at the beginning of his ministry he preached there, Even a true prophet, who really comes with a message from God, is nevertheless seldom esteemed and regarded among his former acquaintance, with whom he was brought up in low

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* It does not appear that he wrought any miracles here: But the blessed effect of his preaching to this people was surprising; and he can as effectually convert the worst sinners, and the most unlikely to be wrought upon, without miracles, as with them, whenever he pleases to set home his word with power upon their hearts; but without this, the greatest of all miracles will have no saving effect.

† Thus the world in this place, as well as in many others, is only made use of to comprehend *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*.

See the note on chap. iii. 16.

§ He said this with respect to *Nazareth*; (*Luke* iv. 16, 24.) and we are told, (*Matth.* iv. 12, 13.) that at his coming into *Galilee*, when he heard of *John's* being cast into prison, he leaving *Nazareth* went and dwelt in *Capernaum*: Unless we suppose our Evangelist to refer to his not going thither, it will be very difficult to make out the connection of this with the foregoing verse: but upon this supposition it stands easy and plain thus, He went into some parts of *Galilee*, but not in to the town of *Nazareth*.

low life, and who are apt to form their opinion of him by what they have all along known of his family, education, and circumstances in the world, rather than by the plainest evidence of his eminent qualifications, and divine authority.

45 Then, when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast; for they also went unto the feast.

45 Therefore, passing by *Nazareth*, he went into other parts of *Galilee*, and many of the people there joyfully entertained him, because they had before been much affected with his doctrine and miracles, which they had heard and seen at *Jerusalem*, when they were last there to celebrate the passover: (*chap. ii. 23.*) For it was their constant custom to go up to that city every year, at the time of that solemnity, in obedience to God's command.

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

46 So Jesus, finding that there was work for him to do, went and preached in several towns and villages in that country; and among others, he again visited that *Cana*, which lay in *Galilee*, where some time before he had miraculously turned water into wine, (*chap. ii. 11.*): And during his abode at this place, there was one of *Herod's* nobles*, whose son lay sick at *Capernaum*.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

47 And this man, great as he was, and that in a wicked court, having heard of the fame of Jesus, and of his being come out of *Judea* into those parts of *Galilee*, was so concerned for his son, and had so much faith in the power of Christ, that he took a journey of about fifteen miles from *Capernaum* to *Cana*, to pay his respects personally to him: And when he saw him, he humbly begged with great earnestness, that he would please to go home with him, and work a cure upon his son, whose disease was so desperate, that at his Father's leaving him, he was looked upon as a dead child, past hope of recovery by any human means whatsoever.

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

48 Hereupon our blessed Lord said to him †, I plainly perceive how it is with you *Galileans*: Though my doctrines and behaviour be ever so heavenly and holy; and many of you have seen my miracles at *Jerusalem*, (*ver. 45.*) yet ye will not believe in me, as the *Samaritans* did upon hearing my discourses, (*ver. 42.*) unless ye see my divine power exerted in performing some wonderful works in your own country.

49 The nobleman

49 The royal courtier nevertheless persisted in his humble

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* This nobleman seems to have been either *Chuzai*, *Herod's* steward, mentioned *Luke viii. 3.* or else *Manoem*, who had been brought up with *Herod*, mentioned *Acts xiii. 1.* But whether he were so or not, it is probable that he was an *Herodian*, and one of *Herod's* court-

iers, who had received good impressions from *John the Baptist's* ministry.

† Christ's saying this to him, together with the rest of the company, intimates that he was a Jew.

man faith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

humble address to Christ, saying, Lord, as I believe thou couldst heal my child, wert thou with him, I beg that thou wouldst go along with me now without delay, lest he be dead, and past any possible recovery before we get to him.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

50 Jesus, to honour the faith of this nobleman, and to help its infirmity in thinking that Christ's corporal presence was necessary to the cure, intimated to him, that he had power in himself to heal his son in an instant, by a mere act of his will, wherever he was, saying, Depart in peace; I now at this distance restore your son to health, and assure you that he is alive and well: Upon this, the faith of the child's father was so strengthened, that he depended on Christ's word, and went home to see, and rejoice in the happy event.

51 And, as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

51 And, whilst he was on his journey back to *Capernaum*, some of his servants, who were sent to acquaint him with the good news, met him on the road, and told him that his son was perfectly well again.

52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend: and they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

52 Then, for the further confirmation of his faith, he ordered them to tell him exactly at what time his son began to grow better, supposing that the distemper went off by degrees: And they replied, that he did not gradually recover, as is usual in such cases; but that, to their joyful surprize, the fever left him all at once, and he became perfectly well in an instant the last night, as near as they could remember, at seven o'clock. (See the note on *chap. i. 39.*)

53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth; and himself believed, and his whole house.

53 Hereupon the nobleman recollecting the precise time when Jesus said to him, *Thy son liveth*, found that, at that very instant, his son was suddenly and miraculously healed; and he believed that Jesus, who could work such a miracle, afar off, as well as near at hand, was the true Messiah: And when, upon coming home, he saw that his dear child, whom he left at the point of death, was indeed restored to a state of perfect health, and when he and the eye-witnesses of the recovery had compared notes about it, his own faith was still further established; and all his family, after his example, believed in the Lord Jesus.

54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

54 This was the second miracle that Jesus wrought in *Galilee*, upon his coming out of *Judea* into that country, where he had been some months before at *Cana*, and turned water into wine. (*Chap. ii. 7,—11.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Into what a low and humble state did our blessed Lord come! How was he surrounded with troubles and dangers, and denied the refreshment of a little cold water! What toilsome journeys did he take on foot! and how, being a man made

made like unto his brethren, did he suffer weariness, hunger, and thirst ! How laborious was he in his work, setting us an example ! and how does Providence subserve the design of his grace, by throwing things into such a course, as is necessary for meeting with the appointed objects of saving mercy ! and when he meets with them, how tenderly, and yet how closely does he deal with their consciences ; and what a glorious harvest of souls doth he gather to himself ! When once they are brought in earnest to inquire after him, he will graciously afford them his presence, and will manifest himself to them, that they may have an experimental acquaintance with him, which is best of all. And O what a free and rich gift of God, in preference to all others, is Christ in himself, and in the esteem of them that savingly know him, though they were naturally ignorant of him, and much more desirous of temporal advantages, than of the spiritual blessings that come along with him. But O amazing condescension and grace, that God, who is a Spirit, will seek worshippers among such carnal creatures as we are ! And blessed be his name that he will accept of gospel-worship, without distinction of places, where-ever it is performed in spirit and in truth.---What delight does our Lord Jesus take in glorifying his Father, and doing good to immortal souls ! and what abundant encouragement have his servants to go on with his work ! They, like their blessed Saviour, shall be received by some, while they are rejected by others : The pains of those, that have gone before them, prepare their way, and make their work the easier to them ; and after they themselves are dead and gone, many shall reap the advantage of the seed they sowed among them : Their labour is indeed great, like that of sowing and reaping ; but they shall have the pleasure of being instrumental in gathering souls to Christ, and shall receive a glorious reward, to their everlasting joy. But, alas ! how do prejudices against the ministry we sit under, hinder our profiting by it ! It is well for us, if afflictions themselves are sanctified, as means of bringing us, like Herod's courtier, to Christ : he will then give us the desires of our hearts, and even exceed our faith and hope, and still further confirm them in him. Happy the great men and nobles of the earth, that are brought to know and believe in Jesus, for the saving of their souls. And happy masters of families, whose faith is followed by all that are in their houses, and who, by comparing experiences with them, gain strength and establishment in their spiritual concerns ! Whenever Christ displays his power and goodness in these, or any other instances, how should we record it to his praise, and to the encouragement of our own and others souls.

C H A P. V.

Christ cures a man on the sabbath-day, who lay at the pool of Bethesda, and had been lame thirty-eight years, 1,—9. The Jews quarrel about it, 10,—16. Christ vindicates himself by asserting his own divine character as the Son of God, 17,—31. Proves this by the testimony of John the Baptist, of his own miracles, of his Father, and of the Old Testament-scriptures, 32,—39. And charges the Jews with various faults which they were guilty of, 40,—47.

TEXT.

AFTER this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER our blessed Saviour had healed the nobleman's son in Galilee, one of the annual feasts * returned, at

N O T E.

* It is highly probable that this feast was the passover : for it seems that the evangelist John particularly recited the four passovers, in their order, that were between Christ's baptism and death. The first, in chap. ii. 13. The

second, in this place, or no where : The third, in chap. vi. 4. (see the note there,) and the fourth, in chap. xiii. 1. Vid. Lightf. Har. Heb. pag. 554. and Harm. pag. 664, &c.

Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

at which all the males of *Israel* were obliged to appear before the Lord at *Jerusalem*, (*Exod. xxiii. 17.*); and Jesus went thither, as usual, that he might pay obedience to the law.

2 Now there is at Jerusalem, by the *sheep-market* a pool which is called, in the Hebrew tongue, *Bethesda*, having five porches.

2 Now there * was in *Jerusalem*, near the sheep-gate, (*ἐν τῇ βοσκήματι*) a certain bath or pond of water, called in the common dialect used among the *Jews*, *Bethesda*, which signifies, The house of mercy or kindness; and, adjoining to this, were † five cloysters, or covered walks, whose roof was supported by columns, for the pleasure and convenience of the people, and especially of those that came to wash in this pool.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

3 In these cloysters abundance of distempered people lay, some blind, others lame, and others sinew-shrunk, and the like, who came or were brought thither, and continued waiting there, in hopes of being healed by the water of that pool, when it should be put into a supernatural motion, as it had sometimes been.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

4 For God, to awaken the expectation of *Israel*, that he was about to return to them in visible tokens of his favour, after they had been withdrawn for several ages, and to encourage persons attending on any means of his appointment for conveying blessings to them, had of late sent an angel at some particular seasons, to give a discernible motion to the water of this bath, which immediately thereupon became of a healing nature, in a very extraordinary manner, not for the curing of all that might go into it, but only of any one person ‡, who stepped in first after the moving of the water, that the Divine Power and sovereignty might be the more remarkably seen in the cure; and how desperate and long continued, or of what kind soever the disease of this person might be, he was instantly and effectually healed.

5 And a certain man was there which had an infirmity, thirty and eight years.

5 And among many others, that lay in these cloysters waiting for the happy opportunity, there was one man in such deplorable circumstances, that he had lost the use of his limbs for thirty-eight years past.

6 When

N O T E S.

* The Evangelist's mentioning this in the present tense seems to be an intimation, that he wrote his gospel before the destruction of *Jerusalem*.

† These, says Dr. Lightfoot in his *Harmony*, p. 661, were such walks as are in the Royal Exchange at *London*.

‡ This shews that the virtue of this water was not owing, as some have suggested, to a mixture of the blood of the sacrifices, which ran into this pool, and to a motion which

some messenger from the sanhedrim, or from the priests, put the impregnated water into, nor to any other natural cause whatsoever: For then its virtue would not have been restrained to the healing of the single person who first stepped in; and no natural virtue could be effectual to cure all, one as well as another, of the different sorts of diseases here mentioned; and therefore every cure by this means must be entirely miraculous.

6 When Jesus saw him lye, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impatient man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath-day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto

6 When our blessed Lord came among these miserable objects, he took particular notice of this distressed man; and knowing in himself, that he had continued so many years in this lamentable condition, his pity was moved toward him; and that he might raise the poor creature's expectation of a cure, and give him an opportunity of declaring before the people how much he needed it, Jesus going up to him said, Are you really desirous to be healed of your distemper?

7 The same man having no notion of Christ's healing him, but hoping that now, at last, a kind friend was come, who might assist him in getting into the water, answered him, Sir, the very design of my coming hither is to wait, and try in the best manner I can, for a cure: But alas! I am so poor, that I cannot hire a servant, and so neglected and despised, that I cannot find a friend to put me into the pool immediately upon the moving of its waters; and whilst I am crawling toward it, some other diseased person always gets the start of me, jumps in before me, and receives the benefit, which is obtained only by him who gets in first; and so hitherto, I have not been able to succeed in my desire.

8 Hereupon Jesus designing to work a miraculous cure upon him, and therein to conform to the rule that had been settled by providence at *Bethesda*, for healing only one person at a time, said to the same man, in a way of sovereign authority, Get up, and, taking your bed upon your back, carry it hence, as a proof that your health and strength are perfectly restored.

9 And such almighty power went forth with this word of command, that the poor man was entirely healed in a moment, and received strength to enable him to obey Christ's order, which he accordingly did by taking up his bed, and carrying it away in the sight of all the people: And the time when this miracle was wrought, and this evidence given of it, was on a sabbath day.

10 When therefore some of the Jews observed that the man who was healed walked along the streets with his bed upon his back, they were offended at it, and quarrelled with him about it, saying, This, you know, is the sabbath, and it is a profanation of this holy day, for you to carry your bed, or any burthen whatsoever: How dare you then be guilty of such a great and public sin?

11 The man replied in vindication of himself, What I do is by the express command of the very person who

to me, Take up thy bed and walk.

miraculously healed me in an instant, and enabled me for it; I could do no less than obey him, after he had wrought such a great and merciful cure upon me; and surely he, who did it, merely by speaking a word, must needs be some holy and extraordinary prophet, and would never bid me do any thing that is sinful.

11 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk?

12 Then they, suspecting that Jesus had done this, made no inquiry about the miracle; but, passing over that, said, with a taunting, wrathful, and contemptuous air, to him that was healed, Pray, what man* is he, who durst presume to authorize your so notoriously breaking God's law, by carrying your bed on the sabbath-day?

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

13 But (8) the healed man could not inform them who it was, he having never before seen Jesus, who had been thus gracious to him: For as soon as Christ had cured him, he withdrew into the crowd, to conceal himself among them, there being a vast multitude at that place, and then slipped privately away, that he might prevent the confusion which was like to arise from his being cried up by some for the miracle he had wrought, and cried down by others for doing, and ordering this man to do, what, as they superstitiously pretended, was a breach of the sabbath.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

14 Afterwards the poor man, being dismissed, went to the temple †, to offer thanksgivings to God for his miraculous recovery, and to shew that he paid a religious regard to the sabbath, notwithstanding what had been suggested to the contrary: And Jesus going thither, as he was wont, met with him there; and speaking to him again, said, Behold how, in the riches of divine and distinguishing mercy, you have been delivered from your late sore affliction, contrary to your own expectations or deserts: Take heed that you do not knowingly commit any sin hereafter, lest, by an abuse of this endearing instance of God's goodness, you bring upon yourself worse miseries than ever you yet felt, to the ruin of your immortal soul.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had

15 At this second interview the man found who it was that had so miraculously healed him; and he imprudently, though with a good intention to do honour to his great Physician, went to some of the chief of the Jews, and told them that Jesus of Nazareth was the person

N O T E S.

* They seemed to call him a man, by way of contempt, to insinuate that he was no more than a man, and therefore could have no authority to order that to be done which

they presumed to say was a violation of the law of God.

* This was probably on the same day, as soon as he had disposed of his bed.

had made him whole.

15 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath-day.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also, that God was his Father,

person who had * miraculously wrought the great cure upon him.

16 But the *Jews*, instead of admiring so undoubted and merciful a miracle, which was an evident demonstration of Christ's divine power and goodness, were provoked at it, and took occasion from thence to set themselves with the greatest malignity against him, and even to thirst for his blood, because he had healed the lame man †, as well as ordered him to carry his bed, on the sabbath, which they called such an open profanation of that sacred day, as was worthy of death.

17 But our Lord, to defend what he had done,—said to them, Though God my Father has instituted a sabbath for man, ye must all own that he nevertheless has all along, from the creation hitherto, continually performed his providential works of power and goodness on the sabbath, as well as on other days; and I, his Son, partaking of his nature and perfections, am undivided in operation from him: Our work and authority are the same in the preservation and government of all things; and therefore as none can pretend to say, that what my Father does on the sabbath, is any breach upon the holy rest of that day; so there is no just ground to object against what I have done, who am a co-worker with him, as if it were a violation of the sabbath §.

18 The *Jews*, at the hearing of this, were still more abundantly enraged, and determined to do their utmost to put him to death, because he had not only done what they insisted was a profanation of the sabbath, but, to justify himself, had added the highest blasphemy to impiety, by calling God *his own proper Father*, (*πατέρα ἑαυτοῦ*) in so peculiar and eminent a sense

as

N O T E S.

* It is observable that the *Jews*, in their question, (ver. 12.) took no notice of the miracle, but only asked what man had ordered this person to take up his bed and walk: But the man, in his account of Jesus, took no notice of his ordering him to carry his bed, but only of his making him whole; which shews that the information this man gave was not from any ill will to Christ, as their inquiry was; but that he designed it for the honour of his great benefactor.

† It was Christ's working the miracle, rather than his ordering the man to carry his bed, that stung the *Jews*, and put them upon taking occasion to charge him with breaking the sabbath, as appears from our Lord's answering only to this ground of the charge, which in course would confute the whole of it.

§ This way of our blessed Lord's arguing, from his Father's working to his own, plainly intimates that he speaks of himself as one with his Father in nature and operation; otherwise the argument loses its force and beauty: For if a mere creature, who only receives a commission from God, as for instance, a prophet or an apostle, were to say, God does whatever he pleases, and therefore I have a right to do whatever I please likewise on the sabbath-day: who would not see the reasoning to be inconclusive and absurd? But understanding our Lord to speak of himself as one in nature and operation with the Father in all his works, the argument is irresistible; and it is evident from the following verse, that the *Jews* understood him in this peculiar and exalted sense.

ther, making himself equal with God.

19 Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily verily I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth: and

as amounted to no less than a claim of equality in authority, power, and operation with God himself*.

19 In answer to this, our blessed Lord was so far from blaming the Jews for wresting his words, that he went on to vindicate them in the most sublime sense that could be put upon them, saying, I, who am Truth itself, solemnly assure you, that the union between the Father and Son is so singular and essential, and they are so undivided in their actions, and in their privity to each other's designs, that the Son can do nothing of his own head, or separately from the Father, without his consent and co-operation, but only concurs with the Father in all the works, which, by his intimate acquaintance with him, he sees him doing: For all things that the Father himself effects, in the continual agency of his Providence, (*ταυτα*) the very same does the Son also perform, by his co-operation with him; and that (*ομοιως*) in the very same manner, with the same divine power and authority with which the Father himself performs them: So that the Father no more does them without the Son, than the Son without him.

20 For they being as much united in will and affection, as in nature and power, the Father has such an infinite complacency in his Son, that he delights in communicating counsels with him, and in laying open all his designs and operations to him; so that no one thing, that is done by the Father, is ever hid from the Son†; And, in the further course of his dispensations, he

N O T E S.

* The Jews themselves often called God their Father, and would never have found fault with, much less charged blasphemy upon, any that came to them under the character of a prophet, for using the same stile: And therefore they must be supposed to understand our Lord, as speaking of God, as his Father, in a sense superior to any covenant or office-relation, and in a sense peculiar to himself, as to intimate his partaking of the same nature and perfections with him; or else there would have been no room for their imagining or suggesting, that by this claim of relation to God as his Father, he made himself equal with God.

† If, as some think, the Son's doing nothing of himself but what he sees the Father do, and the Father's loving him, and shewing him all things that himself does, &c. relate to his office-character as the Messiah: Then these expressions are to be understood with respect to his doing nothing in the execution of his office, but by commission from his Father, and nothing but what the Father, by the union of his Spirit, intimates to him that he should

do; and the Father's shewing him these things, as to be done by him, is an undeniable proof of the Father's approbation of him, and pleasure in him, and in all that he does as mediator: And were we to take it in this light, what our blessed Lord here says about his doing what things soever the Father does, and in the same manner with him, and his Father's shewing him ALL things that himself does, represents him as receiving such an high office from his Father, and such powers for discharging it, as he could not be capable of exercising, unless he were the Son of God in so high and proper a sense, as to be partaker of the same divine nature and perfections with the Father, and to be intimately one with him. But it does not appear to me that it could be said of Christ, merely as the Messiah, especially in his state of humiliation, that whatsoever things the Father did, the very same did the Son, and that in the same manner; or that the Father shewed him universally all things that himself did: And therefore I rather incline to the sense given of it in the paraphrase, as relating to the Son, considered in his original

and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

he will shew him in real events of his power and goodness, and will perform by him, and together with him, much greater works than healing a lame man, that those of you, who shall believe, may be filled with holy wonder and praise, and that others of you, who will nevertheless continue obstinate in your unbelief, may be astonished, and even confounded at them.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them: even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

21 For, to instance in some of these greater works, which the Son does in the same manner with the Father, and which he could not do in the execution of his office, as the Messiah, unless he were partaker of the divine nature: As it is undoubtedly the peculiar property of God to raise the dead, and restore them to life, and the Father has done, and whenever he pleases can do this; even so, by the same power and authority, and with like sovereignty, the Son quickens them, who are dead in trespasses and sins, to a spiritual life, and raises them to corporal life again, who were literally dead, whenever he will*.

22 For the Father judgeth no man: but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

22 For God the Father does not reserve merely to himself, nor exercise immediately by himself, even that prerogative of deity, which consists in ordering all the concerns of providence and grace here, and in managing the final judgment hereafter; but has put the immediate exercise of these divine powers into the hands of his incarnate Son.

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

23 And this he has done to this end, that, instead of any one's being stumbled and offended at the incarnation and humiliation of the Son of God, all men might be induced, by his bearing and executing this high commission in human nature, to pay the same religious adoration, worship, and obedience to him, as they are obliged to pay to the Father himself: And the Father so peremptorily insists upon this, as to account, that, after such a revelation of the Messiah, whoever does not in this manner honour the Son, does not truly honour the Father himself, who glorieth in having such a Son, and has sent him with all authority, to exert these peculiar prerogatives of deity, that he might be owned and homaged as a Divine person.

24 I,

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original nature, who as such was capable of performing all those works which belong to his office, in as divine and Godlike a manner, as the Father himself would have done had he been incarnate.

* It seems to me, as if Christ, in this and the next verse, speaks of raising and quickening the dead, and of all judgment being committed to him, in an extensive view, as relating both to the administration of his king-

dom in this world, and to his raising the dead, and passing the final sentence upon all mankind in the world to come; and that, in the following verses, he enlarges upon each of these articles distinctly, as we shall see when we come to them: Otherwise it may be difficult to account for his repeating expressions of this nature so often in so short a discourse. See the note on ver. 21.

24 Verily verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

24 I, the faithful and true Witness, who have told you that all judgment is committed to me, do solemnly assure you, that the rule, by which I proceed therein, is this, Whoever hears, attends to, and heartily receives my doctrine, particularly with relation to my being the Son of God, and the true Messiah; and who-soever believes on my Father, who hath sent me to exercise those divine powers, as the Messiah, has a right and title to, and the beginnings, principles, and earnestness of eternal life; and he shall never fall under the condemning sentence of the law, or be cast in the future judgment; but is already translated from a state of condemnation to death, into a state of justification of life: And in order hereunto,

25 Verily verily I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

25 I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that the time is just at hand, and is even already begun, when they that are dead in trespasses and sins shall hear the voice of the Divine Messiah, as speaking by his * word and Spirit with powerful energy, to quicken them to the obedience of faith; and every one who thus hears it, shall live for ever: And, as an emblem of this, his mighty power shall soon be seen in raising some persons to life, who were corporally dead; and both these are alike easy to him.

26 For, as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son

26 For as the Father is the fountain of life, who has it necessarily, and in the most perfect manner in himself, and communicates it to all the living; so in the dispensation, whereby he has constituted his own essentially living Son to be the Messiah, he has granted to him †, that in his incarnate state, and in the execution of

N O T E S.

* The gospel is called Christ's voice, (*chap. x. 16.*) and of this he says, *The words that I speak, they are spirit and they are life,* (*chap. vi. 63.*); and he soon gave a visible representation of his quickening power, in his raising several persons to life that were literally dead, before his own death, and at his own resurrection: So that what he here says about raising the dead, and in *ver. 27.* about executing judgment, seems evidently to refer to the power which he then was beginning to exercise in the administration of his kingdom in this world: because these are distinguished from the general resurrection and judgment at the last day, which are spoken of, *ver. 28, 29.*; (see the note on *ver. 11.*) and because it was prophesied, that the Messiah should execute judgment and justice in the earth, and that in his days Judah should be saved, &c. and he should be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.** *Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.*

† Some judicious expositors think, that the

Father's giving to the Son to have life in himself, relates to the eternal and inconceivable generation of the Son, by which the same perfection of life was necessarily communicated to him, as is in the Father himself: But others understand it of an oeconomic communication of life to the Son, as man and mediator, founded upon, and answerable to, his original participation of the same divine life with the Father. And I rather incline to the last of these senses, because of the close connection there is between this and what is said in the following verse, about the Father's giving him authority to execute judgment, both of which are brought in as proofs, not of what our Lord had said, about his doing all things in the same manner that the Father does them, (*ver. 19.*) but of what he had said in the immediately foregoing verse, about the Son's quickening the dead, in the administration of his kingdom; and because it seems to me that his being the Son of man is added at the close

Son to have life in himself ;

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

28 Marvel not at this ; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 And shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

30 I can of mine own self do nothing ;

of his office, he shall have this life in himself, with authority to communicate life to others, in raising them from the dead, by his own fund of quickening power, which is inherent in himself.

27 The Father has likewise committed a judicial power to him, in his office-capacity, to save his favourites from wrath, and execute righteous vengeance on his enemies, (*Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.*) because, being the Son of God, he condescended to take upon him human nature, that he might bear and discharge the office of the Messiah, for the salvation of those that receive him, and for the destruction of those that reject him ; and so men might live or die, and be justified or condemned by the authority of one, who partakes of their own nature, as he is the Son of man.

28, 29 Let it not be thought strange by any of you, that I speak of the Son's doing the things before-mentioned very quickly, in the administration of his kingdom on earth : For I will tell you of still much greater and more surprizing things of this kind, which he will do at the end of the world. The great day is coming, when all the individuals of mankind, who now are, or by that time will be dead and buried, shall hear his powerful and awful voice to raise them out of the graves, and to bring them before his judgment-seat : Then all the good and holy that shall be found to have proved the sincerity of their faith by their works, shall be quickened by his Spirit, as the Head of the body, and shall be adjudged to a glorious and blessed state of immortal life ; and all that shall have persisted in their sins, and lived and died workers of iniquity, shall be raised by his power, as Lord of all, and shall receive a dreadful sentence of condemnation, to their utter and everlasting ruin.

30 The sum therefore of what I insist upon, in my defence against your accusation, is this *, I am that Son of God, who is partaker of the same divine nature and perfections with the Father, and has taken upon him the office of the Messiah to do those great things, which none but such a Son of the Father could possibly perform ; and therefore I can do nothing of myself separately from, much less in contrariety to him : But,

accord-

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close of the next verse, (*ver. 17.*) as the reason of both these donations.

* Dr. Clarke observes, that the same words are repeated here which began the discourse *ver. 19.* There they are *εγω εγω εγω εγω*

εγω εγω εγω εγω, the Son can do nothing of himself ; and here they are, *εγω εγω εγω εγω* *εγω εγω εγω εγω*, I can of mine own self do nothing, which shews that our Lord here resumes, and returns to the head of the discourse.

thing: as I hear I judge: and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

according to what I am originally and perfectly * acquainted with as his Son, and according to the instructions which I receive from him as the Messiah; so I proceed in the administration of all the affairs of my kingdom, both in this world and in that which is to come: Whatsoever therefore I do, cannot but be right and just, because I therein neither aim at, nor pursue any private will of my own, different from, much less in opposition to that of my Father; but have the strictest regard in every thing to what is entirely agreeable to his mind and will, and to the commission, for the discharge of which he has sent me into the world.

31 I indeed readily acknowledge, that, if I only affirm these things concerning myself, and can produce no credentials to support my testimony, this alone is not a sufficient proof of its truth, according to the usual course of men's judging; and therefore I will not rest the matter here, but proceed to other evidence.

32 There is another person, even † *John the Baptist*, who expressly said concerning me, *This is the Son of God*, (*chap. i. 34.*); and I know that his testimony is certainly true, and dare appeal to it as such; nor can ye yourselves justly object against it, since ye owned him to be a prophet, and submitted to his baptism under that character.

33 Yea, so high was your opinion of *John*, that, even when ye were met in council at *Jerusalem*, ye sent priests and Levites with a solemn message to him, to inquire who he was, as doubting whether he himself were not the Messiah; and he honestly and plainly declared the truth, without favour or affection, saying, *That he was not the Christ, but that I am he who came after him, and am preferred before him, because, in my divine nature, I was before him.* (*Chap. i. 19.—30.*)

34 But I have no need of being beholden to his, or any man's testimony whatsoever, to establish my divine and mediatorial characters, having still higher evidence to produce: Nevertheless, I am willing to remind you of what *John* said concerning me, not for mine own sake, but for yours, in condescension to your weaknesses and infirmities, that I might reason with you upon your own principles, and that no proper means might be omitted for your conviction and salvation.

35 Tho'

N O T E S.

* *Hearing* is in this place put for the most intimate and exact knowledge of a thing.

† Some suppose that by this *other*, who bore witness of Christ, is meant God the Father. But his witness is expressly mention-

ed, *ver. 37.* And both the construction and connection of this sentence most naturally lead us to understand our Lord, as here speaking of *John the Baptist*.

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

36 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

35 Though John the Baptist was not (*ἡ ἀρχὴ*, chap. i. 8.) that true light, which was to come into the world, to enlighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Israel, (*Luke* ii. 32.) but was only (*ὁ λυχνίας*) a lamp, or subordinate light; yet he was really a great man, full of holy zeal and wisdom in his doctrine and life, which were admirably suited, under the influence of divine grace, to warm the heart, and enlighten the mind: And ye were so affected with them, at his first appearing among you, that, for a little while, ye esteemed and received him as an eminent prophet, and were even in a transport of wonder and joy at what ye saw in him, and heard from him, till he came to reprove you sharply for your sins, and to give a plain testimony to me; then indeed your language was, *he has a devil*. (*Luke* vii. 33.)

36 But I have still much more clear and unexceptionable testimonies to produce than that of John: For the evident miracles, which I have begun already to perform among you, and the still greater works, which I have told you I am commissioned by my Father, and shall go on to do, till I have perfected all that belongs to my office; these wonderful works themselves, which I myself do by my own power, are so great, so good, and holy, and so undeniably divine, as to carry plain credentials of my being, in the highest sense, the Son of the Father, and the true Messiah, whom he has sent into the world.

37 Yea, to advance yet further, God the Father himself, whose Son I am, and from whom I have my office-power, has directly bore witness to me, by the *heaven's opening*, and the *Spirit's descending like a dove and lighting upon me*, and by an audible voice immediately from heaven at my baptism, saying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, (*Matth.* iii. 16, 17.) That was a very extraordinary testimony to me, such as suits your own desire of a sign from heaven; and none of your nation, how highly soever ye have been favoured of God, have at any time before heard the Father himself speak with an audible voice, or ever seen a visible appearance* of his glory.

38 And

N O T E.

* *Εἶδος* rendered *shape*, signifies an appearance or representation. And as many of the Jews heard the Father's voice, and saw the visible representation he made at Christ's baptism; and, as after this, they heard a voice to him from heaven, (*chap.* xii. 28, 29.) what is here said seems to relate, not to these particular persons, but to the nation of

the Jews; and strongly intimates that this was a peculiar privilege, which none of their ancestors were ever favoured with; and, by consequence, that all the voices and appearances of God, under the Old Testament, were not of the Father, but of the Son, as prefaces of his incarnation: Otherwise it could not be said that the Jews, had never before heard the

38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

38 And though he has now given testimony to me in this immediate manner, as well as formerly by his prophets; yet his word, in either of these ways of delivering it, makes no lasting impression upon you, to engage your faith in me: For, after all, ye will not believe in me; who am thus plainly proved to be sent of the Father.

39 Ye *Jews* profess * to search the sacred writings of inspired men, and are indeed often conversant with them, as they are read in your synagogues every sabbath-day, as many of you get some portions of them by heart, and as they are studied by your learned rabbies to put their own glosses upon them: But carefully examine them again, read and search them to the very bottom, and impartially observe what they say, that ye may understand the mind and will of God in them, which concerns every one of you, whether learned or unlearned. I appeal to these authentic records, and ye cannot justly refuse this appeal; for ye yourselves apprehend and profess to believe, that in them is contained the true doctrine of eternal life; yea so high is your opinion of them, as to think, according to a prevailing corrupt notion among you, that he, who has the words of the law, is safe for heaven: Now these very scriptures are my witnesses; they, in their types, promises, and prophecies, point to me, and say the very same things, in effect, that I have said of myself, and that my Father has said by a voice from heaven, concerning me.

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

40 And notwithstanding all this evidence, your pride and prejudices, carnality and wilful obstinacy, are so great, that ye will not receive, apply to, or trust in me, that ye might have pardon and peace, life and blessedness, and all salvation by me, in whom alone it is to be found.

41 I receive not honour from men.

41 I neither need, nor have, nor seek after the applause of men; nor do I affect that external pomp and grandeur which ye look for your Messiah to appear in: My only aim is to advance the glory of God in the salvation of his people.

42 But I know you,

42 But this is so far from recommending me to you, that, on the other hand, it is a strong prejudice in your minds against me: For how plausible soever your pretences

NOTES.

the Father's voice at any time, nor seen his appearance in a visible representation made by him.

tively, ye do search, or imperatively, search ye the scriptures, and I have taken in both senses.

* *Egwari* may be rendered either indica-

you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

tences of piety may be, to the deceiving of yourselves and others, I can see into your very hearts, and I well know, that ye have no sincere affection to God and godliness; but that the love of this world is predominant in you, and that therefore ye reject me.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

43 I am come to you with a commission from my heavenly Father, to promote his glory and a spiritual salvation from sin and wrath, and have produced several unexceptionable witnesses, to establish my divine and office-characters; and yet because I oppose your vices, and do not appear with worldly pomp, nor give you expectations of secular riches, honour, and power, ye will not believe in me: But if, on the contrary, any false prophets, or false Christs arise, and do not re-monstrate against your sins, but set up with high pretences of delivering you from the *Roman* yoke, and of aggrandizing you in the world, though they bring no credentials from God of their acting by his authority, ye would readily entertain and follow them*.

44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

44 How then is it possible that, with this carnal temper of mind, ye should believe in me, whose kingdom is not of this world, who make no magnificent appearances or pretences, but am despised of men, and teach the most self-denying doctrines? your corrupt hearts can never receive me, while ye are full of worldly ambition, extremely fond of the applauses of men, and will pay no honour to any but those from whom ye expect to receive it again, and while ye have no value or concern for the spiritual, substantial, and eternal honours, which God alone can, and will put upon his favourites.

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

45 But though, for your conviction, I thus freely charge these crimes upon your consciences in rejecting me; do not imagine that the design of my coming into the world is to spy out and aggravate your faults, and to lodge a plea against you to my Father for them: No, my direct and principal work lyes in the merciful, and not in the severe way, in being an advocate for, instead of an accuser of mine enemies: and indeed there is no occasion for my appearing against you: For there is another that does this, even *Moses* himself, in whom ye place your greatest confidence, and by whose law ye expect

N O T E

* Thus they followed *Thendat*, who boasted himself to be some body, and *Judas of Galilee*, who drew away much people after him, (*Acts* v. 36, 37.) and afterwards, in the reign of *Adrian* the Roman emperor, they followed *Eurhecané*, who set up for the Messiah, and

spoke of nothing but wars and triumphs over their enemies, *Euseb. L. 4. c. 6.* And see *Bishop Kidder's* demonstration of the Messiah, *Part I. p. 14.* and *Part III. p. 106.* and the places referred to in *Josephus* there.

expect to be saved: This great prophet does already by his writings indite, and condemn you for your unbelief; and he will be a terrible witness against you, to your utter confusion, at the great day.

46 For had ye believed *Moses*, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

46 For notwithstanding all your boasts of *Moses*, and sheltering yourselves under his name, if ye had really attended to, understood, and heartily believed his writings, ye could not but have received me, and transferred your trust in him to me: For all the types and figures in his law, and all the prophecies which he recorded, evidently pointed to me, and are fulfilled in me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

47 But if ye will not give credit to, nor be convinced by what *Moses* himself has said concerning me, though ye have so high an opinion of him, and acknowledge his writings to be of divine authority; how can it be supposed that ye should pay any regard to what I say, against whom ye have the most inveterate prejudices, and whom ye treat with sovereign contempt, and resolve to run down as an impostor?

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Who, that wants to be healed of spiritual diseases, which are worse than any that can afflict the body, would not wait at the pool of ordinances for supernatural influence to effect the cure! And how often does Christ prevent the soul with his mercy, before it knows him! His word is with power, and when once he says, Thou art made whole; with what satisfaction may we yield the obedience to his commands, with regard to the sabbath, and every thing else, which he enables us to perform, whatsoever others may object against it; and how concerned should we be to sin no more! And O what a divine and suitable Saviour is our blessed Lord, who is truly the Son of man, and yet with inconceivable peculiarity and dignity the Son of God, possessed of the same nature and essential perfections, and undivided in operation with the Father! He knows, wills, and does all the very same things, and performs them with the same divine power and sovereignty as the Father himself; and in the execution of his office, as Mediator, he acts like the absolute Lord of life and death, whether natural, spiritual, or eternal, quickens the dead, exercises an universal Providence for the good of the church, examines all causes, and distributes eternal rewards and punishments in such a manner as none but God himself could be capable of: How evidently therefore are all divine honours, in the nature of things, as well as by the Father's own demand, to be paid to his Son equally with himself! How faithful, as well as able, is Christ to discharge his high and important commission, for the glory of God, and the salvation of all that come to him! And since his forerunner John the Baptist, his own miraculous works, his heavenly Father, and Old Testament prophecies unite in their attestations to him; what surer ground can we have for putting our trust in him? how carefully should we search the scriptures, which contain all things necessary to salvation, and particularly testify of him! And yet, alas! how criminally blind and obstinate are sinners hearts, who, though they own the divine authority of the sacred oracles, do not heartily believe and approve of their plainest sense and meaning: and who, though they sit under a ministry which is like a burning and shining light, are still as dark and cold under it as ever, and only admire it for a season, without being changed by it! It is unbelief that prevents the efficacy of God's word upon their souls, so that it does not abide in them; and their great miscarriage

riage lyes in their unwillingness to come to Christ for life, and chusing rather to trust in the law, or any thing else, than in him for salvation: And how many other sins doth unbelief include! what disaffection to God, disregard to his word, prejudices against the Redeemer, and readiness to give credit to any other rather than him; and what inordinate love to this world, and preferings of the applauses of men, to the approbation of God, and to the honour that comes from him only! O dreadful accusation, that lyes in the inspired writings now, and will be brought in the awful day of account against unbelievers, for this great and complicated sin! But how happy is it to be enabled, by the quickening Spirit, so to hear and believe, as to pass from death to life, and never come into condemnation: and how wide and manifest will the difference be between the righteous and the wicked, when all must come forth out of their graves, some to the resurrection of life, and others to the resurrection of damnation: O joyful day to the saint, and terrible day to the sinner!

C H A P. VI.

Christ's feeding five thousand with five loaves and two small fishes, 1,—14. His walking upon the water of the sea, 15,—21. His discourse with the people at Capernaum concerning himself, as the bread of life, occasioned by the miracle of the loaves, 22,—59. His disciples' dissatisfaction at this discourse, and his reproof of them for it, 60,—65. The apostacy of many from him, and the adherence of others to him, on that occasion, 66,—71.

TEXT.

AFTER these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.

PARAPHRASE.

A Great while after * the fore-mentioned miracle, and discourse relating to it, our blessed Lord retired again into Galilee by water, making a coasting voyage on the sea of Galilee, which is also called the sea of Tyberias; and he landed on the same side of the lake, in a desert place, within the territories of Bethsaida. (Luke ix. 10.)

2 And abundance of people, observing which way he steered his course, flocked after him, some out of curiosity to see more of his miracles, and others in hope of getting a cure for themselves, or their diseased friends, rather than from any desire of instruction by his heavenly discourses; they being generally influenced hereto, by what they had seen of the wonderful cures he had wrought on some distempered persons.

3 And Jesus, seeing them gather about him, went up with his disciples to a neighbouring mountain; where

N O T E.

* As those things pass at the feast mentioned chap. v. 1. this must be a great while afterwards, whatever that feast were; and if, according to the note there, that was the passover, this must be near a year after it, (ver. 4.); and so our Evangelist passes over the fol-

lowing transactions of that year, which had been recorded by the other Evangelists in *Matth. v.—xiv.* and *Mark ii.—vi.* and *Luke vi.—ix.* chapters, for the order of which consult the Harmonists.

there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 When Jesus then lift up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?

6 (And this he said to prove him; for he himself knew what he would do.)

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred penny-worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here which hath five barley-loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place.

where, as the Jewish doctors used to sit when they preached, he set himself down on the rising ground, to speak to them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that needed healing. (Luke ix. 11.)

4 And, as the passover, one of their most solemn feasts, was then near at hand, the multitude was the greater, because the people on that occasion were generally travelling from all parts to Jerusalem.

5 When therefore our Lord observed the vast number of people that came after him, and the disciples had desired him to dismiss them, in order to their getting some refreshment, which could not be expected in that desert place, he had compassion upon them, but told his disciples that there was no necessity of sending them away on that account, (*Mat. xiv. 15, 16.*); and then turning to Philip, who was an inhabitant of Bethsaida, (*chap. i. 44.*) he asked him how, or by what means, provision might be made to suffice so great a company.

6 Jesus put this question to him, not as one at a loss what to do; for this he had already determined in himself; but only for the trial of Philip's and the other apostles saith, about his own miraculously feeding them.

7 But they were so far from having any expectation of this kind, that even Philip, who had been with him, and seen his miracles from the beginning, instead of saying, Lord, thou canst easily furnish a table in the wilderness, replied, It will be impracticable for them to be fed here: For it would cost more than we can be supposed to have with us, to buy a sufficient quantity of food, so much as to stay the stomachs of so great a company as this; two hundred pence would go but a little way toward it. (See the note on *Mark. vi. 37.*)

8, 9 Then another of the apostles, viz. Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, gave Christ an account, that they had only five loaves of barley-bread, and two small fishes in the custody of a youth, who was with them: But alas! said he, what will these do toward feeding such a vast multitude? It would be only baulking their expectations to offer a distribution of so small a pittance among them all.

10 However, our Lord designing to work a miracle for their relief, commanded his disciples to order the people to sit down on the ground, it being well covered with grass: Accordingly the disciples, without any further disputing, obeyed the word of command, in hopes

place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

hopes of some good event; and the people, following their directions, placed themselves in several ranks, by hundreds and fifties, to the amount of five thousand men. (See the note on *Mark* vi. 40.)

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and, when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

11 Then our blessed Saviour took bread and fish into his hands, to intimate that he designed to feed the multitude with them; and, having in a solemn manner (as he was wont to do at his meals, setting us an example) acknowledged God as the author of all mercies, and begged his blessing on the food for the nourishment of those that were to partake of it, (see the note on *Matth.* xiv. 19.) he divided the bread and the fish into pieces, and delivered them into the hands of his apostles, who, by his order, distributed them to the several ranks of the people, as they sat on the grass; and the quantity was so exceedingly increased by his miraculous power, that every one eat till he was fully satisfied.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

12 And to shew that there was enough and to spare; when none of the company could eat any more, he ordered his disciples to gather together the broken remains of the bread and fish, that there might be no waste of the food, though it cost them nothing, and that they might learn frugality in the midst of plenty, and not squander away the bounties of providence, in hopes of living upon repeated miracles without necessity.

13 Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

13 Accordingly, in obedience to his word, they cheerfully set themselves to pick up the scrapes of bread and fish, (*Mark* vi. 43.) that remained, after the multitude had eat to the satisfaction of the utmost cravings of their appetites; and the overplus was so great, that it filled twelve baskets, every disciple, having one for after-use, and therein an abiding proof that the increased quantity was real bread and fish. (See the note on *Matth.* xiv. 20.)

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

14 This was so plain and undeniable a miracle, which the whole multitude saw, and of which they shared the benefit, that it carried a conviction to their minds and consciences of Christ's wonderful power, and even forced them to cry out, He who has thus amazingly fed us, certainly is the true Messiah, who, according to ancient prophecies, they expected would appear in the world about this time, and that, as they thought, for the deliverance of *Israel* from all their enemies round about them.

15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force,

15 When therefore Jesus observed that, according to their gross and carnal notions about the Messiah, as a temporal prince, they were entering into a confederacy,

force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

16 And, when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea towards Capernaum: and it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose, by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So, when they had rowed about five and twenty, or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

20 But he saith unto them, It is I, be not afraid.

21 Then they will-

to set him up, and proclaim him for their King, and even to attempt, in a violent manner, to oblige him to take that character upon himself, he got out of their way*: For having first ordered his disciples to embark, and go back over the sea of *Gabilee* toward *Bethsaida*, (*Mark* vi. 43, 46.) lest they should join with the multitude, and encourage them in these temporal views, he went up the mountain again, to spend some time alone in prayer.

16, 17 And it was just about the shutting in of the evening, when the disciples went to the shore, and took boat to pass over the lake toward *Capernaum*, which lay not far from *Bethsaida*: After this it soon became dark, and Jesus was not then come to them; but, designing a trial of their faith, he continued still for some time in his retirement on the mountain.

18 In the mean while there was a very great sea, by means of a storm of wind, which beat against them, and blew with such exceeding fury, that there was extreme danger, in all human appearance, of their being utterly lost.

19 In this condition they worked hard with their oars, (*Mark* vi. 48.) till the fourth watch, which was a good while after midnight, (see the note on *Matth.* xiv. 25.); and in all that time they had reached no further than about a league, or a little more, it being by computation about twenty-five or thirty furlongs: And then, in the midst of their distress, they saw Jesus walking upon the surface of the water, as if it had been dry land, and making up toward their vessel, to which he was coming in his great compassion to save them; but as they could not distinctly discern him, through the hurry of their own minds, and for want of more light, they imagined that it was an apparition; which made them cry out for fear, lest some evil spirit were come to finish their destruction.

20 But he soon took pity upon them, and discovered himself to them, saying, with his usual voice, and tenderness toward them, It is I, your Lord and Master, who am here, and not any evil spirit, as ye suppose; do not frighten yourselves as if mischief would befall you; all is safe and well; I am come for your deliverance.

21 Then they, being satisfied that it was Jesus, dismissed

N O T E.

* Their present inducements to this attempt seem to have been, that they thought themselves to be a sufficient number for him to begin with, and thought him capable of main-
taining the greatest army, that should lift under him, by miracles, without any charges: But he perceiving this withdrew.

willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

21 The day following, when the people, which stood on the other side of the sea, saw that there was none other boat there, save that one wherewith his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone;

22 (Howbeit there came other boats, from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks.)

23 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

24 And when they had found him, on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when comest thou hither?

25 Jesus answered

missed their fears, and gladly took him into the boat, in confidence that all their danger was over, and that they should soon reach the shore, now they had got him with them: And so it proved; for immediately the storm ceased, (*Matth. xiv. 32.*) and they arrived safe in the vessel to the place they were bound for.

22 The next morning many of the people on the other side of the lake returned; and, being still intent on setting him up for their king, they diligently searched after him in all the places thereabouts; and, not finding him, wondered what was become of him: For they had observed, that, when the disciples took water in the evening, there was then no other boat besides that in which they went, and that they put off alone, Jesus himself not going along with them.

23 However, they afterwards found several other boats, which came that morning from *Tiberias*, and arrived in the neighbourhood of that place, where, the day before, they had been miraculously fed, the Lord Jesus having first, according to his religious custom, craved a blessing upon the food to sanctify it for their use. (*ver. 11.*)

24 When the people had sought for Jesus in vain on that side of the lake, and could find neither him nor his disciples there, they suspected that, by some means or other, though they knew not how, he might be gone to *Capernaum*, towards which they saw the disciples steered their course over night, and which was his usual head-quarters. And therefore, being eagerly desirous to see him again, they resolved to go by water in these boats to that city, and see whether they could not meet with him there.

25 And finding him, as soon as they landed on that part of the shore, they were surprized to think how he got thither, it being unlikely, that, in so short a time, he could take such a large compass as to walk it by land, and there being no other boat the night before, but that in which the disciples went without him: And therefore they said to him, Master, when, or by what possible means, was it, that you got hither so soon before us *?

26 Our Lord made no reply to their curious question; but knowing the corrupt design of their hearts in following him, took occasion to divert the discourse to a more suitable and important subject, saying, I, the

Amen,

N O T E.

* It seems by what is said *ver. 59.* That he used to resort wherever he went, and where they found him in the synagogue, whither it was most likely for them to meet with him.

secreted them and said, Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 They said unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30 They said there-

Amen, the faithful and true Witness, assure you, that I am no stranger to the true reason of your thus earnestly seeking after me: It is not because ye are so convinced by my miracles, and particularly by that which ye yesterday saw me perform, as to believe in me for eternal life; but it is only because I gave you a full meal to refresh you, without any cost or charge, which raised your carnal expectations of some further temporal advantages from me.

27 Take heed therefore that your chief solicitude and care, concern and labour, be not thus eagerly laid out to obtain refreshment for your mortal bodies, or any worldly benefits, which are insufficient for your true happiness, and in a little time must perish together with your bodies themselves: But let your governing aims, inquiries, and pains be for the spiritual food of your immortal souls, and for the blessings that pertain to eternal life, and will make you happy for ever, which I, the Messiah, will freely give to every one of you that believes in me: For this is the great end for which I am come, and for which God my Father has so manifestly authorized me, by his testimony from heaven, by the visible descent of his Spirit upon me, and by concurring with me in the many unquestionable miracles, which I perform to confirm my commission from him.

28 Hereupon the people, some in a way of contempt, and others of more serious inquiry, said to him, Pray, what are we to do to obtain that sort of bread, which you speak of labouring for; or what works can you tell us of, that are more acceptable to God, and necessary to eternal life, than those which he requires of us in the law of *Moses*, and which we think are sufficient to secure the divine favour, and our own everlasting happiness?

29 Jesus in reply said to them, The great and important duty, which I am come to point out to you, and which leads the way to all others, and is necessary to the acceptance of your persons, and of all your obedience, and which therefore God commands, approves, and is the author of, is this, That ye cordially embrace, and yield yourselves up by faith to me, as the true Messiah, according to the discoveries which I am come to make of myself, and of the way of salvation by me.

30 Then the people, being prejudiced against him for not answering their worldly expectations, slighted the many wonders he had wrought at *Capernaum*, as well as the miracle of the loaves, which they admired on

therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily verily I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34 Then said they

on the preceding day; and expostulated with him, saying, Since you pretend to teach a better doctrine than *Moses*, and to set up for the Messiah; what divine token do you produce of your authority, equal to that which he gave of his, that we, being eye-witnesses of it, may be thereby induced to believe you? What extraordinary miracles do you perform to support these high pretences?

31 As for what you did yesterday in feeding five thousand of us, that was a very small matter compared with *Moses's* feeding a much greater number, even all our fathers in the wilderness, with more excellent food, according to what is written, (*Psal. lxxviii. 24, 25.*) *He gave them, not such mean fare as barley-loaves and fishes, but manna, the corn of heaven, and they did eat angels food to the full;* and that not for a day only, but for forty years together: Give us therefore some miraculous sign equal to this, if you would have us forsake *Moses* for you.

32 Jesus replied, Since ye mention that bread, I, who am Truth itself, assure you, that the *manna*, which was given under the ministration of *Moses*, and which indeed not he, but God * himself gave unto your fathers, fell not from the highest heavens, but only from the clouds, or the region of the air, to support their mortal lives for a season: But my Father, in sending me, freely gives those of you, who by faith receive me, the most excellent and important bread from the highest heavens, from whence I am come, for the spiritual nourishment of your souls unto everlasting life and blessedness.

33 For this, which was typified by the *manna*, is, by way of eminence, that excellent and divine provision, which God himself has made for his family, and which he has sent down † from the heaven of heavens, for the spiritual life of an innumerable multitude of perishing sinners, not merely of the *Jews*, to whose use the *manna* was confined, but of the *Gentiles* also, (see the note on *chap. iii. 16.*) and for nourishing them up to eternal life, which is infinitely preferable to this mortal life.

34 The *Jews* not understanding Christ's meaning, but

N O T E S.

* We do not find that *Moses* had any concern in procuring the *manna*, or that he so much as prayed for it.

† O *καταβαιν*, he which comes down, might in this place be better rendered, *that which comes down from heaven*: For though our Lord certainly meant it of himself; yet

he did not explain his meaning by applying the metaphor of bread particularly to himself, till the people, in the next verse, discovered their mistaken conceit, as if he spoke of some material bread in a literal sense, or at least their ignorance of what he really meant.

they unto him,
Lord, evermore
give us this bread.

but either grossly apprehending that he spoke literally of some extraordinary bread, or at best having only some general and confused notions, that he intended something which would supply their worldly wants, and make them exceeding happy, said to them with great earnestness * and respect, Lord, feed us continually with this bread, which has such wonderful properties; and we shall then readily own that you excel even Moses himself.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

35 Jesus replied, Ye are much mistaken, If you think that I spake of any extraordinary bread in a literal sense, or of any temporal happiness whatsoever: I only took occasion from your following me for the loaves, and talking so highly of the *manna* in the wilderness, to represent myself, and the benefits I bestow, under the figure of the most excellent bread; and my plain meaning is, that I am of divine original, and am come down from heaven, in my incarnation, to give spiritual life to dead souls, and to nourish them up in knowledge and grace, comfort and holiness to eternal life †: So that whoever applies by faith to me, and receives me into his heart, shall never perish for want of necessary and seasonable refreshment to his soul, as a needy man pines and dies with corporal hunger or thirst.

36 But I said unto you, that ye also have seen me, and believe not.

36 But alas! I have already told you, (*ver.* 26.) that though ye have seen me, and the miracles which I perform, and been forced to own them to be wonderful; yet, through the carnality of your hearts, ye are so fond of worldly advantages, that you will not embrace or believe in me, when I speak of myself, as come to bestow all spiritual blessings unto everlasting life.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will

37 However, there are some who will believe and be saved, even all whom the Father § by eternal agreement has given to me, as my charge, my property, and my reward; every one of these shall certainly be inclined and enabled to come by faith unto me: And whoever he be, that, under a sense of his guilt and unworthiness, necessity and danger, shall betake himself to

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* Some have imagined that they said this in a way of derision, as supposing that what our blessed Lord spoke of was a ridiculous conceit of something which was impossible to be done. But by the respectful way of their addressing him, it seems to me, with others, that they were serious, though very ignorant in this request, and that therefore in the following verses he so clearly explained his meaning in its reference to himself.

† Coming to Christ in this, and the 37th

verse, is the same as believing in him: For the people were already come in a corporal manner to him; and it cannot be said that the blessings here promised shall be given to all that so come to him.

§ Here it is, *all that the Father giveth me*; and *ver.* 39. it is *all that he hath given me*: The sense is the same, and may intimate that the Father gave them to Christ by an eternal act, which abides and never shall be reversed.

will in no wise
cast out.

to me, and trust in me for all salvation, how many and how aggravated soever his sins have been, and how great soever his discouragements in himself may be, I will on no account whatsoever reject or refuse him; but will readily embrace him, and shew him all the mercy he needs for pardon and peace, sanctification and final salvation.

38 For I came
down from hea-
ven, not to do
mine own will,
but the will of
him that sent me.

38 For I did not come from heaven into this lower world at uncertainties, or to carry on any private design of my own, separately from my Father: But the very business, on which I am come, is punctually to execute his will, who hath sent me to act the part of a Saviour.

39 And this is
the Father's will
which hath sent
me, that of all
which he hath
given me I should
lose nothing, but
should raise it up
at the last day.

39 And it is the resolution and good pleasure of my Father, who sent me, that of all the numberless persons, whom he has entrusted to my care, I should neither neglect, nor be deprived of any one of them, nor lose any part of them; but should recover them from all the ruins of their apostacy, and raise them to a glorious immortality, at the consummation of all things, that they may be completely happy in soul and body for ever.

40 And this is
the will of him
that sent me, that
every one which
seeth the Son, and
believeth on him,
may have ever-
lasting life; and
I will raise him
up at the last
day.

40 And as this is the secret purpose and delight of my Father who sent me; so it is his revealed will, which I am come to publish, that all who, being convinced of their need of me, and of my sufficiency for their help, look by faith to me, and depend upon me, as the true Messiah, for a whole salvation, shall be made partakers of eternal life: And I will certainly accomplish his will and word, by the working of my mighty power, in raising up their mortal bodies from the grave, and in putting their whole persons in full possession of endless glory and blessedness at the last day.

41 The Jews
then murmured
at him, because
he said, I am the
bread which came
down from hea-
ven.

41 The Jews now plainly perceiving from this explication, that by the bread, which came down from heaven, Christ meant himself, and his spiritual benefits, found themselves utterly disappointed in their worldly expectations from him; and, having no relish for spiritual blessings, they were disgusted and cavilled at him, under pretence that he assumed an extravagant honour to himself, by asserting that he came down from the highest heavens, which could be said of no mere man whatsoever.

42 And they
said, Is not this
Jesus the son of
Joseph, whose fa-

42 And to support their prejudices, they, taking for granted that he was begotten and conceived like other men, said one to another by way of scorn and contempt, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, a poor carpenter? and are not we ourselves acquainted with both his fa-
ther

father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

44 No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which

ther and mother, who have nothing extraordinary in them? How then can he have the face to pretend to us, who so well know his original on earth; that he descended from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore, knowing their perverse misrepresentations and arguings among themselves, answered saying, All this is groundless cavil, which ye unrighteously stir up in one anothers minds, and turn into a prejudice against me, as if, because my reputed father, and my real mother, according to the flesh, are known to be mean persons on earth, it were impossible that I should have an higher original from heaven.

44 The true reason of your unbelief and murmurings on this head, lyes in the corruption of your own hearts, which despises and opposes spiritual things, and which nothing but a divine power can subdue; and, as I said before, that all whom *the Father giveth me shall come to me*, (ver. 37.) so I now further tell you plainly, that no man whatsoever, in his present state of degeneracy, is able to divest himself of the natural blindness, enmity, and carnality of his heart, and savingly to believe in me, unless my heavenly Father, who has sent me, persuade and enable him by his Spirit, to depend upon me for salvation, in that way which I am come to reveal: And I will take effectual care of every one that is thus brought to believe in me; and, at the end of time, will certainly raise up his mortal body to immortal life and blessedness.

45 And what I am saying is, in effect, the same that was foretold in the writings of the prophets, relating to the gospel-church, where it is said, (*Isa. liv. 13.*) *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord*, and (*Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.*) *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord*. This makes it evident, that all *Sion's* children; or those who are given to me of the Father, must be drawn by his efficacious illumination and influences, in order to their coming to me; and that every one, who not only hears and is taught his will concerning me, by the ministry of the word, but is likewise under these internal drawings, will certainly believe in me.

46 But do not mistake me, as if I would intimate that any man hath seen, or can see the Father himself, or is to expect an immediate teaching from his own person: This can be said of none but the only begotten Son, who is partaker of the divine nature; (see the note on *chap. i. 18.*): He indeed has a most intimate

which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

and perfect acquaintance with the Father himself, and, as lying in his bosom, knows his mind and will immediately from himself; and it is by the Son and Spirit that the Father teaches others.

47 Verily verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

47 And, as he now speaks by me, I, who am Truth itself, solemnly assure you, that whoever, as a lost and perishing sinner, believes in me, as the only Saviour, is partaker of a life, which in its nature is everlasting; he has already the principle, beginnings, and earnest of eternal life, and has such a sure title to it, that he shall, in due time, as certainly enjoy it in all its perfection, as if he were already in full possession of it.

48 I am that bread of life.

48 I therefore plainly tell you again, that I myself, in my office-character and benefits, am that true, living, and life-giving bread, which I have been speaking of; all the springs of spiritual life are in me, and it is by virtue derived from me, that believers are made alive to God in this world, and continue so, till they obtain everlasting life in the world to come.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

49 As for the *manna* in the wilderness, which ye so highly magnified, what is that, when compared with this living bread? your ancestors were indeed miraculously fed by it in a barren wilderness; but what is become of them all? they are long since dead like other men: It could not keep them always alive upon earth; nor was there any virtue in it to give them life in another world: Nay, notwithstanding their eating of it, many of them died, for their murmurings and unbelief, by an immediate stroke of God's wrath; and few of them lived to enjoy the promised land.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

50 But, on the contrary, the living bread, which I declare myself to be, and which I have told you came down from the highest heaven itself, is of such a divine and excellent nature, that whoever does what, in the language of metaphor, may be called feeding upon it, shall escape the wrath of God, and never die the second death.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which

51 I am come down from heaven to be all that, which I have been discoursing of under the notion of living bread: And as the body is nourished by the food that is eaten; so whoever, with a spiritual appetite, receives me into his heart by faith, his soul shall live in the best sense, and never die: and his body, though it die, shall be raised again to eternal life: And still more particularly to inform you of what it is in me and my performances, that has this immortal virtue to a believer, I tell you it is my own body, or human nature, which I, in a way of special operation, have assumed into

which I will give for the life of the world.

51 The Jews therefore strove amongst themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

into personal union with my divine nature, and which I will freely give up unto the worst of deaths, for the redemption of those, who have deserved, and exposed themselves to it, that I may bring spiritual and eternal life to sinners of this lost world, including *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*. (See the note on *chap. iii. 16.*)

52 Though this way of Christ's expressing the benefits of his incarnation and death was evidently figurative, according to the usual and well-known stile of the eastern nations; and though what the *Jews* had suggested about the *manna* naturally gave a fit occasion for this manner of representing them; yet they perversely disputed, with great heat among themselves, against it, still taking his words in a literal sense, and saying, by way of caviel and scorn, How is it possible that this man's flesh should be eaten like bread; or that he should give it for us to feed upon it? This is monstrously ridiculous and absurd; and would be unnatural and savage to the last degree.

53 Then our blessed Lord, knowing what a stupid and carnal turn they wilfully gave to his words, replied, What I have said is so far from being ridiculous and absurd, according to my declared meaning in it, that I, the faithful and true Witness, solemnly assure you, unless in a moral and spiritual sense ye do that, which may be figuratively called eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of the incarnate and dying Redeemer, and unless ye be united to him by faith, and made partakers of the virtue of his atoning death for the remission of sins, and the refreshment of your souls, ye have no principle of spiritual life in you, nor any right or claim to eternal life, nor shall ye ever enjoy it.

54 But, on the contrary, whoever by faith receives me, who am come to redeem lost sinners by my sufferings in the flesh, and by shedding my blood, has already the principle and earnest of, and a sure title to eternal life; and I will certainly bring him, soul and body, to the full possession of it, at the consummation of all things.

55 For my body, which shall be broken, and my blood, which shall be shed for the remission of sins; have such virtue to procure reconciliation and acceptance with God, together with sanctification and comfort here, and eternal salvation hereafter, that whoever by faith applies them to himself, and has communion with me therein, shall find them to be the best of food and drink for the refreshment of his soul, in a much more sublime, effectual, and eminent sense, than his eating

eating and drinking any corporal repasts can be for the refreshment of his mortal body.

56 This may be illustrated in the following manner: As by eating and drinking material provisions, they are digested, incorporated, and become one with the body, for the support and comfort of its present frail life; so he who by faith receives me, together with the benefits of my death, unto his heart, is thereby united with me, as a member of my mystical body; I dwell in him by my Spirit, and he dwells in me by faith, for all the purposes of maintaining and nourishing his spiritual life, till it shall reach its utmost perfection in heaven.

57 So that as the Father, who has life in himself, has given me commission, and I thereupon, in my mediatorial character, have life * from him for the execution of my office: In like manner I, who have also life in myself, will communicate spiritual life to those who by faith receive me, that they may live with me for ever.

58 This therefore, upon the whole, is my meaning; I myself, in these considerations of me, am that true and living bread, which had its original in heaven, and descended from thence, and with which the *manna* in the wilderness is no more worthy to be compared, in point of excellence, than a type and shadow is with its antitype and substance: For when your ancestors eat of that bread, their mortal lives only were sustained by it for a while, they being all long since dead; but every one who receives me by faith, shall have an immortal life, which being begun in grace, shall be maintained and cherished, till it be perfected in eternal glory†.

59 These things were delivered, not to a select company in private, but, according to Christ's usual custom,

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* Christ living by the Father seems to relate to his life as man and mediator; because it is here spoken of, as the consequence of his Father's sending him; and a believer's living by him is represented as bearing an analogy to his living by the Father.

† It appears from the whole of this discourse, that the eating, here spoken of, cannot relate to a sacramental, much less to a corporal and carnal eating and drinking the real body and blood of Christ, according to the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation: For these things were said a considerable time (a year at least) before the Lord's supper was instituted, and were then spoken of in the present tense, as necessary to eternal life. But as it is shocking to suppose that all, who died between this time and the institution of that ordinance, were lost for ever; so it is an unreasonable and pernicious stretch of

charity to suppose, that all, in every succeeding age, who eat and drank externally of the Lord's supper, are certainly saved. Besides, the *Papish* doctrine, founded on this discourse, is very barbarous to the laity, whilst it denies them the cup, which it calls the real blood of Christ: for *drinking his blood* is here represented to be as necessary to eternal life, as *eating his flesh*. But to understand this in a proper and literal sense, is to put as gross a construction upon Christ's words, as the carnal *Jews* themselves did, when they said, (ver. 52.) *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* And our blessed Lord himself all along shews, that his discourse is to be taken in a spiritual sense, and that eating and drinking in this case are of the same import with *coming to him*, or *believing in him*, (ver. 35.) Accordingly he tells us, (ver. 63.) that to understand his words literally,

said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

tom, publicly in the synagogue, before all sorts of hearers, at *Capernaum*, after he returned thither from the wilderness, where he had miraculously fed the multitude, that followed him to this city, because *they had eat of the loaves, and were filled, (ver. 26.)*

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying, who can hear it?

60 Now as he had a great number of disciples at large, who often attended his ministry, and made a profession of his name; so many of them, whose hearts were not right with him, were highly offended at what he had said about his being the bread that came down from heaven, and about the necessity of eating him, in order to their living by him: They that still took these things in a literal sense, thought it a monstrous and savage doctrine; they that took them in a figurative sense, as Christ explained them, thought that he blasphemously assumed to himself a divine original and operation; and they that knew not what construction to put upon his words, thought there was something so mysterious in them, that no man in his wits could receive them; and so they heavily complained, one to another, that he preached such doctrine, as was not fit for any man to believe, or even to hear.

61 When Jesus knew in himself, that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

61, 62 When Jesus, by his own divine omniscience, knew what secret whispering and disturbance his words had occasioned among them; he said, Does this stumble you, and hinder your embracing me? there is no just cause of your being offended at it: For, as to your prejudice against what I said about my coming down from heaven, suppose some of you should see me, the Messiah in human nature, ascend locally into that holy place, where I had an existence before my incarnation; would not this be as strange and unlikely a thing as my coming down from thence! And yet this, in a little time, some here present shall be eye-witnesses of: Why then should ye be so incensed against me, for saying what is full as probable, and easy to be done as this, which will also be a confirmation of that?

62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

63 And as to your other prejudice against what I said about eating my flesh, and living by me, that is to be understood only in a spiritual and not in a carnal sense: For as in nature, only the soul and animal spirits quicken the body; so in grace, it is only the operation of the Spirit of God, that quickens souls to a spiritual and eternal life; and eating my flesh, in the gross and literal sense, were it practicable and proper, would be of no manner of advantage

63 It is the spirit that quickeneth

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rally, profiteth nothing; but that all their advantage proceeds from the spirit and life that attend them, and are signified by them, or are communicated by their means.

eth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go thou

vantage for the life of souls: The words therefore, that I have been speaking, relate to spiritual things, and are the means of conveying the Holy Spirit, whose influence, as the fruit of my death and ascension to heaven, is effectual unto spiritual and eternal life.

64 But I know that some of you, who profess to be my disciples, do not heartily believe in me, and therefore are ready to cavil at my doctrine, and put the most absurd and perverse construction on my words. And Jesus might well say this; for he perfectly knew all along, from the very first of their pretences to own and follow him, whose hearts were not right with him, and which of the twelve apostles themselves would not only prove to be insincere, but would likewise basely betray him.

65 And, said he, because I knew that there were false-hearted pretenders among you, therefore, for your conviction and caution, and for distinguishing real from nominal believers, I told you before, (*ver.* 44.) that no man can savingly believe in me, unless my Father efficaciously draw him by his Spirit, and thereby give him strength and grace to enable him to come to me, in a spiritual manner, for everlasting life.

66 Upon Christ's repeating what he had said before about the absolute necessity of divine grace, and that with such a close application to them, who had professed discipleship to him, many of them were so stung and offended at it, that they immediately revolted from him to the world, to their pharisaical teachers, and to their own sinful and self-deceiving ways; and never more returned to attend on his ministry, nor ever made any further profession of him.

67 On occasion of this great apostacy among them, our Lord, for the trial of the twelve apostles faith, and to give them a proper opportunity of professing it, said, in an affectionate and moving manner to them, See how many have forsaken me! will ye also follow their example? Tell me what are the thoughts and purposes of your hearts about this matter?

68 Then Simon Peter replied, in the name of the rest, as in charity believing that they were of the same mind with himself, Lord, whatsoever others do, we dare not think of leaving thee: For to whom should, or can we go, with safety and advantage, but to thee? Shall we go to the world? that can never be a satisfying portion to us: Shall we go to the service of sin? that will certainly ruin us: Shall we go to the scribes and Pharisees? They will mislead and deceive us: Shall we go to any schemes of our own, or others framing for happiness? They will surely disappoint us: Shall we go to *Moses*, and

thou hast the words of eternal life.

and trust in the righteousness of the law? he could not help us, but would send us back to thee: Or shall we go to *John the Baptist*? he turned us over to thee: 'Tis thou, and thou only, that teachest the true doctrine of eternal life, and art able and willing to give us life, as thou thyself hast told us in this discourse; we therefore are determined to cleave to thee.

69 And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

69 And from what we have already seen of thee, and heard, and learnt, and felt from thee, we firmly believe, and are fully satisfied, that thou art the true bread of life, even that promised Messiah, whom we expected, and that eternal Son of the only living and * true God, who, as a divine person, camest down from heaven.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

70 Hereupon our blessed Lord, to caution them against self-confidence on account of this noble confession of him, and against being stumbled, when afterwards one of their own number should prove a traitor to him, replied, Do not ye know that I, the Son of God, have separated and called you, my twelve apostles, to bear witness to the truth of what ye have now confessed concerning me? And yet even one of you is still under the power of Satan, and will act his part in treacherously delivering me into the hands of mine enemies.

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

71 He hereby particularly meant *Judas Iscariot*, who was the son of one *Simon*, though he did not then think proper to mention him by name: For he certainly knew that this wretch, being one of the twelve apostles, would, through the instigation of the devil, abuse his familiar acquaintance with his Lord, by turning it into a means of betraying him.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a wonderful and divine Saviour is our blessed Lord, whom God the Father has sealed! He is the eternal Son of the living God, who came originally from heaven, and having died in human nature upon earth, is gone back to heaven, and lives there for ever. He searches the secrets of our hearts, and knows the most private murmurings and transactions of our souls: His almighty power can multiply our store for the body here, and raise it up to an immortal life hereafter; and he, who, like the great God of the universe, trod upon the waves of the sea, and turned the storm into a calm, can easily quiet a troubled soul, saying, It is I, be not afraid.—Of how much greater importance is it, that we be partakers of spiritual blessings to eternal life, which Christ, as mediator, has all authority to bestow, and will give to them that come by faith to him, than that we enjoy the best of perishing things, pertaining to these mortal bodies! And yet, alas! how much more pains will men take for the meat that perishes, than for that which endures to everlasting life! And how backward are they to seek this better food, by that faith, which God requires, and graciously

N O T E.

* God is here styled the living God, not to distinguish the nature of the Father from that of the Son, but the nature of the true God from that of all false gods; and Christ

is called, by way of peculiar eminence and propriety, the Son of this living God, to intimate that he, as the Son, partakes of the same divine life and perfections with his Father.

ciously works in all that obtain it ! What excellent and living bread is a crucified Jesus to miserable souls ! He by his flesh and blood has purchased the best of life for them, and by his word and Spirit speaks it to them, and feeds, comforts, and nourishes them to eternal life. Who, that knows any thing of his own wants, and of Christ's worth, would not say, Lord, evermore give us of this bread ? How should we hunger and thirst after him, as perishing creatures, that need his salvation ; and with what readiness should we receive him by faith with application to ourselves, that we may live by him ! And O what rich encouragement have the worst of sinners to believe in him, who is the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, and has given the strongest assurances, that he will in no wise cast out any that come to him ; but will give them the beginnings, earnest, foretastes, and securities of eternal life, will take care of them, and all their concerns, and raise up their mortal bodies to a glorious immortality, equal to that of their souls, according to the will of his heavenly Father ! How unreasonable and perverse then are the prejudices and murmurings that sinners harbour in their hearts against him ! 'Tis because they entertain wrong and unworthy thoughts of his person and offices, wisdom, power, and grace, and of the way of salvation by him, and prefer earthly and carnal, to spiritual and heavenly things : O how necessary are God's special drawings, by the internal light and influence of his Spirit, as well as by his word, to enable us to believe in Jesus to the saving of our souls ! We shall understand spiritual things in a carnal manner, and never get over the natural enmity of our minds and hearts against them, unless we hear and learn of the Father to come to Christ. But how many soever reject him through wilful unbelief, some shall be brought to saving faith in him : His Father's gift of them to him shall never be revoked ; his precious blood shed for them shall not be split in vain ; his own and his Father's heart are unitedly engaged to secure their happiness ; they shall be taught of God, and come to his Son ; and none of them shall be lost, but he will raise them up at the last day. Wherever else we seek for salvation, we shall certainly fall short of it ; and who knows what degrees of treachery and wickedness they may be suffered to go into, who once begin to forsake him ? But the apostacy of others should be so far from stumbling us, that it should make us cleave the faster unto him ; and when he says to us, Will ye go away also ? we should say to him, Lord, to whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life.

C H A P. VII.

Christ refuses to go with his kindred to Jerusalem, 1,—9. Goes privately afterwards, 10,—13. Preaches in the temple, and discourses with the Jews, in the midst of the feast of tabernacles, about his doctrine, 14,—18. About their charge of his breaking the Sabbath, and going about to kill him on that account, 19,—24. And about himself, 25,—36. His gracious invitation to sinners, on the last day of the feast, 37,—39. The different reception he met with, 40,—44. And the angry debates of the Pharisees about the officers not apprehending him, 45,—53.

TEXT.

AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee : for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the things mentioned in the foregoing discourse, our Lord stayed a considerable time in Galilee, and travelled about from place to place, preaching the gospel, and doing good : For, the season appointed of the Father for his death not being yet come, he thought it imprudent to appear, as he was wont, in Judea, because the Jews there were grown so inveterate

rate against him, that they resolved to take him off, as soon as possible, either by popular fury, or by form of law.

2 Now the Jews feast of tabernacles was at hand.

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

2, 3 But, after a while, the Jewish feast of tabernacles drew near, which was instituted, and continued to be observed, as a memorial of *Israel's* dwelling in tents in the wilderness, and was one of the three great feasts, at which all the males were obliged, by God's command, to appear before him at *Jerusalem*, (*Deut. xvi. 16.*): Christ's near kinsmen therefore, (see the note on *Matth. xii. 46.*) observing that he delayed going to that solemnity, put him upon it, saying, Now is your opportunity to make a figure in the world; stay no longer in this poor, obscure country, but go to the more populous towns and cities of *Judea*, and hasten away to the great metropolis, that by your preaching, and wonderful works, you may make converts of men of reputation and learning there, and may encourage all your disciples, who at this time are repairing from every part of the nation thither, and will be ready at hand to favour any designs that you may set on foot.

4 For there is no man that doth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

4 For no man, who understands his own interests, is so imprudent, as to do things in a private corner of the country, while, like you, he aims at gaining a public reputation by them. If therefore you are able to do any extraordinary works, to establish your authority, as you profess to do here in *Galilee*, your wisest way is to perform them in the most famous places, and on the most public occasions, that men of note and sense, as well as the populace, may see and examine them, and be convinced by them.

5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.

5 But how plausible and innocent soever this advice of his relations might appear, it proceeded from mean and unworthy thoughts of him: For they did not believe him to be the true Messiah, but suspected that he only aimed at the applause of men, and at setting up for the head and ringleader of a party; and therefore they urged him in this manner to go to *Jerusalem*, that he might be detected by men of greater penetration than themselves.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your

6 Jesus (v) therefore answered them, Ye are much mistaken in your thoughts about me and my designs: As I know that many in *Jerusalem* are contriving to take away my life, before the time is come for me to resign it*, 'Tis not proper that I should appear openly there

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* Some have thought that this might likewise be meant of its not being his time yet for leaving *Galilee*, because of some further work, which he had first to do there: But what

your time is always ready.

there at the beginning of the feast, and thereby needlessly give them an opportunity of concerting measures for my destruction: But it is otherwise with you: Ye have nothing to fear from their persecutions, and therefore may go without any danger to yourselves, whenever ye please.

7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

7 The men of this world have no reason to be enemies to you, who are like themselves in their principles, temper, and designs, and never care to say any thing to offend them: But they have the greatest aversion to me, and seek my ruin, because I freely and faithfully tell them their own, and oppose and condemn their beloved lusts and sinful ways, for their reformation.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

8 Repair ye therefore to *Jerusalem* as soon as ye will, that ye may be there at the beginning of the feast: I shall not keep you company, nor indeed go yet-a-while; for I must wait a little longer before it will be prudent for me to be seen there.

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

9 By this answer he sent them to attend divine ordinances, though they were persons of a carnal unbelieving heart; but, as they did not like his presence among them, he would not honour them with it: And, having thus dismissed them, he, keeping to his resolution, still continued some days in *Galilee*.

10 But, when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

10 But soon after those relations, according to the flesh, had set out on their journey, he likewise went after them, to celebrate the feast of tabernacles, that he might honour the institutions of God, and fulfil all righteousness. But he went very privately, to prevent noise and tumult, and all appearance of vain-glory, as also to avoid giving umbrage to the government, and to escape the hands of such wicked men as might lye in wait to murder him.

11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

11 In the mean while, the *Jews* expecting him at the feast, and finding that he did not come with his kindred, there was great inquiry after him, they all wondering what was become of him, or where he had hid himself; some being desirous to hear his excellent discourses, and see his wonderful works, whilst others were watching for an opportunity to get him into their power, that they might put him to death.

12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said he is a good man: others

12 And this occasioned an universal talk, and warm debates about him; some insisted that he certainly was at least an honest, worthy, and useful man, whose doctrine was heavenly, whose life was holy, and whose

miracles

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what is added in the next verse about the world's loving him, as the reason of his not

going to *Jerusalem* just then, seems to favour the other interpretation rather than this.

thers said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

miracles were all merciful and engaging; and they murmured at the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees, for reviling and opposing him: And others, on the contrary, cried out against him, as an impostor, who deluded the people, asserted himself to be equal with God, and profaned the sabbath by working his cures on that day, (*chap. v. 18.*); and they murmured at his friends, for taking his part, and shewing him any countenance.

13 Howbeit, no man spake openly of him, for fear of the Jews.

13 However, as the run of the chief men was cruelly against him, none, that had a good opinion of him, durst venture to speak their minds freely and publicly in his favour, lest they should provoke the rulers of the Jews, to take them up, and persecute them for his sake.

14 Now, about the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught.

14 Now though, for wise reasons, (*ver. 6, 7.*) Christ did not think fit to appear openly at the beginning of the feast; yet about the third or fourth day of that solemnity, which lasted seven days, (*Lev. xxiii. 34.*) he, to shew that he was not afraid of his enemies, went boldly to the temple, when he was little expected, and preached to the people in full assembly, they being then more at leisure to hear him, having, according to custom, spent some days in their booths.

15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

15 And his discourse was with such scriptural evidence, with such profound judgment, and with such gravity and authority, that his hearers stood amazed at it; and some of them said, in a way of high approbation and applause, and others in a way of detraction and contempt, as if he got his knowledge by some evil art, how is this man able to talk at such an uncommon rate about the things of God, and the holy scriptures*, since he never went abroad for learning, nor was educated by any of our famous rabbies in the schools of the prophets at home?

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

16 Jesus perceiving their astonishment, and what an invidious turn some of them gave to his manner of preaching, replied, for the establishment of his friends, and confutation of his enemies, I did not learn the doctrine, which I teach, by any human assistance, nor is it a private invention of my own head†; but it is originally from God my Father, who communicated it to me,

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* *Γραμματα*, the word here translated *letters*, seems to signify the scriptures, in which Moses (*αρχαίος*) wrote of Christ. *Chap. v. 46.*

† Though, considering Christ as God, his doctrine was his own as well as his Father's; yet, he here evidently speaking of himself as man and the Messiah, his doctrine, under that consideration of him, was not his

own, but his Father's that sent him: And it became him, in his state of humiliation, and under the character of a prophet, to speak of it in this light, according to what God had said to Moses concerning him, (*Deut. xviii. 18.*) *I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him.*

me, as the Messiah, by his Spirit, with which he appointed me above measure, and who sent me to publish it to the world, not for gaining applause to myself, but for the advancement of his honour and glory.

15 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

17 Whether ye will believe this or not, yet whoever is heartily desirous to lay aside his prejudices, and to go into humble, serious, and impartial inquiries into the will of God, by meditation, reading, hearing, and praying, that he may learn and practise it, he shall find enough in the nature and tendency of my doctrine to recommend it; he shall experience such powerful, sweet, and holy effects of it, and such further assistances of the Spirit, as will enable him to judge, with entire satisfaction to himself, whether it really be a divine revelation, as I aver; or whether it be the private sentiment and contrivance of an impostor, as my enemies suggest.

18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

18 Such an one will readily think thus with himself: An impostor, who forms his own schemes, and vents his own imaginations to deceive the people, will, contrary to the method that I have taken, calculate his doctrines, and pursue measures to raise his own reputation and interest in the world, and to suit the corrupt principles and taste of men, that they may fall in with him, and set him up for their head and leader: But, on the other hand, he who, like me, is wholly intent upon the glory of God, from whom he professes to be sent, and preaches such doctrine, and lives at such a rate, as evidently tend to humble and reform mankind, to oppose their selfish, worldly spirit, to correct their errors, to root out their corruptions, and to turn them from all iniquity to God, that they may serve and glorify him; this person cannot possibly be a cheat; he is faithful to God, and to the souls of men; and it is plain that he is truly what he professes to be, and that there is no falsehood in his doctrine, or fraud in his management: Thus ye would judge concerning me, were ye really willing to know and do the will of God.

19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

19 But ye are so far from this, and such is the contrariety of your hearts to God, that though ye profess a mighty zeal for the law of *Moses*, as delivered to you by divine authority; yet all ranks and orders among you are shameful transgressors even of this law: Otherwise, why, in direct contradiction to one of its express and unalterable precepts, do ye seek to murder me?

20 The people answered—

20 The common people *, especially those that came from

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* The people here seem to be different from those, that are afterwards said to be

answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers,) and ye on the sabbath-day circumcise a man.

23 If a man on the sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath-day?

24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge

from the country to the feast, knowing nothing of the plot against him, and being under the influence of their rulers, cried out in a great rage, You talk like a madman, or one possessed of the devil: Who intends or attempts to murder you? we cannot think that any have formed such desperate designs against your life.

21 Our Lord, thereupon, referred them to the transactions of the last passover, (*chap. v. 8, — 16.*) saying, I sometime ago wrought a miraculous work of mercy, in curing a poor cripple, with only speaking a word, which ye could not but admire; and yet ye were all amazed at my doing it on the sabbath-day, and some of you sought to kill me on that account, as if I had thereby broken the law of *Moses*. But how unreasonable your charge on this head was, ye may easily judge from what is commonly practised, without any scruple among yourselves.

22 To * this purpose observe, *Moses* delivered to you the ordinance of circumcision, or rather, by the command of God, continued to enjoin it upon you; for it was not first instituted under *Moses*, but was originally a privilege which God appointed to be the token of his gracious covenant with *Abraham*, and his seed long before, (*Gen. xvii. 10, 11.*); and according to this institution, if the eighth day from the birth of a male, prove to be the sabbath, ye count it lawful to do every thing that is necessary for circumcising him then.

23 Now, if in obedience to a ceremonial appointment, which was grafted into the law of *Moses*, ye circumcise a child, and use the means that are proper for healing the wound thereby made upon him, and all agree, that the law of the sabbath is not thereby broken, How unreasonable and perverse is it, that ye should be enraged with bitterness against me, (*ἐμὸν χολᾶςτι*) for only speaking a word, and thereby not barely curing a slight wound, but restoring a poor miserable creature, who was all over diseased, to perfect health on the sabbath-day?

24 Take heed therefore of partiality in judging (*κατ' ὄψιν*) with respect of persons; do not indulge your prejudices against me, on account of my low and mean appearance, nor in favour of your chief priests and rulers,

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of *Jerusalem* (*ver. 25.*) and knew something of the designs of the scribes and Pharisees against Christ. But if it were otherwise, their wickedness is further aggravated by joining known falsehood to their blasphemous reflection on him.

* *Δια νότα*, the words here rendered there-

fore, signify for this cause, which as some have conjectured might be joined to the last verse thus, *κατὰ δόγματι δια νότα*, ye all wonder at me for this, i. e. for doing this work on the sabbath-day: But taking it as the beginning of this verse, it may be rendered to this purpose, as in the paraphrase.

judge righteous judgment.

on account of their specious pretences, and of the authority which they have gained over you; and do not rashly censure what I have done, by giving an invidious turn, to a bare outward resemblance of breaking in upon sabbatical rest: But carefully examine, and compare things together, that ye may judge according to truth and equity; and if ye will but attend to the real merits of the cause, ye never can condemn me as a sabbath-breaker, in any consistency with your own practice.

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill?

26 But lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him: do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

25, 26 Then some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who were not entire strangers to the malicious consultations of the scribes and Pharisees against Christ, hearing him talk with such undaunted courage, said one to another, Is not this the man, whom they have been inquiring after, that they might put him to death? Strange, that they do not immediately seize him! But, instead of that, see how publicly he appears, and what liberty he takes in his discourse! and yet nobody molests him, or offers either to answer him, or to put the least check upon him. What, are our rulers at last convinced, that he is indeed the true Messiah, and therefore let him alone, and so tamely suffer him to run them down?

27 Howbeit, we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

27 However, we can never be of that mind; for we know the parentage and relations of this man, the place where he was born, and what his education has been, which are all mean and contemptible: But we are assured from scripture concerning the Messiah, that when he appears, it will be as one, who, like *Melchizedek*, is without descent, whose goings forth, have been from everlasting, and whose generation no man can declare*.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple, as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not:

28 Then our blessed Lord, knowing what they perversely objected against him, raised his voice in the temple; and speaking with great earnestness and zeal for his Father's glory, said, Ye indeed know my earthly parentage, and that I am sprung up from among yourselves; and yet my office, as well as original, is much higher than ye apprehend: I have not taken this honour to myself; but my Father, who is faithful and true to all his promises of and to the Messiah, has sent me; of him ye are grossly ignorant, and therefore will not receive me.

29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

29 But I am intimately acquainted with him, and have a perfect knowledge of his mind and will; nor can it be otherwise: For I am from him by a peculiar and

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* All this was true with respect to Christ's divine nature, and office-authority; but not with respect to his human nature, the scripture having plainly foretold his tribe and fa-

mily, and the place of his birth: and therefore these Jews reasoned fallaciously upon this head. See the note on chap. ix. 29.

and eternal generation, and am come, as the Messiah, immediately from him, who has sent me with authority to reveal the way of salvation.

30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

30 Upon Christ's so plainly asserting his divine authority, some of the company, and especially the rulers, were incensed to such a degree against him, that they were exceeding desirous to seize and make away with him: But their spirits were surprisingly over-ruled, to prevent their meddling with him, or doing him any harm for the present, because the time appointed for his sufferings and death was not yet come.

31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

31 And one great means of restraining them was, that many of the common people believed on him, and said, for the confirming of each other's faith, and condemning those that opposed him, Surely this must needs be the Messiah; for it could not be expected, whenever he should come, that he would perform more wonderful works than this person has, to bear witness to him.

32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him: and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

32 When this sort of discourse among the people in his favour, and in displeasure against his enemies, came to the ears of the *Pharisees*, it prodigiously nettled them, they fearing lest his credit and authority should rise in the esteem of the populace, to the utter sinking of their own: And therefore they and the chief priests consulting together, and resolving to take as speedy a course as possible to put a stop to him, dispatched some of their public officers, with a strict charge to take the first opportunity they could get with safety, for apprehending and bringing him before them, when assembled together in council.

33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

33 In the mean time, Jesus, knowing what orders had been given to the officers, said to the multitude, and to them at their arrival, I must yet for a little while continue preaching and working miracles among you; and all the malicious designs and attempts of mine enemies, which I am fully apprized of, cannot prevent it: But the time that my Father has further appointed for me on earth is very short, and as soon as that is expired, I shall readily return to him, who sent me hither.

34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

34 After this, ye will earnestly wish, but, alas! too late, that the Messiah would appear among you, which is, in effect, wishing for me, who am he; ye will seek my favour in vain, when, at the last extremity, your calamities in this world and the next are coming upon you: For ye shall not find me to your comfort; nor can ye ever follow me to that blessed place, where I am*, either to enjoy me, or to persecute me again.

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35 The

* Christ's so frequently saying, whilst on earth, *where I am*, when he spoke of his heavenly abode.

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

36 What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

35 The carnal Jews not understanding our Lord's meaning, who herein spake of his death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, seemed to be in great surprize, saying one to another, Whither does this man pretend to retire, that we shall not be able to find him, or get at him? What, will he stroll among the Jews that are dispersed through heathen countries, to see what he can do with them, now he is disappointed here? or will he turn preacher to the poor sorry Gentiles themselves, that are all over the world, upon finding himself rejected among the Jews?

36 What can he mean by saying, that we shall seek him, and want to find him, but shall not be able; and that he will get somewhere or other out of our reach, so that we cannot possibly follow him thither? surely we can go any where, as well as he.

37 The officers not having executed their commission from the chief priests and Pharisees, (ver. 32.) our Lord went on unmolested; and on the eight day, which was the last day of the feast of tabernacles, and a high day*, he stood up and preached to many, that had disregarded all his former discourses, and might never hear him again: And in allusion to their custom of drawing water, and praying for rain on that day, he said to them with great fervour of spirit, and elevation of voice, If there be any among you that is destitute, and really desirous of true happiness, like one, who, feeling the pain of thirst, longs for drink, let him come by faith unto me as the only Saviour, that he may be refreshed and satisfied.

38 Whoever, under a sense of his indigence, and incapacity to get relief any where else, shall believe in me, as the Christ of God, for all salvation, let his distress and unworthiness be ever so great, he shall have such an abundant, increasing, and continued supply of blessings from me, as shall be like a fountain of water, ever springing up in his heart, and flowing out in plentiful streams of righteousness, for his own comfort and others good, according to what the scripture has said about rivers in the desert, and dry land becoming springs of water, and about God's people being like a spring whose waters fail not. (Isa. xli. 18. and xliii. 19. and lviii. 11.)

39 And

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ing in heaven, intimates his perpetual presence there in his divine nature, though his going thither was a future thing, with respect to his human nature.

* On this day there was the greatest concourse of people, and they were then wont to fetch water from the pool of *Siloam*, part

of which they used for drink-offerings, and the rest they drank themselves with joyful acclamations, in remembrance of God's miraculously giving water out of the rock to their fathers, when they dwelt in booths in the wilderness; and on this day they offered up solemn prayers for seasonable rains.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

39 And (2c) the meaning of Christ in all this, was, that they who should cordially embrace him by faith, in his whole character, for all salvation, should, after his resurrection, and ascension to heaven, receive a rich communication of the gifts, graces, and consolations of the Holy Spirit, who would be like a fountain of refreshing, cooling, cleansing, and fructifying water in them; and would make them abundantly useful to others: For a plentiful effusion of the blessed Spirit was not yet granted in so remarkable and extensive a manner as it was to be afterwards, because he was to come as the fruit and evidence of Christ's exaltation to his mediatorial throne, when he should have the glory of sending his Spirit, and the Spirit should have the honour of his own peculiar work in glorifying Christ, by extraordinary attestations to his gospel, by numerous conversions of *Jews* and *Gentiles* to him, and by a rich abundance of light, grace, and joy in them that believe.

40 Many of the people, therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the prophet.

40 Upon hearing this authoritative, gracious, and endearing discourse, many of the common people were greatly affected with wonder and esteem: Some of them said, This is unquestionably a true prophet of the Lord, and indeed that very prophet, whom we expect to be the immediate forerunner of the Messiah.

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

41 Others of them went further, and said, This is the very Christ himself; what he says and does, in so majestic, compassionate, and divine a manner, could never proceed from any other than him. But in opposition to these there were others, who taking it for granted, that our Lord was born at *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, because he was brought up there, were prejudiced against him, and said, No, no, he cannot be the promised Messiah; for who ever heard that he, like this man, should have his birth in any part of *Galilee*? (See the note on *ver.* 52.)

42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

42 Are we not assured from express testimonies of scripture, (*Isaiah* xi. 1. and *Micah* v. 2.) that the Messiah is to spring from *David*, the son of *Jesse*, and to be born at the very town of *Bethlehem*, where *David's* own parents dwelt? (*1 Sam.* xvi. 1.)

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

43 In this manner, as our Lord himself predicted, (*Luke* xii. 51.) there were various opinions, and warm debates about him, some being for, and others against him: Some esteeming him as a prophet, others as the true Messiah, whilst others stuck to their old prejudices, and being misled by a vulgar error, as if Jesus had really been born at *Nazareth*, rejected and opposed him.

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

48 Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

44 And among these there were some who would willingly have taken him into custody, and carried him before the council; but none of them, no, not the officers themselves, who were sent to seize him, (*ver. 32.*) were suffered to offer any violence to him, he laying a restraint upon their spirits.

45 At length the officers returned to the chief priests and *Pharisees*, and not bringing him along with them, they severely reprimanded them, saying, What is the reason that ye have disobeyed our express orders, in not bringing Jesus as a prisoner before us, who have sat in council waiting for him?

46 The officers answered, We went with as much desire and resolution to seize him, as ye yourselves could wish for; but as soon as we came to hear him preach to the people, our hearts failed us at once; and the longer we heard him, the more we were struck with wonder and awe, and the more afraid were we of offering any violence to him: For never did we hear any man talk like him; it was with such surprizing evidence and power, majesty and sweetness, as were enough to make every one in love with him: Surely none of the ancient prophets, no, not *Moses* himself, ever spoke in such a convincing and engaging manner as he did; and the people were generally of the same mind concerning it with ourselves.

47 Then the *Pharisees*, full of indignation and wrath, replied, What, are ye so weak and foolish, as to fall in with the silly thoughts of a giddy mob about him? Could ye suffer yourselves after all that ye heard us say, and even while ye went with authority from us to take him, to be imposed upon by such a notorious cheat as this? We thought that ye might be depended upon as men of more sense and spirit, than to be thus deluded by him.

48 Pray think a little, Do not ye know, that not one of your superiors for wisdom, learning, and reputation, authority and piety, whose judgment ye ought to be determined by, hath ever given the least credit to him? Have any of the members of the sanhedrim, who are the only judges of a true and false prophet, or any of the *Pharisees*, who are men of the greatest eminence for sanctity and knowledge in the law, ever believed in him, or shewn him the least countenance? And are ye wiser and better than these?

49 But this poor, mean, vulgar, senseless rabble that ye talk of, who are stupidly ignorant of the scriptures, and abandoned of God, and who lye under his wrath
and

and curse, are the only people that ever thought well of him, or ever owned him; they are an execrable mob, easily made fools of; and will ye be as great fools as they? In this manner the council endeavoured to enslave the consciences of the officers, to take off the good impressions that had been made upon them, and to prejudice them against Christ and his gospel.

50 Nicodemus faith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them.)

51 Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doth?

50, 51 Hereupon that, *Nicodemus*, who had gone in a private manner to Jesus by night, (*chap. iii. 2.*) being present as a member of the council, and being very uneasy at this dishonourable, unjust, and furious method of procedure, took a little more courage than formerly, and expostulated with them, saying, Brethren, what are we doing? Is it not an unreasonable and illegal way of acting, contrary to the righteousness of our law, and to all rules of equity, for us to pass judgment upon any man whatsoever, and especially upon one who makes such plausible pretensions to a divine commission as Jesus does, before we have heard what he has to say for himself, his doctrine, and behaviour? Surely we ought to be very cautious how we censure, or proceed against him, till he has had an opportunity of speaking in his own defence.

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

52 The council not being able to confute *Nicodemus's* reasoning, resolved to run him down with heat and passion, and false suggestions, instead of arguments, saying, in reply, What! Are you, like the ignorant multitude, one of the *Galilean* party, and an advocate for a man who sets up for a prophet and yet was born in *Galilee*? Pray search the scriptures, and see what they say; and then you can never believe that he has the commission from God which he pretends to: For, according to them, no prophet ever was, much less can the Messiah be a native of that country*.

53 And every man went unto his own house.

53 Upon this, the council finding themselves embarrassed, and hoping for a fairer opportunity, when *Nicodemus* might be absent, adjourned to another time, and every man returned home.

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N O T E.

* Here they took the vulgar error for granted, about Christ's being born in *Nazareth of Galilee*, and would not give themselves the trouble of an impartial inquiry, to set themselves to rights about it, though they might have been easily satisfied, that he was born at *Bethlehem*, from the public register there, and from the genealogies of the family of *David*, as well as from himself and his disciples. And it was not true that no

prophet arose in that country; for *Jonah* was of *Gath-Hepher* in the tribe of *Zebulun*. (*2 Kings* xiv. 25. and *Jesh.* xix. 13, 16. And *Nabum* was an *Elkashite*, (*Nab.* i. 1.) of the town called *Elkes*, which, *Jerom* on the place says, was in *Galilee*, there being a village of that name there to this day. And *Keland* maintains, in his sacred geography, that *Thibse*, the town of *Elijah the Tishbite*, was in *Galilee*.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

Doth the world hate any of us; or are our nearest kindred our enemies, for opposing their corruptions, and adhering to the truths of the gospel; and are we exposed to disgrace and danger for it? Our blessed Lord went through the same before us, for our encouragement and example. But as none could destroy him, till his time was come: so we are immortal men, till God has done his work by us; and yet as he avoided needlessly exposing himself to mischiefs, and sought proper opportunities of carrying on his great design in the world; so should we, till God shews us that our time is come, wherein we ought to resign our lives to him. How certainly divine are all the doctrines of Christ in their original! It is only for want of knowing him and them, and impartially judging concerning them, that any make exceptions against them: But he will maintain the credit of his own character, truths, and ways, to his own and his Father's glory, and to the confusion of his enemies; so that, even they themselves being judges, never man spake like this man. What if, generally speaking, men of high rank and figure do not believe in him? That is no objection against him, whose kingdom is not of this world; and the people that know and receive him, how vulgar soever they may be, are so far from being cursed, that they, of all others, are truly blessed: And how easily can Jesus over-awe the stoutest hearts, even of rough and boisterous officers, to take off their edge against him, and gain a testimony from them to himself! How can he spirit persons of the most timorous tempers, even a *Nicodemus*, to speak bravely for him, and to plead with such force of argument, as to stop the mouths of gainayers! And how easily can he disappoint the devices of the crafty, that their hands shall not perform their enterprize! It is a dreadful case to seek occasions against the Lord, or even to be willing to get rid of his presence, and to be left to go alone to sacred ordinances without him. O how glad would they one day be to find Christ, and to be made partakers of his salvation, who now despise and reject him! They shall die, as he did; but ah! he is gone, where no unbelievers can ever follow him, and be with him, to behold his glory. But how amazing is his grace to them now, that have often slighted and set themselves against him! He still lifts up his voice to a disobedient and gainsaying people, and invites their coming to him for the richest supplies of all that they stand in need of: and whoever is at last made sensible of his own wants and miseries, and comes by faith to the great and only Saviour for relief, shall find a hearty welcome. And O how precious and abiding, how abounding and ever-satisfying are the blessings of his Spirit and grace, which may be looked for from an exalted Redeemer! They shall never be taken away or fail, but shall continue and increase till they be perfect in eternal life and glory.

C H A P. VIII.

Christ's treatment of the woman taken in adultery, 1,—12. His preaching himself as the light of the world, and vindicating his doctrine, 13,—30. His asserting the freedom of his disciples, and answering the cavils of the Jews against it, and their glorying in Abraham as their father; and his escaping out of their bands, 31,—59.

TEXT.

JESUS WENT unto the mount of Olives:

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord, as was customary with him, retired from Jerusalem in the evening to the mount of Olives, that he might refresh himself, and spend some time in private devotion, and might avoid popular tumults and surprizes in the night.

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and, when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

2 And, taking the day before him, he returned early to the temple; where great multitudes of people flocking to him, as usual, he sat down like one having authority, and preached to them.

3, 4 Whilst he was thus engaged in his work, some of the scribes and Pharisees interrupted him by bringing a woman before him, that he might sit in judgment upon her, who had been guilty of adultery²: And when they had placed her, as a criminal, in the presence of all the people, they addressed him with a feigned air of respect, saying, Master, this woman, whom we have brought before you, is charged with adultery, by witnesses that surprized her in the very act.

5 Now this being so vile an abomination, Moses in the law expressly commanded, that if persons, at the time of their committing it, were actually married, they should die for it, and that if they were only espoused to an husband, they should be stoned to death. (*Deut.* xxii. 22, 23, 24.) But as you claim authority from God to make alterations in our law, or at least to interpret it in a different manner from us, we desire to have your judgment upon this case.

6 They applied in this manner to him for no other reason, than to seek an advantage against him, as an enemy to the authority, either of *Cæsar*, or of their own law †. But Jesus, knowing their artful and malicious design, stooped, and looking downward § wrote with his finger on the floor, as if his thoughts were so deeply engaged another way, as not to hear what they said to him.

7 The

N O T E S.

* Perhaps it was very lately that she had been guilty of this crime in one of their booths, during the feast of tabernacles, at which time the hearts of some might be made too merry by plentiful eating and drinking.

† If he should declare for the law of Moses, and encourage the people to stone this woman; they might hope it would give them a plausible handle to reproach him for cruelty, and therein acting contrary to his pretences of being the Messiah, who was to be meek and lowly, and bring salvation; and for partiality in ordering so severe a punishment to an adulteress, though he had freely admitted persons of that character to converse with him; or they might think it would give them a fair opportunity of accusing him to the Roman government, as an abettor of tumults, and of judicial power, independent of its authority: And if, on the contrary, he should declare against the people's stoning her, according to the rigour of

Moses's law, they might hope to incense the people against him, as an enemy to their law, and as a favourer of sin, and of the worst of sinners: And if he should turn them over to the judgment of the Roman government; they might think to expose him to the rage of the people, as an enemy to their liberty.

§ Many have been the uncertain conjectures of learned men about what Christ wrote; and if he really wrote any sentence on the dust of the floor, it was most probably that which he afterwards pronounced, *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.* But perhaps he only made a show of writing on the ground, as was usual with some wise men to do, in those days, when a question was proposed which they thought not proper to answer. Or, as others have supposed, Christ by that action designed to intimate to the querists, that they must attend to what is written. *Vid. Lamp. in loc. & marchii exercitat. 13^a. ad select. test. N. T. c.*

7 So, when they continued asking him, he lift up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you let him first cast a stone at her.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

7 The scribes and Pharisees supposing that they had now brought him into a labyrinth, out of which he could not tell how to extricate himself, repeated their question with vehemence, and pressed him closely for an answer, till at length he raised himself up, and replied, I am far from reflecting on the law, and from vindicating, or lessening the abominable crime of this woman: But as, by another institution under Moses, the witnesses hands should be first upon the criminals, that are to be put to death, (*Deut. xvii. 7.*); and as it is exceedingly out of character, for any to be zealous in punishing the sins of others, while they themselves are guilty of as bad, or worse; ye would do well to consider, which of you shall begin the execution of the law upon her: If any one of you that are come hither to accuse, and witness against her, can in his own conscience clear himself of guilt before God, let him be the man who shall cast the first stone at her*.

8 Our Lord having in this manner wisely escaped the snare which they had laid for him, and, at the same time, reprov'd them for their hypocritical pretences to an extraordinary zeal against sin, while so much guilt lay upon themselves, and they were pursuing measures to murder him, he left them to pause and think on what he had said; and, without waiting for an answer, stooped down again, and wrote with his finger on the ground, as before, that he might seem to take no further notice of the matter, and give them an opportunity of sneaking away, and fancying that he would not observe it.

9 And as all their consciences were struck with horror, by a secret power that set these words home upon them, and they thereupon could not but accuse themselves of one heinous crime or other, if not of the very same that this woman had been guilty of, they were ashamed to plead innocence, or to proceed in a demand of justice against her, and were afraid lest, if Jesus spoke again, he would say some severer thing to them: And therefore instead of applying to him, as they ought, for cleansing from their own sins, they silently slipped away from him, one after another; the eldest, who might be conscious of most guilt, going out first, and the younger following them, till they were all

N O T E.

* He said this, not to discountenance a legal process, or bearing witness against, and executing justice upon offenders, by such as are conscious of guilt in themselves; but to move compassion to the persons of crimi-

nals, as far as the law and justice admit of it, and to put the correctors of others vices upon impartially censuring, and correcting their own.

all gone, and there was no body left with him *, but the woman and the people, who, with his disciples, were there before attending on his ministry.

10 When Jesus had lift up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness; but shall have the light of life.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record

10 The woman still standing before Christ to hear what sentence he would pass upon her, he raised himself up again, and seeing none of her accusers there, said to her, Woman, what is become of all the men who brought you hither to me? Have none of them pronounced, that you ought to be stoned to death for your sin?

11 She, treating him with respect, answered, No, Lord, not one of them has taken upon him to declare any such thing: Then Jesus, who came not to condemn the world, nor to exercise a judicial power in punishing criminals, but to save them that believe in him, replied, Nor do I take that office upon myself; go about your business, and let your present escape from deserved punishment put you upon taking heed that you do not return to the like, or any other iniquity again, lest in the great day of account you come under a more dreadful sentence and execution than that of stoning to death †.

12 Our blessed Lord having in this manner quitted himself of the woman and her accusers, re-assumed his discourse to the people, in which he spoke of one great design of his coming into the world, saying, I am the Sun of righteousness, a light to lighten the *Gentiles*, as well as the glory of *Israel*, who, having all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in myself, am come to direct sinners into the way of life and salvation, by my word and Spirit: And whoever believes in me, and follows my guidance, shall not go on in ignorance and error, to mislead him from the way of duty and happiness, or in the darkness of sin and spiritual death; but shall have the saving light of a renewed life here, and of eternal life hereafter.

13 Some of the *Pharisees*, that were mingled with the people, and were enraged to see how their brethren had been baffled by him, answered, You indeed, prompted by ambition, speak great things concerning yourself; but your own bare affirmation signifies nothing:

N O T E S.

* Christ's being left alone signifies his being rid of all the company of the *scribes* and *Pharisees* that had brought the woman before him, so that none of them remained in the temple to give him any further trouble: For the woman was standing in the midst of the people, in whose presence she had been placed before Christ, (*ver.* 3.) and he im-

mediately afterwards went on preaching to them, (*ver.* 12.)

† It does not appear to me that this woman was a penitent, or that Christ forgave her sin; but only that he dismissed her, as not thinking it proper to take upon himself the office of the civil magistrate in condemning her.

cord of thyself; thy record is not true.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, *Thou* I hear record of myself, yet my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go! but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

16 And yet, if I judge, my judgment is true: for

thing: No body is obliged to believe it, nor would it be admitted, as valid, in any court of judicature whatsoever.

14 Jesus replied, Though this be true in ordinary cases, and according to the usual course of proceedings in law; yet it is otherwise in the case of divine messengers, as ye yourselves owned when ye sent to *John the Baptist*, saying, *Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself?* (*chap. i. 22*) And as life is self-evident, so my testimony, about my being the light of the world, is sufficient to gain credit with every one that duly considers and understands the nature and tendency of my doctrine, and the circumstances in which I appear to confirm it: It is true in itself, and worthy to be believed, and I have authority to assert it; for I am infallibly sure, and have demonstrated to you, that I came from, and am going to the Father: But ye wilfully disregard the evidences I have given of it, and so do not understand that my original and commission are from heaven, or that I am to return thither; and therefore ye receive not my testimony.

15 Ye judge and condemn me only from carnal considerations, according to your secular views, and according to the meannells of my external appearance in the flesh, as that is unlikely to answer your ends: But as I do not so much as meddle with civil judgment, relating to any person whatsoever, as ye have but now seen in the case of the woman taken in adultery; so I neither pass sentence of condemnation, nor execute vengeance upon any one now, as I shall hereafter: No, my present work is all of the merciful strain, as I am come to call sinners to repentance, and to seek and save that which is lost.

16 And yet, were I to undertake the office of a judge at present in condemning criminals, and proceeding in a judicial manner against you for not believing in me, my sentence would be just and valid: For my Father and I have such a mutual in-being*, as to be

N O T E.

* His Father is in him, and he is in the Father, (*chap. xiv. 10, 11.*); and so the Father is no more alone without the Son, than the Son is without the Father, (*Prov. viii. 22, 23, 30.* and, *John i. 1, 2.*) His Father and he were not one and another God, but one in Godhead, though distinct persons, and therefore inseparable from each other: And though the Son came from the Father in a certain dispensation, for the assumption of human nature, and acting in office upon earth, as God is sometimes said to come from heaven, for particular manifestations of him-

self; yet Christ did not leave the Father, or the Father leave him, any more than God leaves heaven, when he is said to come down to this earth: And that our Lord here speaks of himself, as not being alone with regard to his divine nature, seems evident, because in the next foregoing verse but one, he had spoke of himself in that high consideration of him, saying, *I know whence I came, but ye cannot tell whence I came;* whereas, with respect to his human nature, he had before allowed that they knew whence he was, (*chap. vii. 28.*)

for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

be inseparable one from the other, so that I am never alone; and what I say is not from any private judgment of my own, apart from that of my Father; I therein only concur with him, who by various means testifies that he has sent me, and demands your faith in me: There is therefore no room to except against any declaration of mine.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

17 Besides, it is a settled point by your own law, which is indeed God's law, that the evidence of two credible persons is sufficient for establishing affairs of the greatest consequence. (*Deut. xvii. 6.*)

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

18 Now here are two witnesses to the truth of my assertions: I am one, who, as a divine person, declare the commission which I have received as the Messiah: And my Father is another, who sent me into the world to execute it, and whose testimony ye yourselves must own is beyond all contradiction true; he has declared the same concerning me by the voice of his prophets, and by a voice from heaven, as well as by other means; and therefore your own rule of judgment, as contained in the law, demands your assent to the truth of what I say concerning myself, and all things else*.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

19 Then the Pharisees, not being able to return a fair answer, replied in a way of ridicule and insult, Pray, what father is this, that you pretend to have, besides Joseph, a poor carpenter? Where is he? Call your witness, which you lay so much stress upon. Jesus answered again, Though I, who have been so long among you, have frequently explained whom I mean by my Father; yet such is your wilful blindness, obstinacy, and perverseness, that ye are still ignorant of my person and office, and of my heavenly Father, from whom I come unto you: If ye had but known me, who am the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and one in nature, counsel, and operation with him, ye would have seen the perfections of my Father shining forth in me, and would have known the relation, in which he stands to me as his Son, as well as the high commission, which I bear as the Messiah from him†.

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple;

20 Christ freely and openly spoke these convincing and cutting things, whilst he was discoursing in that part of the temple where the boxes were kept to receive

N O T E S.

* I take both these into the paraphrase, because Christ is speaking of the truth of his judgment, as well as of his own character.

† Here our Lord plainly intimates that his Father and he were distinct persons, as they

were two witnesses; and yet were one in essence and divine perfections, as the knowledge of him includes the knowledge of the Father.

temple and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

ceive the money, which from time to time was offered for religious uses: And though at this place the priests and rulers had chief authority, yet their spirits, and those of all his enemies, were so restrained and overawed, that, how desirous soever they were of it, none of them durst venture to offer any violence to him, the time appointed of God not being yet come for his last sufferings and death.

20 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come.

21 Then Jesus, knowing the rancour of their hearts against him, went on with another discourse to them, saying, as he had the day before, (*chap. vii. 33-34.*) I am going ere long to my Father, from whom I came; and hereafter, ye would be glad to have me, as the Messiah, among you, to save you from all your miseries, and will earnestly seek after that privilege: But all will be then in vain; for, as ye obstinately reject me by unbelief, ye shall die under the power and guilt of that your sin, (*ἐν τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ ὑμῶν*) which will bind all your other iniquities upon you, to your utter destruction, by the righteous judgment of God in this world, and to your everlasting condemnation in the next: And the gates of the blessed kingdom, to which I am going, will be shut against you; so that ye will not be able to follow me thither, either to fetch me back from thence, or to partake of my glory there.

21 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go ye cannot come.

22 The unbelieving Jews seemed to be amazed at this, and yet to make a jest of it, saying one to another, What a strange odd way of talking is this! What, does he think of laying violent hands upon himself to get out of the reach of his enemies, and so prevent their murdering him? or what else can be the meaning of this whimsical expression, I am going to a place, whither ye cannot follow me?

23 And he said unto them, - Ye are from beneath; I am from above; ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

23 Our Lord perfectly knowing their thoughts, as well as their perverse discourse, further explained himself to them, saying, The reason why ye cannot follow me, is this: Ye are not only men of earthly extraction, but, like your mean original, are persons of a worldly, carnal spirit and temper, whose hearts are set upon things below; whereas I not only am of divine original, and came from heaven, but my temper and views are directly contrary to, and subversive of yours; I am dead to this world, and my affections are set on things above, whither I am going.

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for

24 And therefore I told you, (*ver. 21.*) that ye shall utterly and dreadfully perish for and in your iniquities, and particularly your unbelief, which leaves you under the power of all other sins: For if, through the carnality,

if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins.

lity, hardness, and impenitence of your hearts, ye will not believe that * I am *he*, who should come a light into the world, (*ver.* 12.) as the only Saviour, there is no help or hope, but that ye must be cut off in your sins, by the righteous vengeance of God upon your city and nation in this world, and by a still more terrible destruction in the world to come.

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

25 Hereupon, as they before had said with a taunt, (*ver.* 19.) *Where is your Father?* so now, with the like temper of mind, they cried out, Who are you that speak so great things of yourself? What do you pretend to be, that we upon our peril must believe in you? To this he replied, I insist upon it, that † I am what I have all along said of myself from the very beginning of my ministry, even the Son of God, and the true Messiah, (*chap.* iv. 26, and v. 17,—27.) how much soever ye despise me.

26 I have many things to say, and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

26 I could easily charge you with many more crimes than I have, to aggravate your infidelity, and lay you under condemnation; and ye hereafter will hear of them, and be judged by me for them: But not to mention things now, which are unsuitable to the present design of my office, and would be lost upon such hardened creatures as ye are, I shall only tell you that he, by whom I am sent to make known his mind and will, is incontestably true to his promise concerning my coming, and to me and them that believe in me, as he also is to his threatenings against those that reject me: And whatsoever I say openly in, and to the world, is with all faithfulness, exactly according to the commission that I have received from him, whose authority is uncontrollable, and cannot be trampled upon with impunity.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

27 Now though in all this Christ so manifestly asserted his divine original and mission; yet so great were their blindness and prejudices against him, that still they did not understand him to speak of God's being his Father, and of his receiving his commission from him; but as he had told them before, (*ver.* 19.) *They neither knew him, nor his Father.*

28 Jesus

NOTES.

* *That I am he*, is in the Greek *ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἀληθὴς*, *that I am*, which some suppose refers to that name of God, (*Exod.* iii. 14.) where he calls himself *I am*: But in this place it rather seems to be an elliptical form of *spe. ch.* with respect to his being the Messiah, at this very expression is undoubtedly to be understood, (*Mark* xiii. 6.) *Many shall come in my name*, *ἔρχονται ἐν ὀνόματι μου, that I am*, i. e. the Christ; and (*Acts* xiii. 23.) *John said*

ὁ ἀληθὴς ἐγώ εἰμι, I am not, i. e. *he*, or the Messiah.

† It is not easy to give an exact grammatical construction of the Greek *ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἀληθὴς ὁ ἀρχὴν ὡν ἦν καὶ ἡμεῖς ὡς ἦν*, which some render, *I am the beginning*; others adverbially, *from the beginning*, which I also say, i. e. continue to say unto you; and so it may be taken as Christ's asserting his own eternal existence as God, antecedent to any human original, according to *John* i. 1, 2, and *Rev.* i. 8.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lift up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

28 Jesus therefore said unto them, How ignorant soever ye now are of me, and though in a little time ye will procure my crucifixion, who appear among you as the Messiah, and will think that ye have thereby effectually ruined me and my cause; yet, as this will really be the direct step to my exaltation, so ye shall be afterwards convinced*, either by happy or dreadful experience, that I am he who was to come, and that, according to what I now say of myself, I do nothing as a private person of my own head, and nothing separately from my Father; but that I faithfully declare every thing exactly according to the instructions, which I, as man and mediator, have received from him, and that all my promises and threatnings shall be punctually fulfilled.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

29 In the mean-while, my Father, who sent me into the world, is ever present with me by an essential union, and by an unmeasurable unction of his Spirit, to assist, accept, and own me in his work: He has not deserted me, or withdrawn the demonstrations of his favour from me: For the whole of what I do is at all times, and without the least variation, entirely agreeable to his will, and delightful to him.

30 As he spake these words many believed on him.

30 When Jesus spake these words, it was with such evidence and power, as brought many of the Jews to believe that he bore a divine commission, or, at least to profess † their faith in him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.

31 But our blessed Lord knowing that some of them were weak in faith, and that others were only hypocrites, who, under all their pretences of discipleship to him, still sought to destroy him, (*ver.* 37.) said to the whole multitude of them, that professed to believe in him, If ye really embrace, and adhere to my holy doctrine in your judgment and choice, and persist in a cordial belief of it, and subject your whole souls to it, then shall ye be proved and owned to be my disciples in truth, as well as in name.

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

32 And ye shall still further be enlightened, confirmed, and satisfied about the certainty, excellence, and importance of my gospel; and by its means shall ye obtain the most glorious freedom from every thing that is enslaving, mean, and miserable.

33 They answered

33 Then some of them, who had professed to believe in

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* The means of this conviction were the signs and wonders that should attend the death and resurrection of Christ, the effusion of his Spirit, and spreading of the gospel, and the judgments of God in the de-

struction of Jerusalem afterwards.

† It appears from the whole of the following discourse betwixt Christ and them, that some of them were very far from being sincere believers.

swered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily verily I say unto you; Who-ever commit-teth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye

in him, taking it as an high affront, that he should speak as if he thought them to be slaves, said to him, in a vaunting manner, We are the descendants of the famous patriarch *Abraham*, who being a sovereign prince, and a man in covenant with God, entailed all civil and religious freedom upon us, as our birthright; and we never lost it by being * enslaved to any foreign power, or governed by any laws but our own. What therefore can you mean by pretending to make us free, who are in right and fact so free already?

34 Our Lord replied, How great soever your boasts of liberty are, I, who speak the truth, solemnly assure you, that who ever, like you, is a worker of iniquity, (*ὁ ποιῶν τὸν ἁμαρτίαν*) is the worst of slaves under the guilt and power of sin: he, notwithstanding all his pretended claims under *Abraham*, is a servant of corruption, to his own perdition.

35 And the servant of sin, though he be the natural seed of *Abraham*†, like *Ismael*, the son of *Hagar* the bond-woman, shall be cast out of God's house and family, and from all its privileges, as *Ismael* was, and as all the carnal unbelieving *Jews* shall be: But the Son of God, who is likewise, by way of eminence, the seed of *Abraham* and the son of the promise, in whom all nations shall be blessed, continues as the first born, lord and heir in his own house for ever; and every one that claims under him, as *Abraham's* seed through faith in him, according to the promise, shall abide in the family as a son, and inherit the noblest freedom with him.

36 If therefore I, who am the Son of God, and Lord of mine own house, shall bestow the noble freedom upon you, which I spake of, ye shall be (*ὄντες*) substantially and eminently free in your own spirits, and

N O T E S.

* It is surprizing that they should have the confidence to assert so downright and known a falsehood, as that *they never were in bondage to any man*: For they had been notoriously in bondage for many years to foreign powers in *Egypt* and *Babylon*; and were at this very time tributaries to the *Romans*, and under great restraints of their liberties from them.

† The sense of this verse, considered as a general maxim, is plain and obvious enough with respect to the privilege of a son above a servant; and yet it is very difficult to fix its determinate meaning, as it stands here in connection with the context, and particularly with the servant of sin, mentioned in the foregoing verse, and with the Son, spoken of in the verse following. But that, which I have given, seems to be its most easy and consistent sense: For it keeps up the same

idea of the servant of sin, and of the Son, as mentioned in the preceding and following verses; and, at the same time, shews the difference between the servants of sin and the true children of God, (who are *Abraham's* seed through faith in Christ) with respect to the bondage of the one, and the freedom of the other; it likewise keeps up the view of Christ's answer to the vain plea of the carnal *Jews*, that they were *Abraham's* seed: and it agrees with the apostle's representation of *Ismael's* being cast out, as the son of the bond-woman, who should not be heir with the son of the free-woman, and with his representation of *Isaac*, as the son of the promise, who was therein a type of Christ, and of all true believers in him. (*Gal. iv. 28, 31.*) And this sense of the words lies in a plain and natural connection with the following verse.

ye shall be free indeed.

and in all your religious concerns; free from the guilt and dominion of sin; free from the law as a covenant of works, from all its burdensome ceremonies, that yoke of bondage, and from its dreadful curse; free from the prevailing blindness and prejudices of your own minds and hearts, and from the tyranny of Satan; free in your access to God, communion with him, and acting for him; free from the sting of death, and the victory of the grave; and at length free from every kind of evil, and in full possession of all the glory of your adoption: So that all other freedom is as nothing compared with this, and is mere slavery without it.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

37 And, as to the other part of your plea, that ye are *Abraham's* seed, I very well know, and readily own, that ye are his natural descendents; but I likewise know, that notwithstanding this, ye are far from giving into his faith, disposition, and obedience, and are full of unworthy inclinations and designs to destroy me, only because your proud and carnal hearts cannot relish and fall in with, no nor so much as bear the holy, spiritual, and self-humbling doctrine, which I preach unto you.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father; and ye do that which you have seen with your father.

38 So great is the contrariety between me and you, that I deliver the things which I am intimately acquainted with as one present in council and communion with my heavenly Father, and which I know to be according to his mind and will: And ye, on the other hand, do those things which ye have learnt by immediate suggestion from your own father, who is opposite to mine, and which ye practise under his influence, and in imitation of him, like persons in communion and council with him.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

39 At these words they took fire, and answered him with some smartness, What father of ours is this whom you speak of with such contempt? We tell you again, and you yourself have owned it, (*ver. 37.*) that *Abraham* is our father: What then do ye mean by reflecting upon him, as if we had learnt any evil from him? Jesus replied, If we were indeed *Abraham's* children in temper and spirit, as well as by natural descent, ye would do such works of faith and holiness, as he did.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God:

40 But instead of copying after, ye go into the very reverse of his believing and holy disposition and behaviour, in that ye seek my life, because I have asserted an important and necessary truth, about my being the Son of God, and the promised Messiah, (*chap. v. 18.*) a truth which, as a prophet, I received commission from God himself to declare to you: Whereas *Abraham*

God: this did not Abraham.

ham readily received and obeyed every divine revelation, and was so eminent for humanity and piety, that he never would have gone about to kill any innocent person, much less any messenger from God to him.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

41 It is plain therefore, notwithstanding all your boasts of being *Abraham's* children, that ye have another Father, whom ye resemble, and whose will and work ye do. The *Jews* perceiving by this, that he spoke of their pedigree, not in a literal, but spiritual sense, replied with indignation, Whatsoever you may suggest to the contrary, we are not the children of idolaters, who have broke God's covenant, and gone a-whoring from him to idols; nor do we own or serve the gods of the heathen, but are worshippers of the only living and true God; and therefore he, in a spiritual sense, is the Father of us all.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father ye would love me: for I proceeded forth, and came from God: neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

42 In answer to this, Jesus said, If, as ye pretend, God were indeed your spiritual Father, who has really begotten you after his own likeness, ye, instead of upposing and rejecting, would affectionately esteem and embrace me and my doctrine: For I originally proceeded from God the Father* as his only begotten Son, partaker of the same nature with him, and am come into the world immediately from him; I did not come of my own head, like a false prophet, but by commission from him, who sent me, as the Messiah, to make known the way of salvation, and to do his will upon earth.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

43 Whence is it then, that ye do not take in what I say, and have evidently proved concerning myself, and the design of my coming into the world? truly the reason is, because your hearts are so carnal and sensual, that ye cannot approve of my spiritual, self-denying, and heavenly doctrine, and are so prejudiced against it, that ye cannot endure to hear of my being the Son of God, who preach it. How then can ye pretend that God is your heavenly Father?

44 No

N O T E.

* Observe the difference between what Christ here says of himself, and what is ever said of any other: Believers are said to be of God, (ver. 47. and 1 John iv. 4. and to be born and begotten of God, (1 John v. 1.); and the prophets were said to be sent of God, as John the Baptist also was, (John i. 6.) But it is peculiar to Christ, that he proceeded forth, and came from God, which intimates his divine original, as well as mission, that he is of the Father as a Son of his own essence, proceeding from him, as well as that he came from the Father, as a

divine messenger: For the form of expression, *ex te pro patre*, here rendered *I proceeded forth from God*, is often used by the Seventy, to signify a proper birth, when applied to man, as in Gen. xv. 4. it is said, *he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir*; chap. xxxv. 11. *Kings shall come out of thy loins*. And it is said of Christ, with respect to his human birth, (Isa. xi. 1.) *there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse*. The phraseology is the same in all these places, with that which is here rendered *proceeding forth*.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

44 No, on the contrary, I must tell you plainly, that your proper father, in a moral sense, is the devil himself; him ye imitate and obey, and his malicious and envious inclinations and designs ye resolutely set yourselves to fulfil: Ye are the seed of that old serpent, who murdered the whole human race, drawing their first parents into sin, at the beginning of the world; who has ever since prompted his children to all the murders that have been committed, especially upon righteous men and holy prophets, from *Abel* down to this day; and who still continues to murder the souls of men by his fallacious temptations. And as he degenerated from his own original integrity; so he afterwards denied the truth of what God had said about the forbidden fruit, that he might ruin the sons of men; and he has ever since set himself against the truth of divine revelation, to prevent their recovery, because he is a lying spirit, destitute of, and an utter enemy to all truth and goodness. Whenever therefore he suggests falsehoods, he therein acts suitable to his own temper, as an apostate spirit: For he is a notorious liar, and the promoter of lies and deceits, in all his methods of procedure, and among all those that go in to them after his example. Ye are therefore his children, acting his part, and fulfilling his will, in all your false suggestions and murderous designs against me.

45 And, because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

45 And tho' I have given the clearest proofs of the truth of my character, as the Son of God and Saviour of sinners, and have told you the only true way to eternal life and blessedness; yet ye will not give any credit to me: Nay, because I tell you such truths, as are spiritual and holy, and disagreeable to your corrupt inclinations and interests, therefore ye reject both me and them.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And, if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

46 If there is any immorality or misbehaviour in my life; or any absurdity or ill tendency in my doctrine; or inconsistency with itself, with the scripture, or with any plain principles of reason; why do not some of you prove it upon me, and thereby confute me? which of you is able to do this? and if ye cannot find any one real fault in my doctrine, any more than in my life, but all is right and true; how perverse and unreasonable is it, that ye nevertheless will persist in your unbelief?

47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because

47 He that is a child of God, enlightened, renewed, and sanctified by his Spirit, is desirous to know, and ready to receive and observe whatever God speaks: The reason therefore why ye pay no regard to what I declare, and

ye are not of God.

46 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

47 Jesus answered, I have not a devil: but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

48 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

49 Verily verily I say unto you, If a man keep my

and have proved to be from him, is because, whatsoever ye pretend to, ye really are not the children of God, partakers of his Spirit, and well affected towards him.

48 Some of the Jews then present, being exasperated at this cutting discourse, which they could not confute, fell into a violent fury against him, crying out, How can you pretend, that none of us have convinced you of sin? (*ver. 46.*) We have said, and we stand to it as rightly said, your own discourse now confirming it, that you are as bad as a Samaritan, whom we look upon as the worst of enemies to our religion and nation, and worthy to be had in the utmost abhorrence; nay, we insist upon it, that you talk like a madman, and one possessed of the devil himself, while you charge the children of Abraham with being not the children of God, but the children of that evil one, and while you perform pretended miracles by his power, and in confederacy with him, to make people believe that what you say is true*.

49 To this monstrously vile and blasphemous reproach, Jesus answered, with wonderful meekness and calmness of spirit, This is such a groundless imputation, as never can be made good against me: The nature and tendency of all my doctrines and miracles, for promoting goodness and holiness among men, and for destroying the works of the devil, are a demonstration that I am not influenced by him, nor act in confederacy with him: But all, that I do and say, is to advance the glory of my heavenly Father's wisdom, power, holiness, and grace, in the salvation of his people: This Satan would never do; and yet ye revile and speak evil against me for it, as if I were acted by him.

50 But (*21*) I neither trouble myself about your reproaches, nor court your applause, having no aim at advancing my own, in distinction from my Father's glory: Nor need I be solicitous about these things; for their is one, even my heavenly Father himself, who will secure an interest for me in the hearts of his people, and will effectually vindicate my character, and avenge all the indignities offered to it.

51 Leaving therefore my reputation in his hands, I, who am Truth itself, go on to assure you with the greatest solemnity, as I have done before, (*chap. v. 24. and*

vi.

NOTE

* He took no notice of what they had said about his being a Samaritan, because that did not so much affect his commission, and every thing that was invidious in that calumny would fall of itself, by his proving that he was not acted by an evil spirit: And per-

haps he made no reply to that part of the charge, because some Samaritans had already believed in him, (*chap. iv. 39.*) and he himself had represented a good Samaritan in an honourable light. (*Luke x. 33, &c.*)

my saying, he shall never see death.

vi. 40, 50, 51.) that whoever heartily embraces, and holds fast my spiritual and holy doctrine, in his faith and obedience, shall not * die (*οὐ θνήσκει*) for ever; he shall not be utterly destroyed by death, but shall live in all felicity, world without end.

51 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

52 Then the Jews, instead of embracing this blessed promise of a glorious immortality, wrested Christ's words to their own destruction, pretending that he meant an exemption from temporal death, and crying out with still greater rage and revilings than before, We are now thoroughly confirmed in the truth of our charge, that you are really possessed of the devil, and are stark mad: For our father Abraham, who was the friend of God, and all the holy prophets, from Moses to this day, are dead, though they were strict observers of the divine will; and yet you boldly affirm, that whoever receives and practises your doctrine shall never die.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

53 What! said they, forgetting that the Messiah must needs be superior to all that went before him, do you pretend to be more highly in favour with God, and to have greater power than our father Abraham himself, and than the most excellent of the prophets, who died, like the rest of mankind? how wild and presumptuous is your talk of making others immortal, when those eminent favourites of heaven could not obtain that privilege for themselves? Pray, who are you that pretend to bestow a greater blessing on your disciples, than God saw fit to vouchsafe to any of them?

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my father that honoureth me, of whom ye say that he is your God.

54 Jesus replied, if I assume undue honour to myself, or make a shew of power without good arguments to support it, such glorying would indeed be empty and vain, and would turn to my disgrace: But it is my Father (*ὁ δοξάζων με*) that honours and glorifies me, by bearing witness to the utmost dignity of my character, and shewing his approbation of me according to it, even that God, whom ye claim as your covenant-God, and whom ye ought to believe, in what he testifies concerning me.

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say I know him not, I shall be a liar. Like unto you:

55 But, notwithstanding your pretences of peculiar relation to him, ye are really strangers to him, and utterly ignorant of him as my Father, and will not understand what he has witnessed concerning me; no wonder therefore that ye do not receive me: But I am thoroughly acquainted with him, and fully assured, that he doth and will own and stand by me, who own and honour him: And were I to say otherwise, to avoid your wrath, I should give the lie to him, to my own

con-

N O T E.

* To see death, and to taste of death, as it is expressed in the next verse, are Hebrewisms which signify dying.

you : but I know him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day : and he saw it, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones to

conscience and character, and to the truth itself, just like you : But I insist upon it, as I ought, that I have a perfect knowledge of him, and of his regard to me, and that I always do the things that please him, according to the commission which I have received from him.

56 And as to your cavil at my speaking greater things of myself than could be said of *Abraham*, he, in whom ye so much glory, as your Father and as the friend of God, made so high account of me, that he earnestly desired * to see the time of my appearing in flesh for the salvation of *Israel* : and he had such a sight of it, as filled him with exceeding great joy : How much more would he have been delighted to have seen what ye now see, and despise?

57 The *Jews*, perverting his words, as if he spoke of *Abraham's* really seeing him in the flesh, said to him, You are but a young man, who, as any one may see by your looks, have hardly reached † the middle age of life ; and what, do you pretend to have seen *Abraham*, as a co-temporary with him, who died many ages ago? How absurd and preposterous is this!

58 Our blessed Lord replied, I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that, how young soever I be, with relation to my human birth ; yet before *Abraham* was born, and before all worlds, I had a real existence, as the unchangeable ‡ *I AM*, who ordered *Moses* to speak of me to your fathers under that name. (*Exod.* iii. 14.)

59 Upon this, they apprehending that he had not only made himself greater than *Abraham*, but had likewise been guilty of the highest blasphemy, in speaking of himself as the eternally existent God, were furiously enraged

NOTES.

* *ἤθελον αὐτὸν ἰδεῖν*, He rejoiced to see my day, seems naturally, from the form of expression in the Greek, to signify, he vehemently desired to see it; and this prevents the tautology, that otherwise appears in the words, he rejoiced and was glad. See *Blackw. Sac. Claf.* vol. 1. p. 46. And though *Abraham* did not see Christ's day, in the same sense as the *Jews* saw it, by his appearing actually in the flesh ; yet he saw it by faith in types, figures, and promises, as particularly in *Melchizedek*, (*Gen.* xiv. 18.) in the appearance of *Jehovah* to him in the plains of *Mamre*, (*chap.* xviii. 1.) in his offering up of the ram in *Isaac's* stead : and in the promise, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, (*chap.* xxii. 1.—18.)

† Perhaps the *Jews* said this, because the gravity of our Lord's countenance, together with his afflictions and labours, gave him the aspect of a man of near fifty. However, they mentioned this age, to intimate, that

since he could not be so much as deemed an old man, it was the more absurd in him to talk of *Abraham's* having seen him.

‡ This remarkable change of the phrase, from *I was*, to *I am*, points us to the eternal existence of Christ in his divine nature, according to the most literal and natural construction of the words, which seem to refer to what I take to have been Christ's own words to *Moses*, because the Father's voice was never heard, nor his appearance seen, under the Old Testament-dispensation. (See the note on *chap.* v. 37.) And this makes them a direct answer to the *Jews* objection taken from Christ's human age, shows his excellence above *Abraham*, and is the proper foundation of all the great things that he had asserted concerning himself : And it is plain that the *Jews* understood him in this sense by their taking up stones to stone him, as appears from the next verse.

to cast at him : but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going thro' the midst of them, and so passed by.

enraged against him, and immediately, all in a hurry, caught up stones to stone him to death : But, his time being not yet come, he prudently avoided their rage by * concealing himself from them ; and, slipping out of the temple through the crowd, he made his escape.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Did *Moses* command that persons guilty of adultery should be stoned to death ? How abominable then is that sin ! But, alas ! how unfit are enemies to Christ, and allowers of themselves in any iniquity, to shew a zeal against others, and condemn them for theirs ! Were they seriously to examine themselves, their consciences must soon convince them of sin, and make them afraid of casting the first stone : And though judgment is not speedily executed against transgressors, a time is coming, when it shall ; and when worse miseries will come upon them than can be inflicted here : He who acts the Saviour's part now, will be their Judge then, and they that reject him in the day of his mercy here, shall be rejected by him in the day of his wrath hereafter : O how will they then seek him in vain, and find that they cannot get to heaven to enjoy him there ! But blessed be God that light is come into our world by Jesus Christ, who has given us a clear revelation of the Father, and of the way of salvation by the gospel, and enlightens dark souls by his Spirit : In an estrangement from him, whatsoever knowledge we pretend to have of God, we shall certainly wander in the dark to our own eternal perdition ; but they that walk in his light, and follow his guidance, shall be preserved from the dominion of sin, and every dangerous error, and shall safely arrive at eternal life : He has said it, and shall he not perform it, who is a Divine Person, inseparable from the Father, and is the eternal *I am*, whose witness concerning himself is true, and of equal authority with the Father's ; and who, in his mediatorial capacity, came from him, and is faithful to him, honours him, and is honoured by him ? How safely may we abide by his testimony, and appeal to it, whenever any question may be moved concerning him, who is the same that he said of himself from the beginning ! But how insufficient is all external evidence to bring an unregenerate carnal heart over to Christ ! And O what blasphemous contradiction and reproach did he undergo from sinners ! They shamefully dishonoured him, because he honoured his Father and reprov'd them ; and they insulted him, as if he were a madman, and possessed with the devil, while they themselves were guilty of the greatest madness, and were actuated by the power of Satan : But his innocence was his protection ; and with what meekness did he vindicate himself, and confute them ! What signifies having *Abraham*, or any other godly persons for our fathers, if we are strangers to their spirit, faith, and holiness ? And how monstrous is the hypocrisy, wickedness, and falsehood of some, that are descendants of religious parents, and pretend to claim under them, yea, that boast of their privileges, and even profess to believe in Christ himself ! They are worldly [while he is heavenly, and they naturally give a carnal turn to spiritual things ; they cannot understand or receive his doctrine, because it is directly contrary to the corrupt dispositions of their own hearts ; they are of their father the devil, and bear his likeness, as the father of lies and of all evil ; they are under the worst of slavery to sin and Satan ; they harden themselves against convictions of their guilt and danger ; and if they believe not in Christ, they shall die in their sins, and shall be turned out of God's family, who will disown them to be his children ! But O the happiness of true believers ! His word abides with powerful influence in their hearts ; they know the truth as it is in Jesus ; they are of God, and bear the likeness of their heavenly Father ; they hear Christ's words, and obtain

N O T E.

* This he probably did, either by hiding himself in the crowd of his friends, or miraculously casting a mist before his enemies' eyes, that they could not distinguish him

from others, and so departed from the temple, through the midst of the company, and got away unhurt.

obtain the most excellent freedom from him; their earnest desires are after him, and they rejoice in the views that their faith gives them of him; they love him, and shall be delivered by him from all the miseries of eternal death; and they are the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, and the children of God, who shall dwell with the only begotten Son in his Father's house for ever.

C H A P. IX.

Christ gives sight to a man who was born blind, 1,—7. Several discourses on that occasion among the neighbours themselves, and between them and this poor man, 8,—12. Between the Pharisees and him, 13,—34. Between Christ and him, 35,—38. And between Christ and some of the Pharisees, 39,—41.

TEXT.

AND, as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

1 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God might

PARAPHRASE.

* AFTER the forementioned things, Jesus, passing along with his disciples, observed a poor beggar, (*ver. 8.*) who was quite dark, and was known to have been born blind.

2 And the disciples, supposing that this affliction had befallen him as an extraordinary judgment, put a nice sort of question to their Lord about him, saying, Master, for whose fault was blindness from the birth inflicted on this man? Was it for any uncommon sin of his own †; or for some remarkable crime of his parents, before he was born?

3 Jesus, to put a check upon a curious and censorious temper, replied ‡, Though all men are sinners, and all affliction is the fruit of sin; yet the blindness with which this man was born, was not for any particular fault, that either he or his parents had been guilty of, more than others: But it was ordered, by the sovereign, wise, and holy providence of God, for the manifestation

N O T E S.

* The discourses, in the two preceding chapters, were at the feast of tabernacles, (*chap. vii. 2.*); and it seems from *chap. x. 22.* (see the note there) that what follows in this, and the next chapter, was at the feast of dedication, which was about three months after the other, that being in *September*, and this in *December*: And yet the last chapter's ending, and this beginning with the same word, carries the face of a connection of events, one of which immediately succeeded the other. There it is said, *παρὰν, he passed by*, here *ὡς παρὰν, and passing by*, which we render, *and as he passed by*, he saw a man, &c. However, these parts of our Evangelist's history are closely connected, though the facts were not so in time; and it appears from *ver. 2, 8, 14*, that the *passing by*, here mentioned, was not at the temple, as the former was, but in

some other place, where his disciples were with him, and where this man sat begging; and that it was on the sabbath-day.

† Their question seems to have related to some personal sin, which God foresaw this man would be guilty of, or which he might be supposed to have committed, either in the womb, or, according to the *Pythagorean* notion, in some state of pre-existence, or in some former body.

‡ The plain design of Christ here is, not to deny original sin, or say any thing about it; but only to reply to their suggestion, as if this man, or his parents, were guilty of some greater sin than others: For it could no more be said absolutely, that his parents had not actually sinned, than it could, that neither he, nor they were under the guilt and power of original sin.

should be made manifest in him.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

7 And said unto him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is, by interpretation, Sent) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him, that he was blind, said, Is not

tion of his own glory, (*chap. xi. 4.*) in my exerting the divine power to work a miraculous cure on this miserable object, and thereby proving myself to be the Messiah, who am come to open the eyes of them that were born both corporally and spiritually blind.

4 I must therefore improve the present opportunity for giving this man his sight, as an emblem of my greater work of enlightening the minds of them that sit in darkness, for which my Father sent me: For as the day of man's life is the proper time for business, and he can do nothing for God, or the good of others, in the grave, to which he is hastening; so all the work I have to do, in my own person on earth, for the glory of my Father, and the benefit of mens souls and bodies, must be done out of hand, the time of my death coming on apace.

5 Accordingly, during my short abode in this lower world, I not only cure them that are corporally blind, but am risen upon it, as the Sun of righteousness, to communicate the light of truth, grace, and comfort to the souls of its inhabitants, in healing beams for spiritual light.

6 Then the blessed Saviour proceeded to prevent this poor man with the blessings of his goodness: And as he could work by contrary means, as well as without any, and could exert the same Almighty power, which at first formed the body of man out of the dust of the ground, (*Gen. ii. 7.*) he spat on the earth, and making a kind of soft clay, by a mixture of dust and spittle, spread it on the eyes of the blind man.

7 And, having done this, he ordered him to go and wash (*ὡς τὸν κελευσθέντα*) at the pool of Siloam, (see the note on *Luke xiii. 4.*) which was a figure of the kingdom of Judah, and of Christ their King, (*Isa. viii. 6.*) and which in the Hebrew language signifies *Sent*, and so pointed to the Messiah, whom God would send; accordingly the blind man, in dependence upon Christ's power, and in obedience to his command, went and washed his eyes * with those waters, and immediately came away seeing, like other men.

8 In the mean time Jesus withdrew; and at the man's returning with his eye-sight, his neighbours, that had long been acquainted with him, and others that had before seen and observed him to be stone-blind, were amazed at the sudden alteration made upon him; and talked

N O T E.

* It is highly probable, that he did not go into the pool, but only washed his eyes with its water, his discomper being only in them; and so the preposition *ως*, here signifies *at*,

not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

14 And it was the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked

talked one to another in a different manner about him: Some, not knowing what to think, said, by way of inquiry, Is not this the blind beggar, who used to sit here?

9 Others said positively, This is the very same man: Others, unwilling to believe the miracle, said, He is indeed exceedingly like him; but one person may be like another, and surely it is impossible that this can be he, since there is no such thing as a man's being brought to his sight, all on a sudden, who was born blind: But the man himself, hearing their debates about him, declared to them all, for the honour of his great benefactor, I really am the person, who was born blind, and used to beg for my livelihood.

10 Upon this they began to examine him closely, saying, If you are the man we mean, how comes it to pass that you, who was always blind from your birth to this day, should now see so perfectly, all at once? By what means was this done?

11 He replied, A certain person, named Jesus, came up to me, as I sat begging, and, taking pity on me, made a sort of soft clay, which he applied to mine eyes, and then ordered me to go and wash it off at the pool of Siloam: Accordingly I obeyed his command, hoping that it might have some good effect, and immediately found, to my joyful surprise, that I could see.

12 Then some of the company asked*, Where is the man who did this? Let us know, that we may go and take the account from him. To which he answered, I really cannot tell; for I never saw him, he being gone before I returned with my eye-sight, and I have not heard of him since.

13 Some of them being enraged, instead of rejoicing at the mercy shewn to him, who had been blind, brought him before the council, in which were many *Pharisees*, that, if possible, the miracle might be disproved which had been wrought upon him.

14 And they were the rather induced to do this, because it was on the sabbath that Jesus made the clay and cured the beggar of his blindness, which they superstitiously thought was a servile work, and a profanation of that holy day, and which they knew would incense the *Pharisees* against him.

15 As soon as the man came before the council, the *Pharisees* also hoping that by their superior wisdom they might catch something from him to render the whole

N O T E.

* They asked this, either out of curiosity, to see the wonderful person who had wrought such a matchless miracle; or out of envy and

ill-will against him, for doing it on the sabbath-day, (ver. 14.); or out of earnest desire to be themselves acquainted with him.

asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I walked, and do see.

15 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath-day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? and there was a division among them.

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying,

whole affair suspicious, or to put some slur upon it, asked him, How, or by what means, he came to his sight? The man honestly replied as before, Jesus came up to me, and, taking pity on me, spread a certain clay upon mine eyes, and then ordered me to go and wash them with the water of *Siloam* which I accordingly did; and immediately thereupon, to my great surprise and joy, I could see every thing about me as I now do.

16 The *Pharisees* being stunned at this answer, some of them, that were most inveterate in their enmity to Jesus, said, Whether this account of the matter be true or not, it is certain that he, who is spoken of as working the cure, cannot be a holy man, approved and sent of God, because he makes no conscience of observing the sabbath, as appears by his doing these unlawful works on that day: But others of them who were not so rash in their temper, said, If we allow that Jesus wrought this wonderful cure, though it were on the sabbath-day, we shall never overthrow his authority among the people: For it will be said, with a great deal of reason, How is it possible that any wicked man, who is disapproved of God, should perform any miracles, so great and merciful as this? Let us therefore more thoroughly examine the fact itself, and see whether there be no fraud in it: And so they were divided in their own judgment and debates about this affair.

17 Hereupon some of the counsel said to the man that had been blind, What is your opinion of this person, since, as you tell us, he has given you the use of your eyes? Did he really do it? If he did, what are your thoughts about him? The man replied, From what experience I have had, and from the best judgment I am able to form upon it, I cannot but conclude that he is, at least, a holy prophet sent from God.

18 But some of these rulers of the *Jews* finding that the man spoke so much like a friend of Christ, would not believe that he was born blind, or had really received any cure from him, till they sent for his father and mother, that they might try what they could learn from them about him.

19 And when his parents appeared before them, they strictly examined them, saying, Let us hear what

N O T E.

* These words may be taken either as a single question thus, What sayest thou of him, seeing that he has opened thine eyes? and so they may be considered as the question of some that had favourable thoughts of Christ, and took the fact for granted: Or

they may be considered as two questions, thus, What sayest thou of him? Dost thou say that he has opened thine eyes? and therefore I have taken both senses into the Paraphrase.

ing, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them, and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not:

ye can tell us about this poor man? Do ye aver that this is your son, who, it seems, ye pretend was born blind? If ye are sure that this is he, we ask you, How came he to have his sight now? or by what means did he obtain it?

20 His parents, being poor and timorous, replied with great caution, We cannot but be sure that this is our own son, and have known to our sorrow, that he was stone-blind from his birth till this time.

21 But how, or by whose operation, he now is brought to his sight is as strange to us as it can be to you; we being absent when it was done: He is best able to give an account of these things himself, and is of competent years and understanding to do it: Be pleased therefore to inquire of him; no doubt but he will give you full satisfaction.

22 His parents, instead of having the gratitude and courage to own what they knew of the cure, shifted it off in this manner, because they were sinfully afraid of incurring the displeasure of the court: For they had heard that the Jewish sanhedrim had already shewn such a malicious spirit against Jesus, as to pass a law, that whoever should own him to be the Messiah, should be forbid entrance into the synagogue, and be excluded, as an apostate, from all the liberties and privileges of the church and commonwealth of *Israel*. (See the note on *ver.* 34.)

23 The man's parents, therefore, fearing that, if they declared their own thoughts about Christ's having healed him, it might be construed as an intimation, that they believed him to be the Messiah, turned off the answer from themselves to their son, saying, He is old enough to speak for himself; please to take the account from his own mouth.

24 Then the council, finding that they could get nothing out of his father and mother, to disprove the miracle, applied again to the man who had been blind, saying, If you really was perfectly dark from your birth, and have been brought to your sight in the manner you speak of, it is a wonderful work of God, and you ought to give him the entire glory of it, and not think that Jesus contributed any thing toward it: For we are sure that he is a wicked man, for having done, and ordered you to do such things on the sabbath-day, as are a downright profanation of it. (*ver.* 16.)

25 The man replied, I do not take upon me to determine about his being a wicked man, or not, on account of his having, as ye say, broke the law of the sabbath

not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

sabbath; if he be a transgressor, I do not know it*: But this one thing I am very sure of, that whereas I was quite blind all along from my birth before, I now clearly see.

25 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee, how opened he thine eyes?

26 Then the council being at a loss what to say against the miracle, and yet resolved not to own it, re-examined the man, in hopes that, through surprize and fear, he might some way or other falter in his evidence: Therefore they said to him, Let us hear your rehearse over again what Jesus did to you, and in what manner you received your sight.

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again, will ye also be his disciples?

27 The man perceiving their obstinate and unreasonable prejudices, and that they only wanted to baffle him, answered them, I have already told you the whole of the case, as punctually as I was able, and ye would not be convinced or satisfied: To what purpose should I repeat the same things over again? What, Sirs, have ye at length a mind to become his disciples? If so, I would gladly tell you the delightful story, as often as ye please; but if not, Why should ye desire to hear any more of it?

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple: but we are Moses' disciples.

28 Then the council, being highly provoked at these last words, broke out into a passion, and began to fall foul upon him, saying, in a contemptuous and taunting manner, We his disciples! No, we scorn your words: You indeed, as we suspected all along from your management, are one of this man's disciples; and none but such sorry wretches, as yourself, would ever own him; but we, whom you ought to receive as your guides in religion, and to treat with more reverence and respect, than to give us such a saucy answer, are the faithful disciples of Moses, stedfastly adhering to the doctrines of that great man of God, and famous law-giver of Israel.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not

29 We are well assured, by undoubted testimonies, that God himself spake to Moses face to face, and by him delivered the law to us: But as for this obscure, worthless fellow, (as they impiously called our blessed Lord) whom you are so fond of, and by whose deceipts you are so easily imposed upon, none knows † who or what

N O T E S.

* Thus the words may be rendered, (*αμαρτανος εστιν ου οίδα*) If he is a sinner I do not know it; thereby intimating that he had other thoughts of him.

† The people had a little before objected against Jesus's being the Messiah, because, said they, *We know this man whence he is; but when Christ comes, no man knows whence he is.* (chap. vii. 27. see the note there.) And here the Pharisees object against him, because they say, *we know not from whence he is:* So

that, right or wrong, his enemies resolved to run him down, and, without any scruple, would talk contradictions to serve a turn, and affirm or deny the same thing, or any thing, rather than not oppose him. But the truth is, they all did, or easily might know his human original: and the unsearchableness of his generation as a Divine Person, whose goings forth were of old from everlasting, was so far from being an argument against, that it was an argument for his being the true Messiah.

from whence he is.

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 If this man were not of God he could do nothing.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost

what he is, or from whom he received his pretended authority.

30 The man replied, Why, Sirs, it is a surprising thing, that persons of your learning and sagacity should know nothing of his original and authority, and yet that he should so miraculously give me sight, who was born blind: 'Tis really amazing to me, that ye should count him a contemptible ill man, or should suppose that he has no authority from God.

31 For we all, and especially ye our rulers and teachers, are well assured, that God shews no peculiar favour to wicked men, and will not hear their prayers, while they carry on base designs against him; much less will he own impostors by giving them a power of working any miracles in confirmation of their doctrine: But if any man be a faithful servant of God, doing the things which are pleasing in his sight, we justly conclude that he will hear and honour him; and God's enabling a person to perform the greatest of miracles, as the professed credentials of his commission, has always been accounted an attestation from heaven; that he is a holy man, and a prophet of the Lord.

32 Now it is a wonderful miracle which Jesus has wrought upon me; and after all the inquiries I have been able to make, I could never hear, that any physician, by human art, or that *Moses* himself, or any other of the prophets, by supernatural operation, from the beginning of the world to this day, ever gave sight to one who was born blind, and continued perfectly dark till he arrived to man's estate.

33 If therefore Jesus were not a holy man, and a prophet sent from God, and owned by him, he could never have done any miraculous work, much less one so extraordinary, matchless and merciful as this, in confirmation of his doctrine and authority: And, as far as I see, we must deny the divine commission of all the prophets that went before him, if we disown his.

34 The proud *Pharisees*, not being able to refute the man's close and pointed reasoning, nor to hear that such an one as he should presume in this manner to argue against them, lost all patience, and answered him with bitter reproaches, and in a huff, saying, You are a filly, rude, and base fellow, who have indeed had an uncommonly blind and vicious soul from your birth; and, if what you say of yourself be true, your coming into the world corporally blind, and ever since strolling about with loose and wicked beggars, has been a plain sign and punishment of it. And what! do you go a-

bout

dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

bout to dispute with and instruct us, who are the guides and rulers of the church, and the chief men of the day for wisdom, sanctity, and authority? And having thus insulted and reviled him, they went even beyond the severe law which they had lately made against owning Jesus to be the Christ, (*ver.* 22.) and * excommunicated this man only for pleading that he was a prophet.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and, when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

35 Our Lord, hearing that they had cast the poor man out of the synagogue for his sake, took the first opportunity of seeking after him, (thereby shewing how forward he is to own and encourage them that stand up for him) and meeting with him, said, Do you believe in the promised Messiah, who is the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

36 The man, glad to hear of the Messiah, replied with great earnestness, Sir, I do verily believe that he will soon appear; and if he be already come, pray tell me which is he, and where I may find him, that I may fix my faith on him, and may be one of his disciples.

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

37 Then Jesus manifested himself to him as he did not to the world, saying, He is nearer to you than you are aware of; you have already experienced his great power and goodness, in opening the eyes of your body, and of your mind too; it is he, whom you now have seen, and who is conversing with you.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

38 Hereupon the poor man cried, in a rapture of joy, Lord, I do heartily believe, that thou art indeed the Son of God, and the only Saviour of *Israel*, who art come to open the eyes of the blind, and to give light to them that sit in darkness: And immediately, in testimony of his faith, he fell down before him, and paid divine adoration to him, as his Lord and Saviour.

39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world: that

39 And Jesus, according to his custom of improving present occurrences, said, I am come into the world to establish a rule of judgment, to alter the state of the church, to try men's spirits, and by distinguishing grace to separate the precious from the vile: I am come, in the administration of my kingdom, to open not only men's bodily eyes, but likewise the eyes of their understanding, who are really ignorant of the way of salvation, and desirous to be taught it: And I am come, on the other hand, to prove them to be spiritually blind, and

N O T E.

* Casting out of the synagogue, signified excommunication, which was principally of two sorts among the Jews. One the less, called *Niddai*, which separated the party from the congregation and society of *Israel* four cubits, for thirty days. The other, called *Shergen*, was the greater, which ex-

cluded from any entrance into the synagogue, and from all religious and civil privileges in the church and commonwealth of *Israel*. *Vid. Seld. de Synedr. Lib. I. cap. vii.* And when it is said of this man, ἐξέβαλον αὐτὸν ἐξ αὐτῆς, they cast him out, it seems as if it were by the greater excommunication.

that they which see not might see; and that they which see, might be made blind.

40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Art we blind also?

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

and to seal them up under their own stupidity and perverseness, who pretend to be wise enough already, and therefore obstinately shut their eyes against the light of my word: Meaning, that thus it would be with respect to particular persons, *Pharisees* and others, and with respect to the nations of *Gentiles* and *Jews*.

40 Then some of the *Pharisees*, that were present and heard this, taking it as designed particularly against themselves, and as a gross affront and reflection upon them, said to him, in a way of disdain, What, dare you suggest that we, who are guides to the blind, and whose lips preserve knowledge, are as stupidly ignorant as the common people that know not the law?

41 Our Lord replied, If ye really were as ignorant, and as sensible of it, as many of them are, ye would, comparatively speaking, have no sin, or at least none so heinous, as ye now have in despising me; and ye would be in a hopeful way of deliverance from all your sins, through faith in me: But while ye are so self-conceited, as to imagine that ye know enough already, and need no further instruction, and so reject me, notwithstanding all that I have said and done among you, your sin is attended with the highest aggravations, and ye remain under its guilt and power, without any likelihood of its ever being removed.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How cautious should we be of indulging curiosity about God's dispensations, and of uncharitably censuring others, because of the afflictions that befall them? Though they are sinners in common with all mankind, they may be under no peculiar aggravated guilt, more than others: But God is righteous in his most awful proceedings, and will turn them one way or other to his own glory. And O how wonderful is the power and grace of Christ toward the unworthy and the distressed! He prevents them with the riches of his goodness, and can easily work salvation for them in whatsoever way he pleases; but they are to observe his own appointments for it, in obedience to his authority, and in faith and hope of his making them effectual, whether they can see the reasons of his orders, and their likelihood to answer their end, or not. What blessed experience will he give such souls of his power and mercy! He will enable them to think and speak honourably of him, till at length he will plainly discover himself to them, and they shall be brought to adore and worship him; and if they are cast out of the favour of men for his sake, he will take them into his special care, and deal the more kindly with them. Happy souls, who were once blind, but now see! How ready should they be to own their former deplorable circumstances, and the wonderful change which Christ has made upon them! How should they rejoice in it, and abide by their testimony to him, whatsoever opposition and contempt others may shew in disputing against it! He will own and honour their words to the confusion of his enemies; and they themselves may hope to be still further acquainted with him. But they who, like the parents of the blind man, are afraid and shy of owning what they believe concerning Christ, have no room to think that he will own them. And O how inexcusable and dreadful is their condition, whose hearts are filled with enmity

mity against him, notwithstanding the plainest testimonies that are given to him, and who, under pretence of sacred zeal for superstitious rites, and of giving all glory to God, upbraid the blessed Saviour himself! Though they may be silenced, they are never satisfied: And the higher evidence they receive, the more they are engaged: What can be expected, but that they should be delivered up by the righteous God to judicial blindness? And the higher opinion they have of their own understandings, the greater is their guilt, and their danger of never being enlightened in the things that belong to their everlasting peace. But what encouraging ground of hope is there for those, that are truly sensible of their own ignorance, and need of instruction! Jesus, according to ancient prophecies of the Messiah, is come to open their blind eyes, and to give them the knowledge of himself: And they, being enlightened by him, should, after his example, be working for God, while their capacities, opportunities, and lives are continued, doing all that in them lies for his glory, and the good of others, before the night of death comes, which will put an end to all their services, as well as sufferings in this world; and then the places that know them now, shall know them no more.

C H A P. X.

Christ the door and the shepherd of the sheep, 1,—18. Different opinions of the people concerning him. 19,—21. His disputes with the Jews about his being the Christ, and equal with God, 22,—38. His escaping their fury, and returning back beyond Jordan, 39,—42.

TEXT.

Verily verily I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Saviour having reprov'd the *Pharisees* as blind guides, while they boasted of their knowledge and skill in the law, (*chap. ix. 39,—41.* warned the people, in a parabolical way, against these and all such conceited false teachers, and directed them to himself, who had been traduced as an impostor. I, said he, the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, solemnly assure you, that as a man, who do not go in at the door of a sheepfold, but climbs over the fence, is justly deemed a thief, that comes to steal away, and destroy the sheep: So all that pretend to be the pastors of the flock of God, which he gathers into his church, as his fold, and do not come into that office according to his appointment, but by methods of their own devising; all these are intruders and seducers, who, instead of feeding and taking care of the sheep, come to rob God of his authority over them, and property in them, and to pervert and destroy their souls.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

2 But as a man, who regularly goes in at the door of the sheepfold, to manage the sheep, is to be esteemed as their real shepherd: So he, who with right principles and ends, and in the method of God's appointment, enters upon the work of feeding and guiding the Church,

Church, and leading them into the only true way of salvation, is qualified, and has a right to be their pastor; and he will take care of them, who may truly be compared to sheep, as they are a peculiar property, a dear charge and living treasure; and as they are cleanly and tractable, meek and patient, harmless and cautious, timorous and exposed, and yet social and useful creatures.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

3 As the door-keeper gives ready admission to the shepherd, and his sheep are acquainted with his voice, who calls them by their several names, and leads them out to the pasture; so God gives all authority to the true Shepherd, and by his Spirit, and the ministry of his servants, opens the hearts of his people to receive him^a; and they are taught to understand and distinguish his voice in the gospel: And, being his peculiar charge and property, he calls them by grace, one after another, as particularly as if it were by name; and then leads them into the good pasture, which he has provided for them in his word and ordinances.

4 And, when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

4 And as when the shepherd brings forth his sheep, he, according to the custom of these eastern nations, walks before them, and they go after him, and are governed by him, because they are acquainted with his voice: So when the great Shepherd leads his own sheep in paths of righteousness, for their spiritual food and refreshment, he shews them the way they should go, by his own instruction and example, and they willingly yield themselves up to his authority, and tread in his steps, because they understand and approve of his teachings, and can distinguish them from all others.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

5 But (b) as the sheep will not go out after a strange man, but, on the contrary, will run away from him, because they are unacquainted with his voice, he being a stranger to them; so the people of God, who are chosen and called to be the sheep of his pasture, will by no means be prevailed upon to hearken and adhere to the unscriptural doctrines, and bad example of uncommissioned false teachers, that would pervert them; but will be upon their guard, and keep at the utmost distance from them, because they perceive that their corrupt principles and practices do not lead them into the right way of salvation.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them:

6 The blessed Jesus delivered himself in this parabolical strain to the *Pharisees*, designing thereby to set forth

N O T E.

^aAs some refer this to God the Father, string servants, I have taken them all into others to his Spirit, and others to his mini- the Paraphrase.

them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

7 Their said Jesus unto them again, Verily verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might

forth his own authority, and to overthrow theirs, together with that of all other corrupt teachers: But as he had not given a particular explication of his meanings, and they were extremely opinionated of themselves, and prejudiced against him, they did not take in the drift of his discourse.

7 Then our Lord further added, I, who am faithful and true, assure you, that I am the door of salvation, and of God's sheepfold; the only way to eternal life, and the only one, by whom ministers and people can have admission into the gospel-church, that the one may have authority to exercise office-power in it, and the other may be partakers of its spiritual privileges and saving benefits.

8 All that have arisen before me, with pretences to the Messiah's character; and all that, like the *scribes* and *Pharisees*, endeavour to prejudice their own, and other people's minds against me; and to teach other methods of salvation than by me*, are no better than invaders of an office, which they have no right to, and robbers of my Father and me of our honour and our due, and destroyers of men's souls: But the elect and called of God were not deceived by them, so as to be drawn into perdition by the error of those wicked ones; nor could they find any satisfaction in following them.

9 I insist upon it, as a matter of the greatest importance, that I am the only true door of the church, and of eternal life: Whoever enters upon religion by faith in me, as the only Saviour, shall certainly be defended against the destroying power of all his spiritual enemies, shall be delivered from the wrath to come, and shall obtain eternal blessedness; and, while he is in this world, he, under the conduct of my word and Spirit, shall go to and from divine ordinances, and possess a holy liberty in them, and shall find spiritual support, nourishment, and refreshment to his soul by their means.

10 On the other hand, the false teacher, who vents pernicious errors, and has no commission from God, comes only to seduce my sheep, and steal away their hearts from me, that he may make a prey of them, to the murdering and ruining of their souls, or that, if he cannot carry them off from me, he may plunder and persecute them even to the death. But I am come into the world to shew them the way of obtaining a spiritual

N O T E.

* This cannot be meant of the holy prophets, and John the Baptist, who preceded Christ in their ministry; for they were sent of God to their work, were faithful in it, and spoke of Christ as the only Saviour.

might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

ritual and immortal life, to purchase it for them, and to give it to them, that they may have it with more abundant evidence than it ever was revealed before, with more abundant cost to myself, and glory to my Father, and with more abundant excellence, eminence, and security to themselves, than can be said of the long life of prosperity that was promised to *Israel* in the land of *Canaan*, or even of the happy life that man enjoyed in *Paradise*; and I am come that they may have it more abundantly than they deserved, or could have expected, or were able to ask or think, (*21* *ἐπιπλεονεκτήσων*) even with an overplus of the highest honour, advantage and delight for ever, which is much more than barely living.

11 I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

11 Yea, I am not only the door of entrance, but am likewise, by way of eminence*, the good Shepherd, who am absolutely so, and the best of all others, even that great Shepherd of the sheep, who was spoken of in the prophets, (*Isa.* xl. 10, 11. and *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23.); and who lead and guide, defend and save my flock; I am not only ready to undergo hardships, and expose myself to dangers for their sake, as *Jacob* did for the love he had to *Rachel*, (*Gen.* xxix. 20.) and as *David* did to rescue his lambs from the lion and the bear, (*1 Sam.* xvii. 34.); but I am freely willing to † lay down my own life for theirs, by dying in their room and stead, and so give my soul for theirs, by making it an offering for sin, that they may live for ever.

12 But he that is an hireling, and

12 But, on the contrary, whoever takes upon him the pastoral office, with selfish worldly views †, and has not

N O T E S.

* Though our Lord rebuked one for calling him *good Master*, while he took him to be no more than a man, saying, *Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God.* *Matt.* xix. 16, 17. Yet here he assumes this title of *goodness* to himself, to intimate that it is really his due, and that he is the God who alone is absolutely good: For the good Shepherd is as high and divine a title, as good Master can be supposed to be; and as Christ claims the first, he undoubtedly has an equal right to the last: And as God in the Old Testament is spoken of by way of eminence, as the Shepherd of *Israel*; so Christ here speaks of himself under that relation to his people, with the additional epithet of *good*: And to shew that he did this in the most eminent sense of the expression, in which it was peculiar to God, he says emphatically, *I am the good Shepherd*, in a way of singularity, and of preference to all others whatsoever.

† *Ψυχὴν τίθειν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων*, gives his life for the sheep, answers to what was pro-

phesied of the Messiah, (*Isa.* liii. 10.) *τοῦτο δὲν ἔσται ἐν ὧν ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ ἑρπύλλῃ ὡς ἑρπύλλον* When his soul shall make an offering for sin: And Christ's speaking here of laying down his own human soul, as a sacrifice for sin, intimates that he, as Lord of himself, resigned it unto sufferings, according to his Father's will, in a way of substitution, in the room and stead of his sheep, when he gave his life, or soul, a ransom for many, (*ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*.) *Matt.* xx. 28.

‡ The hireling cannot mean such faithful ministers as the Lord has ordained to live of the gospel, (*1 Cor.* ix. 14.) but it relates to such foolish and idol shepherds as are prophesied of, *Zech.* xi. 15, — 17. And though what Christ here says about them is justly applicable to all worldly-minded preachers, that regard the fleece more than the flock: yet he seems particularly to point at the scribes and Pharisees: Accordingly the wolf will signify any enemy, who by fraud, or force, attacks the Christian's faith, liberty, or life.

and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay

not a real affectionate concern, like that which the owner has for his sheep; when at any time he finds an enemy approaching, with the craft, or the fury and cruelty of wolves, to break in upon the flock, by pernicious errors, or violent persecutions, he, instead of hazarding his own life, reputation, or secular interests, for their defence, will quit his post, fly from the danger, and leave them to shift for themselves; and so the enemy worries and tears, perverts and oppresses them, and makes an easy prey of them.

13 And the true reason why such a mercenary selfish pretender to this sacred office thus deserts them, in a time of the greatest need and danger, is, because he entered upon it merely for secular advantage, and does not care what becomes of the spiritual and eternal interests of those that were under his charge.

14 I say then, that I am, by way of eminence, the good Shepherd, in opposition to such an intruder, yea, and in preference to the best of under shepherds; and ($\gamma\iota\omega\sigma\tau\alpha\iota\ \tau\alpha\ \mu\epsilon$) I have a particular exact knowledge of all that are my peculiar property by my Father's gift, and my own purchase, and by their own free consent, who have already given themselves up to me; they are all under mine eye, and I observe them with a tender regard and special care, that no enemy may destroy them: And, in consequence of this, I am the object of their notice and observation; they have a distinguishing knowledge of me and my doctrine, and they fiducially and affectionately embrace me, and hearken to it.

15 In this manner I know them, and am known by them; even as God the Father has a perfect knowledge of me, and an entire affection to, and confidence in me, as one that will faithfully discharge the office of a good shepherd toward them, and as I myself am fully acquainted with him and his counsels, heartily love him, and delight to do his will, and am confident of his

owning

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* Knowledge is often put in scripture for an approving knowledge; as in *Psal. i. 6. The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*; and *Psal. cii. 4. I will not know a wicked person*; and *Mat. vii. 23. I never knew you*: At other times it is put for a fiducial knowledge, as in *Isa. liii. 11. By his knowledge, or the knowledge of him, shall my righteous servants justify many*; and *John xvii. 3. This is life eternal, that they might know thee, &c.* The first of these senses is to be taken into Christ's knowledge of his sheep; and both senses are included in their knowledge of him; and there is a mutual confidence, as well as affection, to be considered

in the knowledge, that the Father and Son have of each other: Accordingly I have taken in all these meanings in this and the following verse.

† The construction of these words, $\gamma\iota\omega\sigma\tau\alpha\iota\ \tau\alpha\ \mu\epsilon\ \tau\omega\ \pateri\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \gamma\iota\omega\sigma\tau\alpha\iota\ \tau\omega\ \pateri$, is, *as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father*; and so they refer to the foregoing verse, and are an illustration of the knowledge that is between Christ and his sheep, and an intimation that it is owing to that knowledge which his Father has of him and he has of the Father, with regard to his office of a shepherd to them.

I lay down my life for the sheep.

owning me in my work : And such is my love to my Father and my sheep, that I am freely willing and ready to lay down my life in their stead, that they may not die eternally.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold : them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice : and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.

16 And as I have already taken possession of some of them, and there are still more to be effectually called from among the *Jews* ; so there are many others that the Father has given me among the *Gentiles*, who at present are *strangers from the commonwealth of Israel, and from the covenants of promise*, (*Eph. ii. 12.*) ; these also I must search and find out, and bring back to God, in faithfulness to my engagements for them, and in justice to my purchase of them ; and they shall certainly, in due time, hear my voice in the ministry of the word, and be prevailed upon by my Spirit to attend to it : And, being grafted in by faith with the believing *Jews*, they shall make one church with them, as persons united together in the same faith and love, worship and obedience, in the same holy fellowship and profession, and in a participation of the same spirit, and of the same blessings and privileges of the gospel, under my care and guidance, influence and government, as the one Shepherd spoken of in ancient prophecy, (*Ezek. xxxiv. 23.*)

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

17 This work is so agreeable to my Father's will, that, beside his infinite love to me as his only begotten Son, he has likewise a peculiar affection to, and delight in me, because such is my love to the sheep, whom he loves, and such my zeal for the manifestation of his glory in their salvation, that I cheerfully lay down my life for the expiation of their offences, * to this end that (ver.) I might rise again for their justification.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself : I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

18 No man is able, by stratagem or force, to deprive me of my life, without my own consent ; but I voluntarily lay it down, as mine own free act and deed : I have an original power and right in myself, both to deposit it as a ransom, (*ἵνα ἑαυτὸν ἑκταύτης*) and to re-assume it after satisfaction is made by it : And as my Father has † ordered me, in the quality of a shepherd, to die for the redemption of the sheep, I readily yield obedience to his will therein.

19 Upon

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* I think the connection of this verse, and the use of these phrases in other parts of scripture, sufficiently justify this sense.

† Christ-receiving this commandment from his Father, is not to be considered as the ground of his having power to lay down his life, and to take it again ; for this he had in himself, as Lord of his own life, who had an original right to dispose of it as he

pleased, antecedent to the Father's command : But this commandment was the reason why he thus used his power in laying down his life : He did it in obedience to his Father ; for he willingly accepted this commandment, *τοῦ εὐλοῦντα τὰς ψυχὰς*, as he delighted to do his Father's will therein, (*Psal. xl. 8.*) and therefore his Father loved him, as he had said, (*ver. 17.*)

19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

19 Upon our Lord's saying these things, the Jews were mightily divided in their opinions among themselves, and went into warm debates about him, as they had once and again before, (*chap. vii. 43. and ix. 16.*) and as he foretold they would, (*Luke xii. 51.*)

20 Many of the company cried out with rage against him, saying, in a prophane and blasphemous manner, The devil is in this man, and he is certainly out of his wits: Why are ye so silly as to mind him? or how can ye have patience to hear what he says?

21 On the contrary, others that were well affected toward him, believing him at least to be a sober and holy man, said, The nature of his doctrine, and the manner of his talking, as well as the wonderful things he does, plainly shew that he is no demoniac. Who can imagine that it is the work of a devil to give sight to such as were born blind, (*chap. ix. 32.*)? No, no, A devil neither would, nor could do this: It must be owing to the almighty power of God.

22, 23 Now ⁽¹⁾ these things passed at Jerusalem at the time of a yearly solemnity, which was observed for eight days together by the Jews, in remembrance of *Judas Maccabeus's* * dedicating a new altar to the Lord, and cleansing the temple, after they had been profaned by *Antiochus*. And this being in the winter-season, which was incommodious for walking abroad, Jesus took a turn among the people, who were got together, under covert, in a porch which was built, where one that was very sumptuous formerly stood in the first temple, and therefore was called *Solomon's porch* †.

24 Whilst

NOTES.

* This feast did not relate to the dedication of the temple by *Solomon*, nor to that which was made upon its being rebuilt by *Zerubbabel*: For there was no anniversary festival appointed for either of these: and the first of them was in the month *Ethanim*, the seventh month, (*1 Kings viii. 2.*) which was in autumn, about our *September*; and the other was in the month *Adar*, (*Esra. vi. 15, &c.*) which was at the beginning of the spring; whereas this was in winter, and so evidently related to the dedication of the altar and temple by *Judas Maccabeus*, who appointed an annual festival, in commemoration of it, to begin on the twenty-fifth day of the month *Cisleu*, which was about our *December*; an account of which we have at large *1 Maccab. iv. 18, — 59, and 2 Maccab. x. 1, — 9*. This was not an ordinance of divine institution, nor was the observation of it confined to Jerusalem; but it was a civil appointment, in remembrance of

this dedication, as the feast of *Purim* was, in remembrance of the Jews deliverance from *Haman's* conspiracy, (*Esra. ix. 28.*) And therefore Christ chose to be at Jerusalem then, not in honour of the days themselves, or to give a sanction to them, as sacred time; for had he been so minded, he might have observed them any where else, as well as at Jerusalem: But he came thither at this time, that he might take the opportunity of preaching to the people, who were then assembled in great numbers at Jerusalem; as the apostles afterwards did for the like purpose, when they went to the Jews synagogues on their sabbath, after the obligation of keeping a holy sabbath to the Lord, was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week.

† Some have thought that the Jewish sanhedrim held their court, and were then sitting in this porch.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you,

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

28 And I give unto them eternal life;

24 Whilst our Lord was walking there, some of the Jews surrounding him, and designing to insult and ensnare him, rather than to be satisfied about him, said, How long will you continue to keep us in suspense, by talking ambiguously and figuratively of yourself, as the door of the sheep, and the good shepherd, and the like? if you be indeed anointed of God to the Messiah's office, as you seem to intimate, do not be afraid to speak out; but tell us in so many words freely and boldly. (τῆς αἰτίας)

25 Jesus, knowing their crafty and malicious design, replied, I have said in plain terms what amounts to the strongest declarations of my being the Christ, (*chap. v. 20,--29.*) and yet such is your perverseness and infidelity, that ye will give no manner of credit to me: And I have not only said this, but have clearly demonstrated it by the divine and miraculous works, which I have wrought according to, and in confirmation of my commission from the Father.

26 But, after all, ye still continue to reject me by unbelief; and ye would do so, whatsoever plain declarations and demonstrations I were further to give you: For, as I know, and the event proves, ye are none of my * sheep, whom the Father has given me, and who, being drawn by the power of his effectual grace, *shall come to me*, as I told you, (*chap. vi. 36, 37.*)

27 According to what I then said, all that were by the Father's gift made my peculiar property, trust, and treasure, do, in the day of my bringing them back to God, (*ver. 16.*) attend to, distinguish, prize, and willingly obey the voice of my word and Spirit; and I distinctly know, observe, and love every one of them, and they readily follow my instruction and example as their great Shepherd, who go before them to lead them in paths of righteousness.

28 And I freely give unto them a sure right and title to an everlasting state of all possible happiness and glory, with real beginnings, earnestness, and foretastes of it here, till I bring them to the complete enjoyment of it

N O T E.

* As every good and holy, humble and teachable disposition is the fruit of faith: So if by sheep, as some would understand it, our Lord here meant such as are of this excellent temper, he would rather have said of these persons, that they had not this good disposition, because they did not believe, than that they did not believe, because the temper of sheep was not found in them. And therefore I take the sheep to mean God's

elect, who were from all eternity given to Christ, and, in consequence of that, are in due time drawn to him; and our blessed Lord, who was privy to his Father's counsel, knowing that these persons were none of that number, mentioned it as a *reason* to shew, that, being left to themselves, they would never believe in him, rather than as the *cause* of their not believing.

life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father which gave them me is greater than all: and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

30 I and my Father are one.

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying,

it hereafter; and none of them shall ever, through their own weakness, unworthiness, or remaining corruptions, fall short of heaven and sink into hell, there to perish for ever; (*ο μη απολαμψαις τον αιωνα*) nor shall any artifice, power, or combination of men or devils, ever prevail to wrest them out of my protection, care, and keeping, who have fast hold of them.

29 Nay, my heavenly Father, who loves them, and has a peculiar interest and propriety in them, and has committed them to me, as a dear charge, that I may bring them safe to glory, is (as every one must own) infinitely superior in wisdom and power to all their enemies that can possibly be against them: And ye may be sure that, whatever attempts are made upon them, (*ουδεις*) none can be too hard for him, so as to defeat his designs of grace toward them, or entice or force them out of his almighty hands, who keeps them by his power through faith unto salvation.

30 Now my Father's power and mine are the same, we being one in nature and perfections, as well as in will and design; and therefore he, as well as I, must be overcome, before any adversary can destroy them, whom we have agreed and determined to secure unto eternal life.

31 Then the Jews were incensed against him, as if he had talked blasphemy; and, after the manner of zealots, attempted to stone him to death, as they had before, (*chap. viii. 59.*)

32 But our blessed Lord, seeing how furious they were, seriously expostulated with them, in a meek, calm, and touching manner, saying, Pray, why is all this heat and tumult? What have I done to provoke it? I have indeed wrought many great and merciful miracles among you, in confirmation of my character; I have sed multitudes of your own countrymen, when they were in danger of fainting for hunger; have healed your sick and lame, have cleansed your lepers, have given sight to your blind, have cast out devils from poor creatures that were miserably tormented by them; yea, I have raised some of your dead to life again, and have always gone about doing good: Now for which of these compassionate acts of kindness, that exceeded the power of any other man to perform, do ye want to stone me to death? Is this the return I am to have for all my favours to you?

33 The Jews replied, contrary to the sense of their own consciences, which could not but tell them that they really were provoked at his performing so many miracles,

saying: For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy: and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

miracles, No, no, We do not go about to stone you for any good work, that you talk of: But, as by our law, (*Lev. xxiv. 16.*) a blasphemer of the name of the Lord is to be stoned to death; so we think you deserve it, for assuming to yourself the unalienable rights of deity, in that, being a mere man, you arrogantly and blasphemously pretend that God is your Father; in such a high and peculiar sense, as imports your being partaker of his divine nature and perfections, and being yourself God*.

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

34 Our blessed Lord, far from blaming them, as if they misconstrued his words, answered their cavil against them, in the just sense in which they had taken them, saying, How unreasonable is your being thus furious against me, for speaking of myself in these high terms, as that Son of God, who is God, one in nature with the Father? If ye look † into the scriptures, which ye profess to be guided by, do not ye find that God there says of your judges and rulers, who in their office were types of the Messiah ‡, *I have said ye are gods,* and

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* This their construction of the meaning of Christ's words was right; otherwise, he undoubtedly would have corrected it; and had he been no more than a man, their reasoning against this sense of his expression was certainly just: But their great error lay in perversely disbelieving what he asserted concerning his own divine character, notwithstanding the demonstrations he had given of it by the plainest miracles, which he wrought in a God-like way, and by frequent appeals to scripture-prophecies about it: And so they, in a blasphemous manner, falsely charged blasphemy on him.

† The law is here used, in a lax sense, for all the Old Testament-scriptures, as it also is in *chap. xii. 34. and xv. 25.*

‡ The sense in which interpreters have usually considered the term *gods* in this place, as signifying magistrates in general, has, I think, missed them in their account of this and the following verses, and very much sunk and embarrassed Christ's argument in them; and is hardly reconcilable to any tolerable sense of his reasoning from thence, that *the scripture cannot be broken*, (*ver. 35.*) It seems therefore to me, that the persons here spoken of, under the title of *gods*, are not, as has been commonly thought, magistrates barely considered as such, on account of their resembling God's dominion in the exercise of their power, or acting therein by authority and commission from him. I much question whether the title of *gods* is ever given in scripture to magistrates in common: but, as I apprehend, it relates only to Jewish

magistrates, that were typical of Christ, whose authority was shadowed out by that which they exercised in the commonwealth and church of Israel, and to whom it was to be transferred, when he should appear to set up his kingdom in the world; and so this denomination is not merely metaphorical, but is also typical. Thus God said to Moses, who was a typical mediator between himself and Israel, and spoke immediately from God, *Thou shalt be to Aaron instead of God*, and *I have made thee a God to Pharaoh*, (*Exod. iv. 16. and vii. 1.*) And afterward the Jewish rulers, that sat in Moses's seat, were called *gods*, (*Exod. xxii. 28.*) *Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people*. So if *Psal. cxxxviii. 1.* is to be understood, not of angels, but men, David there seems to refer to the ecclesiastical rulers, saying, *Before the gods will I sing praise unto thee*. (*vid. Gloss. Rhet. pars prima, cap. X. p. 216. and Cocc. in loc.*) And *Psal. lxxxii. 6.* the place quoted by our Lord, *I have said ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High*, seems to be spoken directly with a typical view to Christ; for immediately afterwards, our thoughts are carried onward to him, as the great God and ruler of all, *ver. 8.* where the Psalmist says, *Arise, O God, judge the earth; for thou shalt inherit all nations*, which plainly points to the Messiah, who was to have the beaaten for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, (*Psal. ii. 9.*) and *who is governor among the nations*, (*Psal. xxii. 28.*) And perhaps it was with a prophetic aspect upon the debates between

and all of you are children of the Most High? (Psal. lxxii. 6.)

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken:

36 Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye

35, 36 If then he filled those magistrates gods, because by his own immediate word he had committed the legal administration of the church and nation of *Israel* to them, as types and shadows of the Messiah; and if the inspired writings, which thus speak concerning them, cannot be falsified, but must needs be fulfilled in the Messiah's really possessing the divine dignity, that answers to the high title under which they prefigured him; how perverse and daring is it in you to charge blasphemy upon me, for applying terms proper to deity to myself, as signifying my oneness in nature and perfections with the Father? Since I am the great antitype and substance of those types and shadows, and am in truth what they were only in name; and since I was set apart*, and constituted by my Father in his eternal counsels, and at length was sent into the world, to exercise all authority, as the true Messiah, which can be affirmed of none but the eternal Son of God.

37 I furthermore appeal to the miracles I have wrought to justify my divine character: If I do not perform as great and glorious works, and that in as Godlike a way as could be expected from my Father himself; if they are not so superior, and contrary to the course and laws of nature, that I could not possibly perform them by any other power than that which is in the Father himself; I do not desire you to receive me as the Son of God, and the Saviour of *Israel*, or to give any credit to what I say about my being one with the Father.

38 But if ye cannot deny that I do such works as are peculiar to God, and that in such a manner as none but God himself could do them; then, tho' ye have no regard to my person or doctrine, and will give no credit to my testimony for its own sake; yet submit to the plain and unexceptionable evidence of my miracles, that ye may be convinced and satisfied, that my Father and I, though distinct persons, have communion in

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tween Christ and the Jewish rulers, that it was said (ver. 1. of that lxxiii psalm) *God stands in the congregation of the mighty, he judges among the gods.* However, that our Lord, in the place before us, referred to Jewish magistrates, appears from his saying, (ver. 35.) that the word of God came to them, which intimates, that it was by the commission and appointment of God, as made known to some of them in an immediate and extraordinary manner, that the magistratic authority was committed to them,

till the great *Shiloh* should come to exercise his office-power, which was prefigured by theirs. And so Christ's way of arguing stands, I think, in a natural, clear, and beautiful light, according to the sense given of it in the Paraphrase on this and the following verses. vid. *Lamp. in Loc.*

* I take the Father's sanctifying Christ in this place, to relate particularly to his setting him up as Mediator from everlasting, (Prov. viii. 23.) because it is mentioned as preceding his sending him into the world.

ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.

39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

40 And went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

42 And many believed on him there.

in Godhead, as being essentially one in 'the other, which is the same thing with what I said about my Father's and my being one.

39 Our Lord having thus plainly and unanswerably maintained his assertion, the *Jews*, instead of receiving conviction, fired at him so much the more; and therefore renewed their attempt to seize him by open violence, that they might either stone him to death tumultuously, or might prosecute him in their ecclesiastical court, as a blasphemer, who stood to his claim of deity; or in their civil court, as an enemy to the *Roman* government: But, his time not being yet come, he easily, by the management of his own wisdom and power, got clear of them.

40 And he immediately left *Jerusalem*, and, crossing over *Jordan*, retired to *Bethabara*, which was a solitary part of the country, where *John* began his ministry and baptism, and had given a public and honourable testimony to him, (*chap. i. 28, 29.*); and there he continued preaching, and doing good for some time.

41 And whilst he abode at this place, the people hearing of him, multitudes flocked to him; and recollecting what *John* had done and said among them, about three years before, they reasoned upon it in their own minds, and one with another in this manner, saying, Tho' *John the Baptist* was such an extraordinary great and holy prophet, that, had not he himself denied it, we should have believed him to be the Messiah*; yet he never wrought any one miracle amongst us: But, said they, we now see that many, and no doubt but all the great things are to a tittle true, which we well remember he said concerning this person, who rises in his glory, and preaches such excellent doctrine, and does such wonderful works amongst us.

42 And though he was so generally rejected by the great and learned, rich and noble in *Jerusalem* and *Judea*; yet among these poor country-people, great numbers of them, that spoke thus honourably of him, heartily embraced him, and became his disciples.

R E C O L -

N O T E.

* The miracle of *John's* conception, and of his father *Zachary's* being struck dumb, and not speaking again till after his birth, and the miraculous appearance and voice from heaven at *Jordan*, when he baptized *Jesus*, were, together with his holy life, sufficient to gain credit to his doctrine; for it contained nothing new, or extraordinary, more

than his reminding the people of ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah, and pointing them to him, whose miracles were an abundant confirmation, both of his own and of *John's* doctrine concerning him. And it was fit that this honour should be reserved for the Messiah himself, as one distinguishing mark of his superiority to his forerunner.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

With what shining evidence does Jesus appear in his divine and office-characters ! All the shadows of divinity in *Jewish* typical magistrates are fulfilled in him, as the true God ; his wonderful works, which he performed with sovereign Majesty, and by his own power, are convincing proofs of it ; and all that the scriptures predicted, or prefigured about it, center in him ; for they cannot be broken. O how shocking is it for any to charge the true sense of his assertions with blasphemy, as they ascribe proper deity to him ! And how indispensibly necessary is this divine Saviour to us, who is our only way to God and glory, and is that good Shepherd of the sheep through whom they obtain holy liberty and delight, spiritual refreshments, and rich supplies of all their wants, in paths of righteousness here, and who gives them eternal life to be fully enjoyed hereafter, with such abundance of glory and blessedness, as is matchless and unspeakable, and never could have been possessed in any other way whatsoever ! He is absolutely good in himself, and relatively good to them ; has taken the charge of them, and has a peculiar propriety in them ; and, in the greatness of his love, has laid down his own life for them, as one who had power in himself to resign and resume it ; and did both, as the Messiah, in obedience to his Father's will, that he might redeem them : And with what faithfulness, wisdom, and grace, does he search and find them out, and bring them into his fold ; and what an exact and particular notice does he take of every one of them ! How does he guide and govern them, defend them from all their spiritual enemies, deliver them out of every danger, and go before them, that he may lead them, through sufferings and death, safe to glory ! Who can ever destroy them that are in his Almighty hands, since he is one in nature and perfections with the Father, who has given them to him, and concurs with him in securing them ? And as he thoroughly knows the Father, and delights to do his will ; so the Father loves and owns him, as his trusty servant, and has an entire confidence in him, that nothing shall miscarry under his hand. How short do the best of under-shepherds fall of him ! And how injurious to his flock are all that teach any other way of salvation than by him ! They, having no commission from him, set themselves up against his authority, seek their own secular interests, ease, and honour, and degenerate into ravenous wolves, that fright and scatter, wound and endeavour to destroy his sheep, instead of standing by them ! But how much soever some may oppose and revile him, and prove themselves to be none of his sheep, by finally rejecting him ; he has a chosen people, that shall hear, understand, and distinguish his voice, and follow him, that shall fly from corrupt teachers, as for the life of their souls, and shall relish the pure doctrines of Christ : He will have a people to believe in him, and honour him, if not among the great and learned, and mighty ones of the earth, yet among people of lower rank, and among *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, who shall be to the Lord for a name, and a praise through all generations.

C H A P. XL

The tidings which Christ received of Lazarus's sickness, 1,—16. The visit he made to his sisters, when he heard of his death, 17,—32. His raising him from the dead, 33,—44. And the effect of this on different sorts of persons, 45,—57.

TEXT.

NOW a certain man was sick, named Lazarus of Bethany, the town of

PARAPHRASE.

NOW, whilst our Lord continued preaching beyond Jordan, (*chap. x. 40.*) a man, whose name was Lazarus, lay dangerously sick at a little village, near Jerusalem, called Bethany ; and two of his sisters dwelt there

of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was *this* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

7 Then after that faith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again.

8 His disciples say

there with him, one of which was named *Mary*, and the other *Martha*.

2 This *Mary*, whose brother *Lazarus* was so extremely weak, was a woman of extraordinary piety and affection to Christ, being the same person, who afterwards, (*chap. xii. 3.* see the note on *Matth. xxvi. 6.*) at a public entertainment, anointed his feet with costly ointment; and, instead of a towel, wiped them with her own hair.

3 These sisters therefore, being much acquainted with Jesus*, and having great faith in his power and goodness, sent to him, saying, Lord, we hearing where thou wert, and knowing that thou hast a great love for our dear brother *Lazarus*, could not but in duty to thee, and tender concern for him, dispatch a messenger on purpose to tell thee, that he labours under a very threatening illness, and, with humble submission, to refer his affecting case to thy wisdom and compassion, without presuming to prescribe to thee.

4 When our blessed Saviour had received this account, he said, †, This distemper shall not finally issue in death; but is designed to afford a special occasion for the manifestation of God's perfections by me, that I, his eternal Son may exert the divine power and goodness, and thereby confirm my commission in a more remarkable and convincing manner, than by immediately curing this mortal disease.

5, 6 Now *Martha* and her sister, as well as their brother, were exceeding dear to their Lord; he therefore, waiting for the fittest opportunity to be gracious, continued two days where he then was, after he heard of *Lazarus's* sickness, without taking any further notice of it, that he might try and improve their faith and patience, and might in due time manifest his love to them in such a way as would best recommend it, and give them the sweetest relish of it.

7 Then, after the expiration of those two days, he, in pursuit of the kind designs of his heart to the afflicted family at *Bethany*, said to his disciples that were with him, Come, let us now take a turn again in *Judea*.

8 The disciples not understanding what he intended to do there, nor considering how easily he could save himself from the power of his enemies, said to him, Master

N O T E S.

* It seems that he used to be entertained at their house, when he came up to the feasts at *Jerusalem*.

† He probably said this to the messenger,

or at least in his hearing, that he might report it to the afflicted family for their comfort, and for the trial of their faith, whilst he nevertheless delayed going to them.

say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death:

Master, what means this surprising motion? We remember with great concern, as if it were ^(viii) but now, that the *Jews* in those parts were, not long since, so malicious and outrageous against thee, that they said would have stoned thee to death, (*chap. x. 31.*) And what, shall such base unworthy wretches have the honour and the privilege of thy presence again? and wilt thou so soon expose thyself and us to the utmost danger among them?

9 Jesus replied, Alas! where is your faith, who lately saw how easily I escaped out of their hands? Is not your day divided into twelve hours,* which are allotted for labour and service? Now whilst a traveller pursues his journey and business in its proper season, having the light of the sun to direct him, there is no great danger of his stumbling, and by that means falling short of his design: So the appointed time of my life is my opportunity for finishing the work my Father gave me to do; and the knowledge I have of his will is the light that guides me in it; and as long as this time lasts, there is no danger of my being overpowered by mine enemies.

10 But if a man would travel out of season, in the night, no wonder that for want of the light of the sun, he stumbles and falls, and cannot get forward in his way: So when my work is done, and the time determined of the Father for my death is come, I shall no longer deliver myself from mine enemies, but shall fall by their hands.

11 Our Lord having said these things to silence their objections, and take off their fears, proceeded to open his design in going back to *Judea*, saying, I, who know all things at a distance, as well as nigh at hand, assure you that your dear friend *Lazarus* is now fallen into a deep sleep; but I am going to rouse and awake him: By which he meant that *Lazarus* was really dead, and that he would raise him again to life, which was as easy for him to do, as to awake a man out of sleep.

12 The disciples replied, Lord, we are glad to hear of such a favourable symptom in his case; for if he is got to sleep, there is good reason to hope that he may recover, without thy taking the trouble, and exposing thyself to the danger of going to heal him.

13 But they mislook the true sense of Christ's words, who obviously enough spoke of his being really dead, under

N O T E.

* *Judea* being about twenty degrees nearer the equator than *Great Britain* is, their days were more nearly equal than ours; and so

they generally reckoned them to consist of twelve hours, as we also do, when we speak of a day's work.

death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, *Lazarus is dead.*

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, (to the intent ye may believe,) nevertheless, let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called *Didymus*, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

17 Then, when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

18 (Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about sixteen furlongs off.)

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary

under the notion of a sleep, as death was often called in scripture; and yet they unthinkingly supposed him only to mean, that he was taking his natural rest in sleep, which was like to do him more good than harm.

14 Then the meek and humble Jesus, instead of upbraiding them for their stupid misconstruction of such an easy and well-known metaphor, bore with their infirmity, and told them expressly that *Lazarus* was really dead.

15 And it is very pleasing to me, said he, that I was not with him before he died, since ye may now have an higher confirmation of your faith in me, than barely curing his distemper would have been: I could then have healed him, and even now at this distance could easily raise from him the dead; however, that the divine work may appear before you, and many other eye-witnesses to be of my own doing, let us go to his grave.

16 Then *Thomas*, one of the twelve apostles, who was also called *Didymus**, said to the rest of his fellow-disciples then present, Since our great Master is resolved to run this risque, come, let us all go along with him, that if he should be seized and stoned, or some other way killed, we may take our lot with him for life, and death, and eternity: For what signify our lives on earth, if once we lose him?

17 By the time that Jesus, coming with his disciples from beyond *Jordan*, (*chap. x. 40.*) arrived at a place near *Bethany*, (*ver. 30.*) *Lazarus* had been dead, (*ver. 39.*) and laid in his sepulchre, no less than four days, the Jews being wont to bury persons as soon as possible after their death. (*Acts v. 5,—10.*)

18, 19 Now *Bethany* was a little less than two miles distant from *Jerusalem*; and, it being so near that city, a great many friends were making their visit at the house of mourning, to condole with the two disconsolate sisters, *Martha* and *Mary*, and to soften their grief, as well as they could, under the very affecting loss of so dear and valuable a brother.

20 While they were thus together, tidings were privately brought to *Martha*, that Jesus was just at hand; upon which, she immediately left the company, and went out, to testify her respect to him, and bid him wel-

wel-

N O T E.

* *Thomas* in the Hebrew, and *Didymus* in the Greek, signify a twin; and probably this name was given him, because he was a twin-brother: And perhaps, as some think, his being three times spoken of in this Gospel with this interpretation of his name is the

Greek, as here and *chap. xx. 24.* and *xxi. 2.* might be to intimate, that he bore twins of different qualities, like *Jacob* and *Esau*, in his heart, he being sometimes believing, and at others full of unbelief.

Mary sat still in the house.

welcome * : But *Mary*, who as yet knew nothing of the matter, (*ver.* 28.) continued with her friends in the house.

21 Then said *Martha* unto *Jesus*, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

21 As soon as *Martha* came to *Jesus*, she, in the midst of overwhelming grief and distress, said to him, Ah, Lord, how happy would it have been for us, if thou hadst been so kind as to come hither, when we sent word of our brother's sickness! I am persuaded that his miserable case would have moved thy compassion, and that thou couldst easily have prevented his death, and all the dismal sorrows occasioned by it.

22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

22 However, let me not indulge my passions too far: I am well satisfied thou hast such an entire interest with God, that whatsoever thou shalt still desire him to do, for making up this great loss, he will grant it †; and therefore I wholly refer myself to thy wisdom and favour.

23 *Jesus* saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

23 Our blessed Lord observing that there were some low workings of faith in her, and pitying her on account of its weakness, and of her present distress, said, for her support and comfort, though without explaining particularly what he meant, Come, cheer up; your brother shall certainly rise again from the dead.

24 *Martha* saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

24 *Martha* answered, Truth, Lord, I firmly believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, (*Acts* xxiv. 15.) and that my good brother shall bear a glorious part among the rising saints at the end of time. This is indeed a great comfort to us; but alas! it exceedingly troubleth us to think, that we have lost the pleasure and the benefit of his agreeable company, that he who was the strength and glory of our family, and might have kept up its name in *Israel*, is gone, and that we shall never see him in this world any more.

25 *Jesus* said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

25 Christ replied, Whereas you only speak of God's giving me whatsoever I ask of him, Be assured that I have life in myself, and, as the efficient cause of the resurrection, and of every kind of life, quicken whom I will, (*chap.* v. 21, 26.) And though the believer in me must die, as well as other men, yea, even supposing him to be already literally dead, as your brother now is; yet his body, as well as soul, shall live again in a better world, and, if I please, in this world too.

26 And

N O T E S.

* And some suppose that she went to tell him what a company of *Jews* were in the house, that he might use his prudence in coming among them, or not.

† *Martha's* faith was very defective, in thinking that Christ could not prevent her brother's dying, when at a distance, and in

not going so far, as to rest upon his own power for making up this loss; nor does it seem to me that she as yet had much, if any hope, of her brother's being raised from the dead, though she might believe that God was able, and that, if Christ saw fit to ask it, he would do it.

26 And whoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

26 And whoever is now living upon earth, and, being quickened to a spiritual life, believes in me, (*ο πιστευων εις εμε αλων*) shall not die for ever, by undergoing the second death; nor shall his body always continue in the state of the dead, but I will raise him up at the last day, (*chap. vi. 14.*) Dost thou heartily assent and consent to this important truth concerning me, and them that believe in me?

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ the Son of God which should come into the world.

27 *Martha* answered him, Yea, Lord, I am fully persuaded that thou art the true Messiah, even the Son of the living God, who was spoken of by way of eminence, as (*ο προφητευων*) he that cometh, and who, according to antient prophecies, is now generally expected to appear in the world; and I believe that all the powers belonging to this divine Saviour are in thee.

28 And, when she had so, said, she went her way, and called *Mary* her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

28 And immediately, upon having thus expressed her faith in him, she hastened back to her sister *Mary*; and whispering in her ear, that the rest of the company, who were enemies to Christ, might not hear her, said, I have joyful tidings to tell you, The Lord Jesus, whom we own for our great Master, is at the town's end, and asks very kindly and particularly for you.

29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

29 *Mary* no sooner heard this, but, in the fervour of her affection to Christ, she sprung up from her seat; and, leaving her friends, ran with all speed to meet him, from whom she, like a truly gracious soul, expected and found greater comfort, than they all together could minister to her.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where *Martha* met him.

30 Now Jesus, to avoid all appearance of ostentation by gathering a company about him, and to shew how ready he was to do the great and good work for which he came thither, had not entered into the village, but continued at the same place where *Martha* at first met with him.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw *Mary* that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave, to weep there.

31 As soon as *Mary* got up, and went out with such eagerness and haste, her condoling friends imagined, that, in the excess of her grief, she was gone to indulge, aggravate, and vent her passions, at the grave of the deceased; and therefore (*οι*) they immediately followed her, designing, if possible, to restrain and pacify her: But, instead of her going thither, they found she went another way till she came to Jesus; and so they were insensibly led to him, and made eye-witnesses of the miracle that he was about to perform.

32 Then when *Mary* was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him,

32 When *Mary* came up to Jesus, and saw him, she, in floods of tears, threw herself down at his feet, in testimony of her humble submission to him, and profound reverence of him, saying, As *Martha* had be-

him, Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled;

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? they say unto him, Lord, come and see.

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should

fore, (ver. 21.) Ah, Lord, how much have we suffered for want of thy presence! If thou hadst but been here when our dear brother lay sick, I am well satisfied thou wouldst have commiserated him and us, and couldst easily have prevented his death.

33 When therefore the holy Jesus saw how bitterly she, and the attending Jews, lamented and wept on this occasion, he was exceedingly touched and moved in his own spirit, partly with compassionate grief and displeasure at the inordinate excess of Mary's sorrowing, even in his presence, and at the weakness of her faith; and partly with holy indignation at the unbelief and hardness of the hearts of her friends*, and with a human pity, in prospect of the miseries that would come upon them, who he knew were cruel enemies to him, while they shewed so much humanity and tenderness toward her: And, as he had an absolute command of his passions, (*καταλείπων τὸν θυμὸν*) he awakened a due commotion in his own mind on these accounts.

34 And, that there might not be the least appearance of collusion between him and the mourning relations, he asked them in what tomb they had placed Lazarus's corpse? They replied, Lord, If you please to come along with us, we will shew you where he lies.

35 Jesus accordingly went with them; and, as he was going, a consideration of all the moving circumstances, then before him, so affected his heart, that, being a man of like natural, though sinless, passions with ourselves, his eyes ran down with tears of grief.

36 Then the Jews observing it, some of them said to others in a sort of surprize, See how affectionately Jesus loved Lazarus! He seems to weep heartily for him.

37 But (sc) others of them said, in a way of reflection upon him, If this man, as is reported, chap. ix. 6,—20.) restored one to sight who was born blind, could he not as easily have prevented the death of his friend, for the loss of whom he now discovers so great con-

N O T E.

* As the words *ἐκτενέμενος τὸ πνεῦμα*, here rendered, *he groaned in spirit*, properly signify to lament or groan with anger and indignation: So it seems to argue too much weakness in our Lord's passions, to suppose that he was thus exceedingly grieved and troubled, merely in a way of sympathy with Mary and her friends, on account of their lamentations at their loss, since he designed immediately to repair it, and to turn their mourning into joy, by raising Lazarus from

the dead: But as it was no unusual thing for Christ to be affected with grief and anger at the sin and folly, unbelief and hardness of persons hearts, and with sorrow in the prospect of approaching miseries, (*Mark* iii. 5. and xvi. 14. *John* xlii. 21. and *Luke* xix. 41, 42.) So the considerations, that I have taken into the Paraphrase, seem to be natural, and were every way worthy of his compassionate and displeased resentments, and besuit the following context.

should not have died?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone, *Martha*, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lift up his eyes, and said: Father, I thank thee

concern? He certainly would, if he could: We may therefore conclude that story to be all sham, and that there was really nothing in it.

38 Jesus therefore, knowing what perverse and unbelieving prejudices were vented among themselves, was much affected again in his own spirit, fetching a deep sigh, with compassionate grief and holy indignation, as before, (*ver.* 33.); and this was just as he arrived at the sepulchre, where *Lazarus* lay, which was a cave*; and a great stone, as usual, was laid at its mouth to inclose it.

39 Then our Lord ordered some of the standers-by to roll the great stone away from the mouth of the cave, that he might not work a needless miracle, and that the dead carcase might be seen and smelt by the spectators: Hereupon *Martha*, the sister of the deceased, little thinking what he intended to do, said to him, Lord, Why should your affection carry you so far, as once to desire to see the dead corpse now? It doubtless by this time begins to putrify, and will be very offensive by its noisome stench: For my brother has been dead, and buried, (*ver.* 17.) these four days; and 'tis now too late to hope for a revival, or for any pleasure in seeing him.

40 But Jesus, in reply, gave her a gentle reproof for her unbelief, and yet encouraged the little faith she had, saying, Did I not promise you, that, in case of your relying on my power and goodness, who am the resurrection and the life to them that believe in me, you should see a glorious display of the divine perfections in what I would do on this occasion †?

41 Then, *Martha* desisting from any further opposition, some of the people removed the stone from the mouth of the cave where the dead corpse lay: And Jesus, looking up toward heaven in a solemn manner, said, in their hearing, O my Father ‡, I bless thy name, that,

N O T E S.

* Perhaps this custom of burying in caves might be in imitation of the burial of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and their wives, in the cave of *Macpelah*, (*Gen.* xlix. 29, 30, 31.) These caves for persons of distinction, as *Lazarus* seems to have been, were commonly in rocks, which abounded in that country: In some of these there were natural caverns fit for this purpose, and others were cut out by art, as *Joseph of Arimathea's* was, where the body of our Lord was laid. (*Matth.* xxvii. 60) And the entrance of these caves was shut up with a great stone, which sometimes had a monumental inscription upon it.

† It seems by this, that Christ had said more to *Martha* than is before recorded, when she first met him, and when he put it to her, (*ver.* 15, 16.) whether she believed what he had declared about his being the resurrection and the life, and about a believer's living, though he were dead.

‡ For understanding this and the two following verses, it may be of use to observe, that here is no appearance of Christ's having prayed to his Father for power to perform the miracle which he was going to work; nor was there any occasion for it, he having before said of himself, I am the resurrection and the life, (*ver.* 15.) and declar-

thee that thou hast heard me.

52 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but, because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

42 And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

43 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

that, by the disposals of thy Providence, thou hast granted my desire of this remarkable opportunity for exerting my power, and shewing forth thy praise.

42 I indeed (⁵²) ever was, and still am, absolutely sure of thy answering every request that I can make, my will being always regulated by my perfect knowledge of thine: But my addressing thee, in this public manner, is merely for the sake of the people here present, that my disciples may be fully assured, and that others may be encouraged to believe, that I am the true Messiah, whom thou hast sent.

43 And having said these words, he, standing without the sepulchre, did not thereupon peep and mutter an unintelligible jargon, like a necromancer, or dealer with familiar spirits, (*Isa. viii. 19.*) but spoke out with a distinct and elevated voice, to intimate the awakening power that attended it, saying, without any mention of his Father's name, but with the majesty of God himself, *Lazarus, I command thee to come hither.*

44 And so powerful was this word of command, that the dead man, being instantly made alive, came out of the sepulchre, in his burial dress, (*Acts v. 6.*) his hands and feet being wrapped up, and rolled about with swaddling-bands, and his eyes blinded with a linen cloth, which was bound about his head*: And when *Lazarus* came forth in this confined posture, Jesus ordered some of the company to set his hands and feet at liberty, no miracle being needful for this, that he might walk home.

45 This was such an incontestable and uncommon miracle, that many of those *Jews*, who had come to comfort *Mary*, together with *Martha*, (*ver. 19.*) under her loss, were thereby induced to believe in him.

46 But

N O T E S.

red, (*Isa. vi. 21, 26.*) that he had life in himself, and quickened whom he would. His divine nature was undoubtedly sufficient for this: accordingly when he told his disciples of *Lazarus's* death, he said, (*ver. 13.*) *I go that I may awake him*; and in working the miracle itself, there is not the least shew of his applying to the Father for assistance, or taking any notice of him: But he managed it with an air of absolute sovereignty, like the Lord of life and death, saying, with the authority and majesty of a God, *Lazarus, come forth*, as we shall see *ver. 43.* And therefore I take it, that this thanksgiving to his Father was for the opportunity that Christ had prayed might be given him to work this miracle, in such remarkably advantageous circumstances, by his Father's ordering that *Lazarus* should

die, and that so many persons of note should be brought together on that occasion, how, with his own disciples, were to be eye-witnesses of his raising *Lazarus* from the dead for the establishment of his own character and the advancement of his Father's glory: With regard to which he had said to his disciples, (*ver. 4, 15.*) *This sickness is—for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby: And I am glad for your sakes, that I was not there, to the intent that ye may believe.*

* His hands and feet being bound, and his eyes covered with the cloth, as was usual, to prevent the ghastly appearance of a dead corpse, shewed the miraculous power of Christ in bringing him out of the sepulchre in this form, as well as in restoring him to life.

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

46 But others of them, tho' they could not deny the truth of the miracle, were so obstinately and maliciously set against Christ, that, instead of believing in him, they were so much the more provoked to think, how this would raise his reputation and authority among the people; and therefore they went immediately to the *Pharisees*, his most inveterate enemies, to tell them what had passed, that they might enter into effectual measures for putting a stop to him.

47 Then the *Pharisees*, being alarmed at this information, agreed with some of the chief priests to summon a council, in which they gathered together to consult against the Lord, and his Anointed, as was prophesied (*Psal. ii. 2.*) saying, What signifies all that we have hitherto attempted against this man? Some more prudent, and yet vigorous step must be taken without delay: For from what we ourselves have seen, and our own friends now tell us, it is plain beyond denial, that he does many surprizing miracles.

48 If we suffer him to go on at this rate, without some effectual opposition to him, he will soon grow so famous, that all the people will be persuaded to believe him to be the expected Messiah: And what will be the consequence of that? Why, the *Romans* will certainly take umbrage, as if we were going to set up a king of our own, and to throw off their yoke; and they will be so exasperated at this, as to deprive us of all the remains of our civil and religious rights and liberties, and even to destroy our city and temple, and put an end to our being a distinct nation any longer.

49 And, while the council were at a loss what course to take for silencing Jesus, one of them, namely *Caiaphas*, a bold *Sadducee*, (*Acts v. 17.*) who had no fear of a judgment to come, and who, by the favour of the *Roman* government, was high-priest that year, (see the note on *Luke iii. 2.*) said to them with great subtilty and malice, as well as haughtiness and warmth, All your cautious deliberations are to no manner of purpose: I find ye have no notion of what is necessary to be done in so desperate a case, which must have a desperate remedy.

50 Nor do ye consider, (*οὐκ ἐπιλογίζεσθε*) in all your reasoning on this head, that the danger of the present circumstances obliges us to have recourse to the old politic maxim, of preferring a public to a private good: We have no need to trouble ourselves with nice inquiries, whether this man be an impostor, or a prophet; we do not know what he is; but it is certainly better that

that he should be put to death, than that we should lose our all, and the whole nation should be utterly ruined by suffering him to live.

51 And this spake he not of himself: but, being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

51 And he said this, not merely from his own crafty and wicked design of exciting the council to go into resolute measures against Jesus: But as he was the high-priest, and head of the *Jewish* church for that year, in which Christ was to redeem his spiritual *Israel*, and to put an end to the Levitical priesthood and oblations, by the sacrifice of himself; and as *Caiaphas's* words, on account of his exalted character, would be looked upon as oracles: So, by an over-ruling providence, he expressed his malicious design in terms, which, contrary to his own intention, contained a truth, that, in another view of their signification, was prophetic of what God had designed should come to pass, viz, That Jesus being the Messiah *, he should be cut off, not for himself, but as a propitiatory sacrifice for God's antient people, the *Jews*:

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

52 And not merely for a remnant, according to the election of grace, (*Rom. xi. 5.*) of those *Jews* that dwelt together as a nation in the land of *Israel*, but likewise of such, to whom pertained the adoption, as were dispersed among the *Gentiles*: And not only for these; but also for others among the *Gentiles* themselves, who were predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, (*Eph. i. 5.*) that, according to the merit of his death, they also, by the preaching of the gospel, attended with the power of his Spirit, might be effectually gathered into one church, and fellowship of believers with the *Jews*, under Christ their Head, (*Eph. i. 9, 10.*); wherever they were scattered abroad among all nations of the earth, like sheep straying from the fold of their great Shepherd, (*chap. x. 16.*)

53 Then, from that day forth, they took counsel to-

53 This subtle speech of *Caiaphas* so fully determined the council to act in concert for putting Jesus to death, that, from this time forward, they frequently consulted together

N O T E.

* By the Evangelist's construction of this prophetic sense of *Caiaphas's* words, *The children of God, that were scattered abroad*, (*ver. 52.*) may relate to the *Jews* dispersed among the *Gentiles*, who, on account of their ancient adoption, as God's covenant-people, might be called the children of God: And supposing that he carried his thought still further to the *Gentiles*, it seems as if the nation, or church of *Israel*, were therein considered, as typical of the whole New Testament-church, consisting of *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*: Otherwise there was nothing in *Caiaphas's* words, about the whole nation's

perishing, that could be construed as prophetic of Christ's gathering together the children of God, that were *Gentiles*: But which ever way we take the Evangelist's meaning, I do not see how it can extend to the whole nation of the *Jews*, and all individuals among the nations of the *Gentiles*, or can signify any more than the true *Israel* of God in both: For he speaks of such a fruit of Christ's death, as should save them from perishing, and should be effectual to gather together the children of God into one spiritual body under Christ, answerable to the like language that is used in *Rev. v. 9.*

together for to put him to death.

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

55 And the Jews passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.

together about the properest opportunity, and the safest method for compassing it.

54 Our blessed Lord therefore well knowing their secret and resolute combination against his life, and that the time appointed of the Father for his death was not yet fully come, prudently declined walking about openly, as he was wont, to preach and work miracles among the Jews, at Jerusalem, and the parts adjacent: But he withdrew to a certain town called * Ephraim, which lay in a remote, and more retired part of the country, bordering upon the wilderness of Judea; and there (surprised) he spent his time in private conversation with his disciples, till within six days of the passover, (chap. xii. 1.)

55 At length the Jewish passover drew near, which was the last that Jesus eat with his disciples, or that was ever celebrated by divine authority, he having soon after legally put an end to that typical solemnity, by the sacrifice of himself: And great multitudes from all parts of the country repaired to Jerusalem, as usual, some little time before-hand, that they who had contracted any ceremonial uncleanness, might perform the rites of purification appointed in the law, in order to their partaking of that religious feast.

56 The city therefore filling apace, and our Lord not appearing there, the people sought after him; and, at their meeting together in the temple, said one to another, What are your thoughts about Jesus's not being here? Will he, according to custom, come up to this passover, or will he stay away for fear of his enemies?

57 Now, though some might ask these questions out of good-will toward him, being desirous to see and hear him, and get good by him; and others out of mere curiosity; yet there were others, that wanted an opportunity to deliver him up to the chief priests and Pharisees: For they, as a council, had issued out orders, strictly requiring upon pain of their utmost displeasure, that if any one knew where he was, he should not conceal him, but should forthwith discover him to them, that they might apprehend him, and prosecute him even unto death.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How common is it for such as Christ loves, and as sincerely love him, to be, like Lazarus, sick unto death, and, like Mary and Martha, mourning the loss of the dearest friends and comforts of life! But what encouragements may they take from his love, to apply in all their distresses to him! Though he may sometimes

N O T E.

* This Ephraim was so obscure a place, that it is uncertain where it stood, or whether it were Ephratah, in the tribe of Judah,

or Ephraim in the tribe of Benjamin: But which ever it was, it probably bordered on the wilderness of Judea.

times delay an answer, and we may be apt to misjudge his conduct, and give way to unbelief, while we look at the discouraging circumstances that surround us, instead of looking to the promises and power of Christ; and though we may expect a reproof for it; yet how does he bear with us, and wait to be gracious, that he may glorify his own and his Father's name, improve our faith, and do us good, in a better way than we ourselves desired!—With what cheerfulness and diligence should we follow his example, in working for God whilst it is day, since death will soon put an end to all opportunities for it! How willingly should we take our lot with our Lord, for this world and the next! And why should believers be afraid of dying, to sleep in Jesus, who will awaken them again in the morning of a blessed resurrection! Behold the God in him, who spoke of himself as the object of faith, as the resurrection and the life, and, by his absolute word of command, quickened *Lazarus* from the dead, and called him forth out of his grave! And behold in him the man of like natural passions with ourselves, when on moving occasions he groaned in spirit, and shed tears of grief! And how admirably did Providence over-rule various circumstances, that in these ways he might act both the God and the Man, before many credible witnesses! Whatsoever we believe concerning him, our faith is vastly defective, unless it rests upon him as that Saviour, who is the Son of God, in such a peculiar and exalted sense, as to be himself God, and whose own power can perform all things for us: We may therefore think we hear him saying to us, *Believest thou this?* And we should not be satisfied till we can answer, *Yea, Lord, we believe it.*—How kind and compassionate is he to his afflicted friends; how tenderly does he sympathize with them; what rich consolations may they find in him under all their troubles; how easily can he make up their greatest losses, and restore former mercies beyond all their own hopes, whenever he pleases; and how readily should we go to meet with Jesus! And, when once he appears, how great is the joy, whatsoever our sorrows were before! The *Jews* themselves, may indeed teach us sympathy with our mourning friends; but none pities like Christ, and none can relieve like him: And O what might we not hope for, had he but said to depend upon him according to his word! And what glorious things will he work for them that believe in him! Though they must die out of this world, like other men, they shall not die for ever; but he will raise them up to a blessed immortality in a better. But alas! how great are the prejudices that are found against him in men of carnal minds? Though they themselves were to see him open the eyes of them that were born blind, and raise them to life that had been dead long enough to sink in their graves; yet unless the same divine power be exerted to open the eyes of their own understandings, and quicken them to a spiritual life, they will not believe in him to eternal life: While some, through grace, are brought over to him; others, from worldly views, endeavour to expose, and take counsel against him: But all their devices shall be over-ruled to subserve the salvation of the children of God of all nations, wherever they are scattered abroad; and whatsoever may be the design of men against Christ, and the various thoughts of their hearts concerning him, he will carry on, and finish his work, in his own time and way.

C H A P. XII.

Mary anoints Christ's feet at Bethany, 1,—8. The people flock to see him and Lazarus, 9. The chief priests consult to kill Christ, 10, 11. He rides in triumph to Jerusalem, 12,—19. The Greeks desire to see him, 20,—22. He foretels his death and its effects, 23,—33. His solemn warning to the Jews, 34, 36. The continued infidelity of the generality of them, though some of the rulers believed him to be

the Messiah, but did not own him, 37,—43. He asserts his divine mission, 44,—50.

PARAPHRASE.

TEXT.

Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper, and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment, of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which

NOW the time appointed of God for the death of Christ being just at hand, he, to shew his great readiness for yielding obedience to his Father's will therein, went the day before the sabbath, six complete days before the passover, to the village called *Bethany*, where *Lazarus* dwelt, whom he had miraculously restored to life, (*chap. xi. 43, 44.* see the note on *Matth. xxvi. 6.*)

2 Upon his arrival thither, his friends provided a handsome entertainment, and invited him, and (*ver. 4.*) his disciples with him to supper, that being the principal meal among the *Jews*; and *Martha*, to testify her gratitude, veneration, and esteem, waited upon him like a servant,* though she was a person of considerable rank: But *Lazarus* himself sat at table with him, that all the company might be witnesses of his being alive and in health, and of his eating, drinking, and conversing again like other men.

3 Then *Mary*, the other sister of *Lazarus*, that she might likewise pay her grateful acknowledgment of Christ's favour, and her honourable regard to him, brought a pound of odoriferous ointment, made of the most genuine (*spikenard*) and costly spikenard; and coming behind him, as he sat at table with his feet thrust out backwards, she suppled his feet with the ointment, and wiped them with her own hair, as thinking that she could not humble herself too much, in expressing her veneration of such a great Lord and friend: And that she might further testify her faith in him as Messiah, the King, and might add another token of the highest honour that was anciently put upon the greatest personages, (*Psal. xxiii. 5.*) she poured the rest of the ointment upon his head, (*Matth. xxvi. 7.* see the note there) the perfume of which diffused a grateful scent thro' the whole room, and was a fit emblem of the sweet odour of Christ's approaching death and sacrifice, and of the graces of his Spirit, which should be shed abroad in consequence thereof.

4, 5 Hereupon *Judas Iscariot*, who was the son of one *Simon*, and an apostle of Christ, discovered a malignant discontent at the honour done to his Lord, saying, What

NOTE.

* It appears that *Martha* was a person of some figure, from the great respect that was paid to her and her sister, in visits and condolences, at *Lazarus's* death, as well as from the costly ointment that her sister used in anointing Christ's feet, (*ver. 3.*) and from

there being an house of entertainment to our Lord and his disciples, he probably lodging there, when he returned from *Jerusalem* to *Bethany* every evening of the last week of his life, which he now entered upon.

which should betray him,

3 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

4 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

5 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

6 For the poor always ye have with you: but me ye have not always.

7 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came, not for Jesus sake only, but

What an extravagant waste is this, without any manner of occasion for it? Why should our Master or we suffer such profuseness? Would it not have been much better to have sold this rich ointment for the great price it would have fetched, (see the note on *Mark* xiv. 5.) and to have relieved the poor with it?

6 The reason of Judas's speaking in this manner was, not that he had any real concern, as he pretended, for the poor; but because he was a man of a covetous temper and dishonest principle; and what little money Christ and his disciples had for necessary supplies, was committed to his keeping, who, had the price of this ointment been put into his hands, might have purloined some of it, or run away with it all, in case the suffering days which his master talked of should come.

7 Our Lord therefore, (*) knowing his wicked design, but taking no public notice of it, replied, (*etc*) Do not be severe upon this good woman, let her go on peaceably with these testimonies of her respect to me: She herein, by a special direction of providence, acts more suitably than you are aware of, to my circumstances, who am just ready to be put to death, and, in effect, is only expending that upon me a little before my burial, which you cannot deny to have been a fit reserve for an embalment, which she will have no opportunity for, after it.

8 And as he knew that others of the disciples had likewise been influenced, by Judas's plausible pretence of charity, to find fault with what Mary had done, (*Matth.* xxvi. 8, 9.) he told them there was no occasion for their uneasiness on that account: For, said he, in the disposals of providence, in such a world of sin and misery as this, there will be always poor people enough living among you, to furnish opportunities for liberality and compassion toward them, according to your ability, whenever ye may be inclined to it; but in a very little time I shall be no longer corporally present with you, and all opportunities will soon be over of shewing any kindness or respect to me in person again.

9 Now as Christ was at *Bethany*, within less than two miles of *Jerusalem*, abundance of the Jews soon heard of his being there; and, as the fame of his late surprising miracle was spread among them, they immediately flocked * thither, not merely for the sake of seeing and bearing him, but that they might likewise see and converse

N O T E.

* If, as we have supposed, Christ was at this entertainment on the evening, as soon as the sabbath was over, it is highly probable that this company came to *Bethany* on the next day, which was the first day of the week.

but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

12 On the next day, much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass and a colt.

verse with Lazarus himself, whom he had brought to life again from the dead.

10 But the chief priests, instead of being softened, or suitably affected with such a wonderful instance of Christ's power and goodness, were filled with rage and envy at it; and conspired against the life of Lazarus, which had been thus miraculously restored, resolving to put him, as well as Jesus, to death;

11 Because, by means of this undeniable, living proof of Christ's divine character, many of the Jews were induced to think meanly of their rulers, and desert their party, and to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, notwithstanding all that his enemies could say to the contrary.

12, 13 And so great an interest did he hereby obtain in the affections of the people, that the next day, the second day of the week, vast multitudes of them, that were come from all parts to Jerusalem against the passover, when they heard that he was repairing thither too, gathered boughs of palm-trees, and went out of the city to meet him; and strewing some of their branches in the way, (*Matth. xxi. 8.*) and carrying others in their hands, they attended him in solemn procession, and shouted aloud with all the joy that used to be expressed, together with these ceremonies, at the feast of tabernacles, (*Lev. xxiii. 40. and Psal. cxviii. 25, 26.*) saying, *Hosanna*, May all prosperity, victory, and success, crown thee long expected, and now present King of Israel! May he reign and triumph for ever! Blessed be his glorious name; we rejoice in him, and bid him welcome, who is come from God himself, and is clothed with his authority, as our Messiah, to save us from all our enemies, and to load us with his benefits. (See the notes on *Matth. xxi. 9.*)

14, 15 And as the people thus surrounded him with acclamations and praises, Jesus himself, having procured a young ass, rode upon it in a way of uncommon triumph, with circumstances of abasement, suitable to his state of humiliation, and with a shew of grandeur, that prefigured his approaching exaltation to the kingdom: And this was ordered in providence, though undesigned by the people, to be a literal accomplishment of an inspired prophecy concerning the Messiah, (*Zech. ix. 9.*) where it is said, *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; let your joy expel all your former fears, O every son and daughter of the new Jerusalem, and heavenly Zion; Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the sole of an ass.* (See the notes on *Matth. xxi. 5, 7.*)

16 While

16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but, when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

17 The people therefore that was with him, when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

20 And there were certain Greeks

16 While these things were transacting, the disciples of our Lord were so far from using any under-hand methods to promote them, that they had no notion of their reference to the Messiah's character: But when he was afterwards exalted to his heavenly throne, and shed down his Spirit upon them from on high, their understandings were enlightened, and, to the confirmation of their faith, they perfectly recollected that these very circumstances were foretold in prophecy, and had been punctually fulfilled in him.

17 The immediate occasion of which was this, those persons, who were present, when Jesus raised *Lazarus* from the dead, declared that they saw him come out of the grave, at Christ's authoritative word of command.

18 This was the principal reason, why so great a multitude, at that time, went out of the city to meet and applaud him, in that public manner, as the Messiah; for they were well satisfied by the report of these credible eye-witnesses, that he had really wrought this very extraordinary and surprizing miracle.

19 The *Pharisees* hereupon were filled with the utmost rage and vexation, saying one to another, Alas! to what little purpose are all our authority and zeal, threatenings and persuasions, contrivances and opposition to suppress this man? Instead of the peoples being restrained by our attempts against him, they grow more fond of him than ever. Look what a world of them run after him, and are all at once become his disciples! What will this come to at length, unless some more speedy and effectual course be taken, than we have yet gone into, to put a stop to it?

20 And at the same time, some religious persons among the *Gentiles* were stirred up to earnest inquiries after Jesus: There were, for instance, several *Greeks* †, who being proselytes of the gate came up to *Jerusalem*,

N O T E S.

* The world is here, as in many other places, evidently to be understood with restriction, and can only signify great numbers of all sorts of people, especially of the lower rank.

† *Ελληνες* the *Greeks*, and *Ελληνισται* the *Grecians*, are very different in the stile of the New Testament. The *Grecians* or *Hellenists* are mentioned, as I think, only in *Acts* vi. 1. and ix. 29. and xi. 20. and signify such *Jews* as were scattered abroad in *Gentile* nations, and used the *Greek* language. But the *Greeks* are mentioned a dozen times in the New Testament, and properly signify *Greeks* by nation or birth: These, being a renowned people for learning among the *Gentiles*,

are sometimes put for the *Gentile* nations in general, in opposition to the *Jews*, as in *Rom.* i. 16. and ii. 9, 10. compared with ver. 14. and at other times for the more polite *Gentiles*, in opposition to the more rude and barbarous nations among them, as in *Rom.* i. 14. It is probable, as *Crotius* thinks, that these *Greeks* were *Syrophœnicians*, who dwelt about *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and, by means of their commerce, were acquainted with the *Galileans*, and particularly with *Philip*, who was a man of *Bethsaida* in *Galilee* of the *Gentiles*, (ver. 21.) And they are more generally thought to be proselytes of the gate, who used at public solemnities to repair to *Jerusalem*, to worship; though, not being circum-

Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the feast :

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew : and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone : but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

Jerusalem, to worship in the court of, the *Gentiles* at the great festival, which was then at hand.

21 These having heard so much of him, and having some knowledge of *Philip*, who was one of his disciples, and had been an inhabitant of *Bethsaida*, which lay in *Galilee* of the *Gentiles*, went to him, * two or three days after the public entry, and begged the favour of him to introduce them into Christ's company, saying, Sir, we would fain see Jesus, and have a little conversation with him, that we ourselves may be acquainted with his doctrine, and may know what judgment to form concerning him.

22 But as Christ had discouraged converses with the *Gentiles*, (*Matth* x. 5.) and might be still more exposed to the fury of his enemies by appearing in company with these, *Philip* consulted *Andrew*, a senior disciple, and one of his own townsmen, (*chap.* i. 44.) about the expediency of mentioning this request to Jesus ; and they, agreeing together, went and acquainted him with it.

23 To which Jesus replied, The set time appointed of the Father is just at hand, when I, the Messiah, shall be highly honoured in the salvation, not of *Jews* only, but of *Gentiles* also, that shall be brought to know and believe in me ; an earnest and specimen of which appears in the importunate desire of these *Greeks*, to see and converse with me.

24 I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that as a grain of wheat, which is sown in the earth, yields no increase, unless its present form die or perish † ; but, if it dies, it becomes exceeding fruitful : So were I to continue in my present state in this world, and never to die a sacrifice for sin, and be buried in the grave, the great design of my office would be defeated, and I should not have the honour of raising up a spiritual seed to

N O T E S.

cified, they were not suffered to eat the pas-
sover : Accordingly it is here only said of
these *Greeks*, that they came to *Jerusalem* to
worship.

* As Christ made his entry into *Jerusalem*
on the second day of that week in which
he was crucified, and it is said, (*Luke* xix.
47.) that he taught daily in the temple, which
intimates, that he did so some days at least
in that week ; so as soon as he had finished
the discourse, occasioned by this request of
the *Greeks*, it is said, (*ver.* 38.) that he de-
parted and hid himself : And therefore it
seems to have been two or three days after
his public entry into *Jerusalem*, that they
applied to *Philip* to introduce them to Jesus.

† *Nieuwenhys* observes that these words
ought to have a particular emphasis, in which
our Lord, agreeable to his infinite know-
ledge, is pleased to single out from among so
many thousands of seeds, in which the con-
trary obtains, the only one almost which
dies in the earth ; and which therefore was
an exceeding proper similitude, and peculi-
arly accommodated to that purpose for which
he intended to use it. See *Relig. Philos. Con-
templ.* 23. § xi. Where, for proof, he refers
to Dr. Grew's anatomy of plants : and
Malpigh. de sem. veget. whose observations
are, that the like is not found in any other
grain, besides the great bean, and millet-mil-
lum.

to bear mine image, and shew forth my praise: But if I am made an offering for sin, and pour out my soul unto death, *I shall see my seed, and the pleasure of the Lord will prosper in my hand, (Isa. liii. 10, 12.)* that I may be glorified in converting, and saving multitudes of all nations, and in their adoring songs, as the reward of my sufferings and death.

24 He that loveth his life shall lose it: and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

25 Then, to shew his disciples that the benefits he spoke of, as the fruit of his death, were not of a temporal, but of a spiritual and eternal nature, he proceeded to tell them that they must be conformed to him in sufferings, as ever they would be partakers of glory with him, saying, Whoever is so fond of this present life and its enjoyments, as to deny, disown, or reject me, that he may avoid such persecutions and dangers as would expote him to death for my sake, shall certainly fall short of that eternal glory and blessedness which best deserves the name of life. And, on the contrary, whoever shall be so indifferent to the present life and all its comforts, as even to hate every unworthy means of preserving it, such as disowning or denying me, shall surely inherit eternal life, which is the highest happiness he can be capable of.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me: and where I am there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

26 So that if any one would be a true disciple and servant to me, let him follow my example, and the imitations of my word, providence, and Spirit, wherever they may lead him; and for his encouragement I assure him, that in the blessed world, where in a just sense I now am, and where in a little time I shall be, and abide in my human nature for ever, (see the note on chap. vii. 34.) there shall such a servant of mine be also with me, to behold my glory: If any man in this manner unfeignedly devotes himself to me, how much soever he may be despised and ill-used for it by men, my heavenly Father himself will put immortal honours upon him, that as he suffers for me here, he may be likewise glorified with me for ever.

27 Now is my soul troubled: and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

27 Whilst our dear Lord was thus discoursing about sufferings, the terror of his own last conflicts began to seize him; upon which, to shew that he had all the innocent passions of human nature, he said, At this very time my soul is exceedingly distressed in a near view of the bitterest tribulations that from every quarter are coming upon me: How shall I express myself in the most becoming manner, under the touching sense I have of them? Then, turning his address from the people to God, he said, O my heavenly Father, the language of oppressed nature is, Let me, if possible, be

excused the extreme sufferings that are now just ready to rush upon me: But I insist not on this, as knowing that the great design of my coming into the world is to undergo them, according to thy eternal purpose, and my covenant-engagements to thee.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

28 Father, I freely and entirely resign to thy holy will, and devote myself to the honour of thy name, whatsoever it may cost me; glorify thine own perfections by me, in such a way as is most pleasing in thy sight, and I am satisfied: In answer to which, an awful majestic voice was immediately directed to him from heaven, saying, I have already glorified myself, meaning by Christ's obedience, ministry, and miracles hitherto; and will be still further glorified, meaning by his sufferings and death.

29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

29 This voice was heard by the whole assembly then present, tho' by some more plainly than others; some of them therefore said it was a clap of thunder, whilst others, who heard it more articulately, said, It is certainly the voice of an angel speaking to him from heaven.

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

30 But Jesus knowing that they observed it, and yet were ready to turn it off, as if it were not a testimony to him from God himself, said, This extraordinary voice was pronounced from heaven, not on my account, as if I needed to be satisfied that my Father would own me, and glorify himself by me; but it came, in your hearing, as an immediate witness from him, of his approving of me in my work, and of his crowning it with glorious consequences to me and mine, that ye might believe in me, or be left for ever inexcusable for rejecting me.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

31 The time is now just at hand, and the thing itself is as certain as if it were already done, when the men of this lower world shall be brought to a critical trial, with regard to their thoughts about me; when a reformation shall be set on foot, and a distinction made between the precious and the vile; and when judgment shall pass upon both, by the word and providence of God, as a preface of the future judgment, to acquit or condemn them, answerable to their believing or not believing in me: Judgment shall also be speedily obtained against Satan, who has usurped a tyrannical dominion over worldly-minded men, and works in their hearts by means of the things of this world, and who reigns in the ignorance, idolatry, and wickedness of the heathen world: His power shall be vanquished, his claim defeated, his oracles silenced, his temples laid waste; and he himself shall be cast out of the hearts of sinners,

sinners, by the merit and victory of my death and resurrection, and by the triumphs of my Spirit and gospel, till at length his kingdom shall be utterly destroyed.

32 And, as for me, I will erect my throne upon the ruins of his; immediately after * I shall be lifted up from the earth as a sacrifice for sin, which will be very soon, I will then effectually prevail upon persons of all nations, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, by the endearments of my love and the operations of my Spirit, to come by faith unto me, that *my people may be willing in the day of my power.* (*Psal. cx. 3.*)

33 Our Lord spoke of his being *lifted up*, to intimate, that he should be put to the death of the cross, on which, like one that died under the curse, he should hang between earth and heaven; and that, in consequence of this, he should rise from the dead, and be glorified in heaven, and his name would be exalted in the preaching of the gospel, and in its glorious effects, to the salvation of all that should look by faith to him, as *Israel* looked to the brazen serpent and were healed.

34 The common people hearing him speak of himself in such a manner, as imported that he should die, and leave this world, replied, We have learnt by the inspired writings; (see the note on *chap. x. 34.*) that, when the Messiah is spoken of under the character of the Son of man, it is said, *His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed,* (*Dan. vii. 13. 14.*) If then you pretend to be this *Son of man*, how inconsistently do you talk of being lifted up from the earth, and dying out of this world! What do you mean by calling yourself the Son of man, while you thus speak? Or how must we understand you?

35 Then Jesus, knowing with what perverseness they cavilled at his words, did not think proper to answer directly to their question, by reminding them of his resurrection and ascension to heaven, where he would erect his throne, and exercise a spiritual and everlasting dominion, according to the true intent of ancient prophecies concerning him: But he said to them, I have already sufficiently told you who I am, and how all this may

N O T E.

* It is the common observation of critics, that the particle *εἰ*, here signifies, and should be rendered, not *if*, but *when*: For our Lord was speaking of his death as a certain event, that was near at hand.—His drawing *all men* to him, in consequence of his being lifted up, cannot be meant of every individual of mankind; because many

never heard of a crucified Saviour; and many of them that have, were never prevailed upon to believe in him, or to be his disciples: But, the occasion of this discourse, which was the *Greeks* desire to see Jesus, (*ver. 21.*) naturally leads us to understand it of all sorts of people, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*. See the note on *chap. i. 7.*

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

33 (This he said, signifying what death he should die.)

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, the Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is

is the light with you: walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

may be reconciled, though you continue obstinately to reject me; and the light of my ministry will continue but a very little time longer among you: See to it that ye make good use of this light, while ye have it to direct you in the way to eternal happiness, lest not only I, but the gospel itself be taken from you, or ye be left under judicial blindness of mind, to your utter confusion and misery: For he that walks in the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, walks he knows not how, and goes he knows not whither; he cannot tell what course to take for safety, but is in perpetual danger of wandering into mischief and ruin.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

36 While therefore, for a little time longer, ye have me among you, who am come, as a light from heaven to shew you the way of salvation, believe in me, according to what I say concerning myself, that ye may receive the truth in the love of it, before it be too late, and may be under sure guidance here, till ye be admitted to the regions of everlasting light hereafter. Our Lord having given them these solemn warnings, which enraged them, and made them worse instead of better*, he withdrew, and concealed himself from them, that they might not tumultuously rise, and immediately apprehend him.

37 But, tho' he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

37 Now (b) tho' he had talked so plainly and closely to them concerning himself as the true Messiah, and concerning the extreme danger of rejecting him; and though he had confirmed his doctrine with (τῶν αὐτῶν) so many great and merciful miracles, which they themselves were eye-witnesses of; yet the generality of them were suffered, through the hardness of their hearts, to persist obstinately in their unbelief:

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to

38 That the prophecy of *Isaiah* might be evidently accomplished, as a proof of its being divinely inspired, and of Jesus's being the Christ, saying, (*Isa. liii. 1.*) Ah Lord! how few are there of the *Jews*, that have heartily embraced, and received by faith, the plain declarations of the gospel concerning the Messiah, as made by himself †

N O T E S.

* It is generally thought that he retired, as usual, to *Bethany*, or to the *mount of Olives*. But, as some suppose, the preceding discourse, and that which follows at *ver. 44.* and so on to the end of the chapter, are to be connected and considered as delivered at the same time, all the intermediate verses being the Evangelist's own remarks: And so they understand Christ's departing, and hiding himself from them, to relate to his taking his final leave of them, after which he never preached publicly to them any more, but spent the little remains of his time in a more private way with the disciples, or by

himself. It is in this light that I have considered it; and so this discourse may be taken as delivered at the same time with his solemn parting warning in *Matt. xxiii. 39.*

† This began to be fulfilled by the obstinate unbelief of the *Jews*, under Christ's personal ministry; and was afterward more fully accomplished by their persisting in it, under the ministry of the apostles, *Rom. x. 15.* And I take the *arm of the Lord* to signify his Spirit, who at other times is represented as the *finger of God*, and the *hand of the Lord*. *Luke xi. 20. and Acts xi. 21.*

to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

and his servants to them? and alas! how few of them have been favoured with the victorious power of thy Spirit and grace to overcome their obstinacy, and bring them into a willing reception of him, and subjection to him, as their Lord and Saviour?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

39, 40 They therefore remained incurably unbelieving, because they were the very persons whom the prophet *Isaias* spoke of in another place, (*Isa. vi. 9, 10.*) saying to this purpose, Their eyes were first wilfully, and thereupon judicially, shut and blinded, and their hearts were in the same manner hardened, that they might not see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ in its truth and excellence, nor understand it in a spiritual and affecting manner, with application to their own case; and that, being left to themselves, they might not be turned, in heart and life, from sin and Satan, the world and self, to God in Christ, nor be healed, by my pardoning and sanctifying grace, of their sinful and dangerous diseases, which they had contracted and taken pleasure in*.

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

41 These awful things *Isaias* said, under divine inspiration, concerning Christ, at the same time that he had a vision of his glory, as the great Jehovah, who appeared to him in human form, *sitting upon a high throne, and filling the temple with his train*, (*Isa. vi. 1.—9.*)

42 Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also, many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.

42 Nevertheless, there were many, even of the Jewish rulers themselves, who were convinced in their consciences of his being the Messiah; but their sinful shame, and fear of exposing themselves to the contempt and fury of the sanhedrim, and particularly of the *Pharisees*, his most inveterate enemies, had such a powerful influence upon them, that they durst not own what they believed concerning him, lest they should be excommunicated, as apostates, and be thereby deprived at once of their reputation, and of their civil and religious rights and liberties. (See the note on *chap. ix. 34.*)

43 For they loved the praise of men

43 For, their hearts not being changed, they rather chose, and were more solicitous about their own having the

N O T E.

* I cannot see how God's suffering men to act according to their own free, though corrupt inclinations, and over-ruling it by his providence into an accomplishment of what he foresaw, and foretold would be, can impeach his righteousness, who is under no obligation to turn and heal them, that obstinately refuse to be turned and healed: For whatsoever judicial act of God may be supposed herein, it is in consequence, and as a just punishment of their own wilful refusal of Christ and his gospel; and his only withholding forfeited grace, and giving them up

to the corruptions of their own hearts, and to the power of Satan, which they chose to be governed by, is sufficient to account for all judicial blindness and hardness, without supposing any positive act of God upon a man's soul to produce them: And I think the course, in which they come upon the sinner, as represented in the Paraphrase, fully agrees with the account we have of this awful case in *Isa. vi. 9, 10.* which is the place here referred to, and recited in sense, though not exactly in the same words.

men more than
the praise of God.

44 Jesus cried,
and said, He that
believeth on me,
believeth not on
me, but on him
that sent me.

45 And he
that seeth me,
seeth him that
sent me.

46 I am come
a light into the
world, that who-
soever believeth
on me should not
abide in darkness.

47 And if any
man hear my
words, and be-
lieve not, I judge
him not: for I
came not to
judge the world,
but to save the
world.

48 He that re-
jecteth me, and
receiveth not my
words, hath one
that judgeth him:
the word that I
have spoken, the
same

the esteem and applause of men, and shewing respect and honour to them, than about the approbation of God himself, and shewing forth his praise.

44 This being the carnal, worldly temper of some, whilst a malignant spirit reigned in others, Jesus laid hold of that opportunity for taking his last farewell of them, (see the note on *ver.* 36.) ; and, lifting up his voice with great earnestness, he said, The sum of all my discourses issues in this, He who has true faith in me, as the promised Messiah, believes not in me only, nor in me ultimately as such, but together with me, and through me, believes in my heavenly Father, who sent me into the world to seek and save lost sinners.

45 And he that by an eye of faith beholds who and what I am, is thereby led into the knowledge of who and what my Father is, from whom I derive my mediatorial commission, and whose perfections and authority display themselves in and by me.

46 I, who had a pre-existence with him, am come into this world, to scatter the mists of ignorance and error, superstition and idolatry, which have over-spread it, and to bring life and immortality to light by the gospel, that whoever receives and trusts in me, and yields himself up by faith to my guidance, should not continue under the power of spiritual blindness, and wander in the ways of sin to an eternal state of misery and darkness, but should find the way to eternal life.

47 And if, after all, any one, who has had opportunities of hearing and knowing my gospel, wilfully refuses to embrace it, and to depend upon me according to it, I do not as yet accuse him to the Father, nor pass a definite sentence of condemnation to an immediate execution of wrath upon him: For the direct design of my coming into the world is not to accuse, or condemn, or take vengeance upon mankind; but to make the gracious overtures of salvation to them, and effectually to save those of them, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, that shall believe in me, before I proceed to the final judgment. (See the note on *chap.* iii. 16.)

48 But he that, continuing in unbelief, (*οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμῇ*) makes light of, despises, and rejects me, preferring other things to me, and do not cordially embrace my doctrine, shall find that there is an impartial Judge to pass sentence of condemnation, and execute wrath upon him; and that very doctrine, which I have preached, how much soever it may now be treated with contempt, shall appear in evidence against him, and shall be the rule of judgment, according to which he shall

same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself: but the Father which sent me he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak I verily, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

be condemned, with dreadful aggravations of his guilt, at the great and final day of account.

49 For, as is evident from the holy, excellent, supernatural, and gracious nature of the truths that I have taught, and from my divine manner of confirming them, I have not delivered them like a private person, as from myself, much less as the inventions of a mere man; but my Father, from whom I received my commission, gave me authority and instructions, in covenant-agreements between him and me, to publish all those things which I have insisted on among you.

50 And, whatsoever ye may think of it, I know that the doctrine I preach by his authority, from whom I am come as the messenger of the covenant, is the only way and means of bringing lost sinners to eternal life and blessedness: Whatsoever therefore I have revealed, it is neither more nor less than the Father himself put into my commission to be made known to the world; and it is at your utmost peril to reject it.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How wide is the difference between a true believer and a hypocrite! One, like *Martha* and *Mary*, thinks he can never do too much to serve and testify his affection to Christ; while the other, like *Judas*, grudges every expence for him, under a specious pretext of applying it to some better use; but Jesus himself will take their part that honour him. And how great is the difference, even among those that have no saving acquaintance with him! Some, like the *Greeks*, and common people of the *Jews*, are pleased with the notions they have of him, and of his word and works; whilst others, like the *Pharisees* and their partizans, are filled with horrid rancour against them, and consult to suppress and destroy them.—For once, the Lord of glory, whilst on earth, gave a faint emblem of his future triumph: But with what humble state, even then, did he ride on a young ass, amidst the hosannas of admiring throngs!—How desirous should we be to see Jesus, not to gratify curiosity, but to be satisfied concerning, and led into an acquaintance and communion with him! And how little reason have any to be ashamed of him! Though he was hung upon a cross, and suffered such a terrible death, as it could not but be desirable to human nature, if possible, to escape; yet how readily did he resign himself up to it, as an act of obedience to his Father's will; and as knowing that it would turn to his own exaltation, and the raising up of a numerous seed to be glorified with him! And what a remarkable honour did God the Father put upon the suffering Saviour, by over-ruling the sentence of the high-priest against him into a prophecy of the happy fruits of his death, and by publicly bearing witness to him from heaven for our sakes, that we might believe in him, as the *Jehovah of Israel*, of whom *Isaiah* spake, when he saw his glory! How groundless then, and perverse, are all the prejudices and objections of his enemies against him, though pretended to have their support from scripture itself! They really shut their eyes against the most glorious light, and walk in darkness, and know not whither they are going: But how dreadful is it to be under such blindness of mind and hardness of heart, as govern them by their own consent, till they are delivered up to their own choice, by the righteous judgment of God! And, alas! what a snare is the fear of man, together with a fondness for secular honours, to hinder a due profession of Christ, who came, as the light of this world, to enlighten them that believe in him, and who faithfully executes his Father's will, and bears long with obstinate sinners, before he removes the means of grace from them, and

before

before he proceeds to the final judgment ! Then, his word itself being the rule of his awards, they that receive him by faith, and walk in the ways of truth and holiness, shall be admitted to everlasting light and life; and they that reject him by unbelief, and go on in the ways of ignorance, self-deceit, and sin, shall be cast into everlasting darkness and misery. O of what vast importance is it heartily to embrace him; and how desperate is their case, that let themselves against him ! Whatsoever we may think of these things, he that is faithful has declared them, and knows them to be true.

C H A P. XIII.

Christ's last time of eating the paschal supper, 1,—3. He washes his disciples feet, to set them an example of humility and love, 4,—17. Gives notice before-hand who should betray him, 18,—30. Enjoins brotherly love upon his disciples, 31,—35. And foretels Peter's denying him, 36,—38.

TEXT.

NOW before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord, having now done with preaching to the people, devoted the small remains of his time to a more private instruction of his disciples, and preparation for his own death: Accordingly, on the evening, (see the note on *Matth. xxvi. 20.*) which introduced the seven days, that altogether were called the feast*, he, who was the true paschal Lamb, knowing that the appointed time was then fully come for his being sacrificed, and for his departing from this world by death, and returning to his Father in heaven, took occasion

N O T E.

* The feast was called by the Jews the *Chagigah*, i. e. the feast-offering, in which they made peace-offerings of sheep and oxen all the seven days of the feast, which are called the passover, *Deut. xvi. 2. Luke xxii. 1. and John xviii. 28.* And in *Isaiah's* time, many thousands of lambs, kids, and bullocks were given for the passover-offerings, as they are called, *1 Chron. xxxv. 7, 8, 9.* (See *Answer*, on *Deut. xvi. 2.*) But expositors are much divided in their thoughts about the supper, which our Evangelist here speaks of: Some understand it to mean a supper at *Bethany*, a day or two before the passover; and others take it to be the paschal supper itself. Many reasons of considerable weight are offered for each of these opinions, which do not come within the compass of my design particularly to discuss. But after mature deliberation, I am inclined to think, upon the whole, that it was the paschal supper, as I have supposed in the Paraphrase: For it was that supper, at which Christ's hour was come, and at which he said, *Now is the Son of man glorified*, (ver. 1. & 31.) which most naturally intimates the nearest approach of his death: And in the close of his discourse at this supper he said, (*chap. xiv. 31.*) *Arise, let us go hence*; and that he then arose to go to the garden, where he was apprehended.

ed, appears from the following parts of the history; for soon after he spoke these words; he went on with his discourse, (*chap. xv. and xvi.*) which he concluded with a prayer, (*chap. xvii.*) and then went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into which he entered with his disciples; and Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, (*chap. xviii. 1, 2.*) Besides, Christ's notifying the traitor to his disciples, at this supper, (ver. 21,—30.) seems to be the discovery that he made of him to them at the passover-supper, as it is recorded (*Matth. xxvi. 21.—25. and Luke xxii. 21,—23.*) And what our Evangelist says, (ver. 30.) of Judas's going out at night from this supper, well agrees to that night in which he betrayed his Lord, and seems to be different from his first going to the sanhedrim, to make the offer of betraying him, which is spoken of as having been before the passover-supper, and was probably in the day-time. (*Matth. xxvi. 14, 15.*) This account of the matter seems natural and easy, and keeps the history free from many perplexities which it is otherwise thrown into; and I do not find any transactions that possibly be brought into the time between the paschal supper, and his being apprehended.

loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

occasion from thence to intimate, that, as he had always loved * his own children, and members, which were in this world of sin and sorrow, he *rested in his love*, (*Zeph. iii. 17.*) and would continue it to the end of his own life, and of their days and troubles on earth, and for ever afterwards in the other world, to which he was going, yea, that he loved them to perfection †, even to the completing of their state of happiness with him there.

2 And supper being ended, (the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,)

2 And (*ἡ σὺν ἑσπέρῃ*) during the supper-time, † as soon as one part of it was over, he gave his disciples a most affecting instance of his extraordinary humility and friendship, to set them an example of the like towards one another, and to shew his engaging care and concern for them, as also to fortify them against the great trial, which was just then coming upon them: For Satan had already (*ἤδη*) so far prevailed upon the corrupt and covetous heart of *Judas Iscariot*, who was the son of *Simon*, and one of the twelve apostles, (see the note on *Matth. x. 4.*) as to bring him to a resolution of betraying his Lord ||.

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God.

3 At this time, tho' Jesus knew that the Father had given all power in heaven and earth to him as Mediator, and though he was thinking of his own divine original, and approaching exaltation, as one who came from God his Father into this world, and should soon return to be glorified with him in heaven:

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments;

4 Yet, even † while these grand thoughts filled his mind, so amazing were his self-abasement and grace, that on a sudden he got up from table, and, pulling off his

N O T E S.

* Mr. Henry observes, that when his own are spoken of, that *received him not*, (*chap. i. 11.*) it is *ταῖς ἰδίαις*, his own things, as a man's cattle are his own, which yet he may, when he pleases, alter the property of: But here it is *τῶν ἰδίων*, his own persons, as a man's wife and children are his own, to whom he stands in a constant relation.

† The words, *ἵνα τελειωθῇ* signify to perfection, as well as to the end. Accordingly I have taken both senses into the Paraphrase; because the following discourses and prayer, to the end of *chap. xvii.* are full of expressions of Christ's love and care after, as well as before he should go to heaven, and that not only for the comfort of his disciples, as long as they should live in this world, but likewise for the safe arrival of all His to glory.

‡ *Maisworth*, on *Exod. xii. 8.* says, that the Jews used first to eat some of the bitter herbs and unleavened bread, then the table was taken away, and afterwards was brought again; and this seems to me to be the time when

our Lord rose from supper to wash his disciples feet, as is said, *ver. 4, 5.*

|| I take this to relate to Satan's first instigation of *Judas* to betray his Lord, which put him upon going to the chief priests, with an offer of delivering him up to them, and was before the passover-supper, (*Mat. xxvi. 14, 15, 16.* and *Luke xxii. 3, 4, 5.*) and so it is different from what is said, *ver. 27, 30.* of this chapter, about Satan's entering into him after he received the sop, upon which he went out immediately to execute his villainous design, the devil having then got an entire ascendancy over him, and gained his point upon him; and perhaps the time of *Judas's* first going into this design was, when he was vexed because he could not get the price of *Mary's* ointment into his hands, (*chap. xii. 4, 5.*)

‡ It is probable that he was likewise discoursing on this subject to his disciples, which made his condescension in washing their feet the more surprising to them.

ments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith

his upper-clothes, took a napkin or towel, and tied it about his waste like a servant in-waiting.

5 After which, this Lord of glory poured water into a bason, and set himself to wash the feet of his poor disciples and dependents, with his own hands, as if he had been the meanest of servants to them, (1 Sam. xiv. 41.) ; and, having so done, he wiped them with the cloth which he had tied about him for that purpose.

6 Then, among others, he came to *Simon*, whom he had surnamed *Peter*, to do the like to him; and *Peter* being startled, amazed, and shocked at such a matchless instance of condescension, said, Lord, what art thou going to do? shall I, a poor sinful wretch, ever suffer that thou, whom I believe, and have owned to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, (*chap. vi. 69.*) shouldst debase thyself at such a rate, as to undergo the irksome drudgery of the meanest of servants in washing my feet? I cannot endure the thought of thy doing it.

7 Our Lord answered, It is not for you to oppose my proceedings, of which you are no competent judge: You do not know the reasons of what I am now doing, and little think what is my meaning in it; but I will explain something of it by and by, (*ver. 12,—17.*) ; and when my Spirit shall be hereafter poured out from on high, you shall be still further acquainted with it, and shall experience the benefit I intend by it.

8 *Peter* replied, with great vehemence, It signifies nothing to talk of it; though all the rest of my brethren should admit of thy doing it to them, I know well enough, that this is too great a disparagement to thee, and too high an honour for me: I cannot bear, and never will consent, that thou shouldst degrade thyself so far, as to wash such sordid feet as mine. Jesus answered again, in a way of severe rebuke for his being so hasty and positive, under a mistaken notion of extraordinary modesty and humility; Nay, if you so far set yourself against my authority, wisdom, and love, as not to submit to my washing your feet, you cannot be my disciple; and if you are not really cleansed by me * in such a spiritual manner, as is signified by washing with water, you can have no communion with me, or interest in the blessings of my kingdom.

9 *Peter*, thereupon, seeing that so much depended upon it, and dreading the thoughts of being separated from Christ, was soon convinced of his folly, and, retracting

N O T E.

* To have no part with another, signifies having no inheritance or communion with him,

no interest in him, or benefit by him. *Deut. xiv. 27. 2 Sam. xx. 1. and 2 Cor. vi. 15.*

saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

tracting his former resolution, cried out, Lord, if this be the case, I readily submit, and beg that thou wouldst please to wash not only my feet, but my hands and head, and every part of me, that I may be cleansed throughout, and may share in all thy blessings.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

10 Jesus, further to explain himself, and correct Peter's mistake, who ran from one extreme to another, replied, He who is once justified and sanctified, as being washed by my blood and Spirit, only needs to be further cleansed, in the daily exercise of faith and repentance, from the guilt and defilement, which, through remaining infirmity, he perpetually contracts by his conversation in the world, he being already *forgiven all trespasses*, (Col. ii. 13.) and freed from the *dominion of sin* (Rom. vi. 14.) and most of you, my disciples, are in this sense cleansed; but though, as a symbol of purity, I wash all your feet; yet every one of you is not really clean.

11 For he knew who should betray him: therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

11 The reason of his saying, all of them were not clean, was, because he knew that Judas, though a professed disciple, was still in his sins, and that he would treacherously betray him into the hands of his enemies.

12 So, after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

12 Then our blessed Lord, having gone through the servile work of washing all his disciples feet, put on his upper-clothes again; and, sitting down at table with them, he, to convince them of their ignorance, and to raise their attention, and their desire of his instructions, said, Do ye understand the meaning of what I have done to you: And what lessons ye are to learn from it? I'll tell you:

13 Ye call me Master, and Lord: and ye say well: for so I am.

13 Ye often salute me under the title of your Lord and Master, and profess to own me as such, and ye therein do right; for I really am the only Lord of your faith and obedience, and your only teacher, on whose authority ye may depend.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

14 If therefore (v^o) I, who am indeed your Lord and Master, and whom, as such, ye own to be infinitely your superior, have nevertheless condescended to so despicable and troublesome an office, as that of washing your feet, to testify my affection to you; how much more ought ye to be ready, on all occasions*, to stoop to the meanest and most laborious services, for testifying your mutual love, and affording reciprocal assistance to one another,

N O T E.

* We never read that the apostles ever washed the feet of one another, or of any other disciples; and therefore what our Lord here says, is only to be understood of their performing offices to each other, as mean a:

this; but gives no colour for observing this ceremony of feigned humility, by washing people's feet every year on the Thursday of Passion-week.

other, who are all on a level, as fellow-servants and brethren, in my kingdom and family?

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

15 For I have herein designed to set you an example, which is highly worthy of your imitation, that ye should cheerfully attend to every duty of humility, kindness and love, to the refreshment and comfort, purity and welfare of your fellow-christians and fellow-servants, and not be ashamed, or think much of doing any offices to them, as mean and servile as this which I have now done to you.

16 Verily verily I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent, greater than he that sent him.

16 To reconcile you to these self-denying duties, I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that no servant is, or should think himself to be above his Lord, nor should he, who is sent to execute any commission, think himself above his principal who sent him: And therefore, as ye are my servants and apostles, ye ought not to be ashamed, or think it beneath you to condescend as far to others as I have to you. But should learn of me, who am meek and lowly in heart, (*Matth. xi. 29.*)

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

17 Ye may hence receive useful instruction relating to your own duty; and if ye really understand what I mean by all this, it will be your great happiness and comfort, honour and advantage, to practise according to it.

18 I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me.

18 I do not indeed expect that this will be done by every one of you. No, I always was, and still am, fully acquainted with the temper and disposition of all your hearts: Tho' I have chosen you all to the apostleship, (*chap. vi. 70.*) yet, as I but now said, (*ver. 10.*) *ye are not all clean*; I know * which of you I have chosen to faith, holiness, and salvation, as well as to the apostolic office: But there is one among you †, whom I have not chosen to grace and glory, but have taken into the apostleship, and left to the free choice of his own perverse will, that what the scripture says of *David*, my type, (*Psal. xlii. 9.*) may be eminently fulfilled in me, *viz.* He who, like a friend, sat at table, and familiarly eat with me, (*see the note on Mark xiv. 20.*) has turned his back upon me, and with an ingratitude, enmity and contempt, worse than that of brutes to their masters that feed them, has spurned and kicked at me to kill me.

19 Now

N O T E S.

* It is manifest to me, that Christ here means a more peculiar and beneficial election than to the order of apostles; for he had chosen them all to this: But he here speaks of a discriminating choice of some of them, which did not extend to them all, and particularly to *Judas*: And to shew that his knowing whom he had chosen, related not to their temper and disposition, but to the persons

themselves, he did not say, I know, *where*, what their qualities are, but *ye*, the persons, whom I have chosen.

† Expositors generally consider this passage as elliptical; accordingly I have supplied what may be wanting to fill up the sentence, with what I take to be most naturally suggested by the foregoing words.

19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

19 Now I tell you of this beforehand, that, when the rest of you come to see the shocking event, ye may not be discouraged or stumbled at it; but, on the contrary, may be the more established in your belief, that I am the true Messiah, who foresaw the end from the beginning, and willingly yielded myself up to the worst of usage, according to the appointment of my Father, and this divine prediction, which was herein to be accomplished in me.

20 Verily verily I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me: and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

20 And further to take off their discouragement as if their stooping so low as he had ordered them, and as if one of their own number's so openly acting against him, would bring them under contempt, he said to them, I, who am faithful and true, assure you, that he who loves and honours any ambassador of mine, and receives his testimony concerning me, shall be looked upon and esteemed, as shewing the same regard to my one person; and he that embraces me, by faith and love, as the only true Messiah, does, in effect, receive my Father himself who sent me.

21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

21 When Jesus had said these things to his disciples, to prepare them for the further discoveries he was going to make of the traitor, and to caution the traitor himself, that he might still have room for repentance, and be left inexcusable for want of it; he shewed a more than ordinary trouble and concern of mind, not merely at his own sufferings, but at the horrid wickedness and ingratitude of Judas, who was thereby bringing the most dreadful destruction upon himself: And, speaking with great earnestness, he said, I, who am Truth itself, assure you, that one of your number, who has been all along a witness of my life and miracles, and whom I have chosen to be one of my apostles, and laid under the highest obligations, will nevertheless basely deliver me into the hands of mine enemies, who will put me to death.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

22 Then every disciple, except the bardned Judas, being struck with horror and amazement at so solemn a declaration, looked round about one upon another, to observe what signs of guilt might appear among them; they being at a loss, and anxiously concerned (απορησάντες) to know which of them he meant, none of them being conscious of any such wicked design in himself, and yet each suspecting his own, rather than his brother's heart.

23 Now there was

23 Now while they were in this solicitous suspense, one of them *, who was a peculiar favourite of Jesus's, fat

N O T E.

* This was the apostle John himself, who wrote this Gospel, but in modesty concealed

his own name, when he spoke of the disciple whom Jesus loved.

was leaning on Jesus before one of his disciples whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25 He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And, when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

27 And after the sop Susan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

sat next to him, leaning backwards with his head upon his Lord's breast, according to the usual posture at the passover.

24 Simon Peter therefore, being desirous to know, and yet afraid to ask Christ publicly whom he meant, made a private sign, as persons use to do, by winking, nodding, or pointing with the hand, to put that disciple upon asking him, which of them it was that he had said would be guilty of this abominable crime?

25 Accordingly that disciple, having a fair opportunity for it by being so near to Jesus, spoke to him softly, saying in an humble manner, Lord, may I have the favour of knowing which of us is the person, that will betray thee?

26 Jesus replied in a whisper, so as not to be heard by the rest of the company, (*ver.* 28.) It is he to whom I shall give the next piece of sopped bread, as soon as I have dipped it in the sauce *: And presently after this, dipping a piece of bread, he gave it directly to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, as an indication to John that this was the man.

27 And as soon as Judas had taken and eat the sop †, the devil got such a prevalence over his carnal heart, as to engage him in a thorough resolution to set about executing his perfidious design out of hand: And Jesus knowing this, said to him, Whatsoever you are resolved to do, take your own course as soon as you will, I am ready, and will no longer keep you under restraint.

28 Now as the disciple to whom Christ had intimated by which of them he should be betrayed, did not apprehend that it would be so soon; and as the rest at table did not know that Judas was the man; so none of them understood what Jesus meant by these words, and some mistook his design in them.

29 For

NOTES.

* This dipping of the sop is, I think, to be distinguished from, and seems to have been after the dipping of the hand in the dish, which is mentioned in *Matth.* xxvi. 23. and *Mark* xiv. 30. when Christ said, *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me; and it is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish:* For that was spoken openly to them all, but this privately to John; that related to Judas's dipping in the dish with our Lord, but this to Christ's dipping the sop, and giving it to Judas; that was a more indeterminate signal, answering to, and probably at the same time with what he said, (*ver.* 28.) *He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me,* but this was determinate, and directly pointing

out Judas himself as the very person whom he meant.

† Perhaps Judas might have some suspicion, as if Christ's giving him the sop was designed to mark him out as the person he spoke of, and so was the more furiously enraged against him: However, Satan, seeing this to be a fit opportunity to execute the villainous design, worked more powerfully in this son of perdition now, than ever before, (see the note on *ver.* 2.) and, leading him captive at his will, prevailed upon him to set about it without delay. And his going immediately upon this, (*ver.* 30.) seems to intimate, that Judas went out before the celebration of the Lord's supper. See the note on *Luke* xxii. 21.

29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or that he should give something to the poor.

30 He then, having received the sop, went immediately out: and it was night.

31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

33 Little children, yet a little while

29 For, as their little stock was committed to Judas's custody, they apprehended, either that Jesus gently reproved him for neglecting the duty of his office, and ordered him to provide the things that were necessary for the following days of the feast, (see the note on ver. 1.) or else that he * ordered him to distribute something, without delay, in a way of charity to the poor.

30 Then Judas, having eat the sop, forthwith left the company, and, being under the power of Satan and his own corruptions, went away to the sanhedrim to get assistance for apprehending Jesus, who he supposed would soon be moving to his usual place of retirement: And by this time night came on, so that it was dark.

31 When therefore Judas was gone out of the house, Jesus, knowing the business he went about, said to the rest of the disciples, Now the hour is just at hand, when I, the Messiah, shall † be glorious in the work of redemption, and in the conquest that I shall obtain over sin, Satan, and all the powers of darkness, by my death; and shall be glorious in performing my engagements to the Father; in my zeal for his glory, and love to his people; and in the exercise of every grace, and of all divine power to support me under, and carry me honourably through the awful scene that lies before me: And God the Father will be glorified in and by me, as all his perfections will be exalted, with united harmony, in the humble self-abasement, obedience, sufferings and death, which I, in the form of a servant, so freely submit to.

32 And since God the Father will be thus highly glorified in and by me, he will honour me in my sufferings with amazing signs and wonders, and with testimonies to me, which shall be extorted from mine enemies themselves, and will gloriously reward me afterwards in my resurrection, ascension; and exaltation at his right hand; he will glorify me in my own person, and (ἐξορίσει αὐτὸν ἐν αὐτῷ) will glorify me with himself, by admitting me, even in my human nature, to full communion with him in his majesty and glory; and this he will do speedily, and in a right way, (εὐθεὶς) as is most becoming himself and me.

33 My dear children, whose faith is weak, but whom I affectionately love, it is but a very little time that I shall

N O T E.

* It is probable that at the passover-feast our Lord had used to order a distribution of alms to the poor, as far as their scanty circumstances would admit of it.

† This evidently relates to the glory that

belonged to his dying in such a holy and victorious manner, as he did, and not to the honour his Father put upon him, which is distinguished from it, and spoken of as most consequent to it, in the next verse.

while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and, as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come; so now I say unto you.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow

shall continue in the body with you: When I am gone, ye will be earnestly desirous of being with me; but as I once and again have told the unbelieving Jews absolutely, (*chap. vii. 34. and viii. 21.*) so I tell you for the present, (*ver. 36.*) that ye cannot as yet come to the blessed state whither I am going.

34 In the mean while, I, your dying Lord and Master, authoritatively leave, and bind upon you, one great commandment, in a particular manner, which indeed is not in itself a new one*, but is sadly corrupted, and almost forgot and lost; I therefore enjoin it upon you by a new example, and with new explications, motives and inforcements, that it may be observed with a new spirit and temper, and in a new manner, as a fundamental law of my kingdom, and may be ever fresh in your minds and hearts, and written there by the Spirit of the New Testament, as a most excellent command, which shall be eternally as much in force, as if it were always new: And this commandment is, that ye mutually love one another, not in a common way merely as men, but in an affectionate, sympathizing, self-denying and beneficent manner as my disciples, in imitation, and under a sense of my love to you, in the greatness of which I have freely suffered many things already, and am going even to die for you.

35 This is the honourable badge of your holy profession of my name; and all that see and observe you, whether they be friends or enemies, shall know that ye are indeed my disciples, partakers of my Spirit, and bearing mine image, if ye thus cordially love one another, and shew it on all occasions, after my example, for my sake, and in obedience to my command.

36 *Simon Peter* being more impressed with what Jesus had said (*ver. 33.*) about his going whither the disciples could not come, than about their loving one another, said to him in an abrupt manner, Lord, I beseech thee to let us know † where it is that thou talkest of going from us to set up thy kingdom? Jesus answered, I tell you again that I am going, where you are not at present

N O T E S.

* This cannot be understood as a commandment absolutely new, since our Lord himself had said before, (*Matth. xxii. 39, 40.*) that to love our neighbour as ourselves, is one of the two great commandments, on which hang all the law and the prophets; and our Evangelist speaks of loving one another, as an old commandment, which we had from the beginning, (*1 John ii. 7.* compared with *2 John v. 5.*); not only from the beginning of Christ's ministry, but even from the beginning of the world, ever since mankind had

able a being; and from the beginning of the law, ever since it was delivered to *Israel*, it being a fundamental law of nature, which runs through all dispensations, according to the various relations in which we stand one to another.

† It seems as if *Peter* thought that Christ, being rejected by the Jews, would go to some other parts of the earth to erect his throne, where he might reign without disturbance, and with great power, according to the carnal notions he had of Christ's kingdom.

follow me now : but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily verily I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

able to accompany or follow me ; but you shall follow me in proper time hereafter, when I have done my work by you, and strengthened your faith for treading in my suffering steps.

37 *Peter*, not well knowing what Christ meant, replied with a sincere, but self-confident and rash zeal, Lord, what is the reason that I cannot follow thee now, as well as at any time hereafter? I am fully resolved to embark in all difficulties with thee, even to the laying down of my very life, rather than desert thee : What then should hinder my going along with thee, wherever it be?

38 To this Jesus, who knew him better than he knew himself, answered again, to humble and warn him, Will you risque, and even sacrifice your life for me? alas! *Peter*, you are too self-confident; I, who speak the truth, assuredly tell you before-hand, that, notwithstanding this vain boast, you will this very night, before the time of cock-crowing is over, shamefully deny a first, a second, and third time, that you are any disciple of mine, or that you ever so much as knew me *, (*Luke* xxii. 34.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How affectionate and abiding is Christ's love to his own people; and how amazingly does he condescend to them, for their instruction and advantage! But we cannot justly pretend to be his disciples, unless he washes us by his blood and Spirit, and we be ready to follow his example of condescension, and to obey his commands, and particularly that great law, which he has so strongly enforced, of loving one another for his sake. How melancholy is the thought that any under a profession of Christ, and under the highest obligations, and the nearest visible relation to him, should lift up the heel against him! And what sad work does Satan make with them, when, being left to their own corruptions, he leads them captive at his will! But the Lord knows who are his; and yet how many are the mistakes and defects, how great the ignorance, self-confidence, and rashness, and how dreadful the falls of some, that Christ loves, and that sincerely love him! What need have the best amongst us for daily cleansing from daily sins! And how becoming is it for us to be always humble and modest, to have a godly jealousy over ourselves, and to submit to the wisdom and authority of Christ in whatsoever he says, does, or orders concerning us! And if any thing seems strange and unaccountable at present, let it be our comfort, that what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. In the mean while, we can never have too high thoughts of Christ, whose presence is our greatest joy,

and

N O T E.

* The substance of these passages is related in *Luke* xxii. 33, 34, 39, as well as in our Evangelist, before Christ's going out of the house to the mount of Olives: But a discourse to the same purpose is mentioned after it in *Matth.* xxvi. 30, 33, 34, 35. (See the note there) and *Mark* xiv. 26, 29,—31. It therefore seems as if this were a conversation that passed a little before that related by *Matthew* and *Mark*, unless we suppose them to have

a little neglected the order of time there, as in some other places, that they might throw things of a like nature together. But those learned men that think the supper, which our Evangelist speaks of in this chapter, was a night or two before the paschal supper, must suppose that his account of what passed between Christ and *Peter*, about that apostle's denying him, is entirely different in time from that of all the other Evangelists.

and whose absence our greatest grief; whose authority is incontestible; who is intimately acquainted with the most secret dispositions of our hearts, and not only knows what we now are, but what we shall be and do; who is glorious even in his sufferings and death, by which his Father was highly glorified; and who is now exalted to all the grandeur of his throne and kingdom! He will honour his servants that honour him, and will regard those that receive his messengers, as if they received himself and his Father; and though they, like him, may meet with treacherous usage from their nearest intimates, and with other sufferings for his sake, it will not be long before they will follow him to glory, and be ever with the Lord.

C H A P. XIV.

The beginning of Christ's farewell sermon, in which he comforts his disciples under their troubles with promises of heaven, 1,—5. Speaks of himself as the way to the Father, and of his own being one with him, 6,—12. Assures his disciples that he will answer the prayers, which they offer up in his name, 13, 14. Promises another Comforter, and gracious manifestations of himself, and of the Father, 15,—24. Repeats the promise of the Comforter, bequeathes a legacy of peace to them, and concludes the first part of his discourse, 25,—31.

TEXT.

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER Judas was gone away, (*chap. xiii. 31.*) our Lord said to the eleven apostles, Take heed that your hearts be not discomposed and terrified at my approaching ignominy and death; or at what I said about the traitor, (*chap. xiii. 21.*) as if I meant any of you; nor be ye disheartened at what I told you, about your soon losing my corporal presence, (*chap. xiii. 33.*); or at the disappointment ye will thereupon meet with in your secular expectations from me, and the dangers ye will be exposed to for my sake: Ye have already * faith in God, according to the revelations that are made of him in the Old Testament; and ye have faith in me, as his own Son and the Messiah, according to the discoveries that in my ministry, and by my Spirit, have been made of me; this ought to quiet your fears: Labour now,

N O T E.

* The verb *crede* is in both parts of the sentence is the same, and equally belongs to the indicative and imperative mood, and so admits of various constructions. But it seems most natural not to render it in one part of the sentence indicatively and in the other imperatively, as in our translation; but either indicatively or imperatively in both, as I have put it in the Paraphrase, that the reader may take his choice: Or, if he likes it better, he may follow our version, according to which our blessed Lord owns with commendation, that the disciples did believe in God,

as manifested in the Old Testament, and enjoins them to believe in himself, as manifested, and to be still further manifested, in all his divine and saving characters under the New. But which ever way we take it, Christ here speaks of himself as the object of the same divine faith equally with the Father; and therefore though he is to be considered as a distinct person from the Father, and under a distinct notion as the Messiah, who was sent by the Father; yet he is not distinguished from him as God, or as excluded from sharing in Godhead with him.

now, in a special manner, to live in the daily exercise of faith in God the Father, and of the same divine faith in me; and this will be an effectual means of your support and comfort, under all the troubles, that now fill your hearts, or are coming upon you.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

2 For in heaven, where my Father dwells in the highest manifestations of himself, there are many delightful abodes, as many as there are sons to be brought to glory; and there are some particularly for you, that ye may have eternal rest and satisfaction, after all the toils and troubles of time; if it were otherwise, such is my faithfulness and affection to you, that I would certainly have undeceived you as I often have, when ye vainly expected temporal dignities and possessions from me: But the very business and design of my departure, by death to heaven, is to procure a right of admission to it, by the merit of my atoning blood, for you, to take possession of it as a forerunner in your names, and to dispose of things in the best manner, and get them ready against your arrival thither.

3 And if I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

3 And (1st) when, or as surely, as I go in this manner, to provide a blessed residence there for you, (παύω ἑαυτὸν) I will quickly return by my Spirit to take care of you, and to fit you for that heavenly habitation; and I will receive your souls at death, and your whole persons at my second appearing, into my immediate presence, for intimate fellowship and communion with me, that where I already am in my divine nature, and very soon shall be in my human nature, there ye may likewise be in a state of perfect freedom, honour, and delight.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

4 And, by what I have now, and formerly said to you, ye have been told, and may know, both the place to which I am going and the way, in which ye hereafter are to follow me thither.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

5 Thomas, who was apt to be of a doubtful and unbelieving heart, (chap. xx. 25, 27.) and could not get rid of his notions about temporal dominion, replied, Lord, notwithstanding all that thou hast said, we are still at a loss about the place to which thou art going; how is it possible then, that we should know the way of following thee thither?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth,

6 Jesus answered him, I, myself, am the * only true and living medium of intercourse between heaven and earth,

N O T E.

* Some suppose that Christ here useth the figure *Henriadis*, to denote that he is the true and living way, according to what the apostle speaks of believers, *having boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a*

new and living way, which he has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. (Heb. x. 19, 20.) I have accordingly given this sense a place in the Paraphrase.

truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

earth, and of your finding acceptance with God, and receiving grace to advance you to eternal blessedness; I am the *Way*, as by my own blood I am entering into the holy place, and shall thereby open a way for you to follow me; I am the *Truth*, as all the legal types and shadows are fulfilled in me, and as I, the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, teach you the sure way to heaven and glory: And I am the *Life*, as I have life in myself, and am the author of spiritual and eternal life, to all that believe in me: So that no man, in his fallen state, can make any acceptable approach in worship to the Father, or have any comfortable communion with him, by faith, and love here, or have a personal entrance into his immediate and blessed presence hereafter, in any other way than by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

7 And as for the Father, to whom I tell you I am going, had ye clearly understood what I am in my divinity, as well as human nature, ye must have known who and what my Father is, he and I being in nature and essential properties one, (*chap. x. 30.*): And from this time forward ye begin, and shall go on to know more of him, and indeed, ye have already seen more of him in me, and in the manifestations that I have made of the divine power and goodness, than ye are aware of.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

8 Hereupon *Philip*, another of the apostles, whose faith had a great mixture of unbelief, (*chap. vi. 7.*) said to him, Lord, if thou wilt but please to give us some visible representation of the Father, as God used sometimes to give of himself, in extraordinary visions to the ancient prophets, this will entirely satisfy all our doubts, and silence all our fears.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, shew us the Father?

9 Jesus replied, in a way of gentle rebuke, Have I been upwards of three years daily and familiarly conversing with you all? And what, *Philip*, art thou, who wast one of my first disciples, (*chap. i. 43, 44.*) still ignorant of my original nature? I tell thee, that whoever is duly acquainted with me, has seen such divine perfections manifesting themselves in my person, ministry and miracles, that he cannot be ignorant of the Father; but has seen such lively displays of his nature and excellencies in me, who am the express image of his person, as exceed all former visible representations, which in their main design, were only so many types and shadows of what now appears in me: How strange is it then, that, after so long acquaintance with me, thou shouldst desire me to shew you the Father, in order to your satisfaction and comfort?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works sake.

12 Verily verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me the works that I do shall be do

10 What! Dost thou not yet believe, that I and my Father are so essentially united, as to be inseparable, though distinct persons from each other, and that we have such intimate communion in Godhead, as imports a real and mutual, though incomprehensible inbeing? Then, turning his discourse from *Philip* to all the disciples, he, to help the infirmity of their faith, said, This, as well as every other doctrine that I deliver to you, I speak not merely of myself, as if it were a private sentiment of my own, apart from the Father; but he who, I say, inseparably abides in me, exerts the same divine power with me in performing the miraculous works which I have wrought to confirm it.

11 Believe me then, upon mine own divine authority, who am the Truth, (*ver. 6.*) that my Father and I have an essential and inseparable being one in the other, as I have said: But (*ὅτι μὴ*) if ye do not believe me merely upon the credit of my own word, let the very works*, which I perform in a divine Godlike manner, satisfy you, that I exert no less power, than that of God the Father himself, in bringing them to pass.

12 Then returning to his design of comforting them, (*ver. 1.*) he said with great solemnity, I faithfully assure you, that he who truly believes in me, according to the declaration I have made of myself, shall be highly favoured in this world, as well as for ever blessed with me in the next: For he shall be enabled to do, not only the same sort of works, in healing the sick, casting out devils, restoring sight to the blind, and raising the dead, as I now perform, † during my abode on

N O T E S.

* It seems to me, that Christ's referring to his works here, as often elsewhere, respects not merely his miracles themselves, but his sovereign Godlike way of performing them by his own divine power, which was the same in him as in the Father: Otherwise those works themselves were no proof of his being in the Father, and the Father in him, or of the Father's dwelling in him, in any higher sense than the same might be affirmed of the apostles, who, he says in the next verse, should do the same, and greater works than these: Much less could it be said, that he who had seen him had also seen the Father, unless he had been partaker of the same nature with the Father, and had, in his acting like a divine person, exerted the very same power as resides in the Father himself, and that in such an absolute way as the Father himself would have done it, had he appeared personally and visibly among men: For nothing like this was ever said of the apostles, or any other

were man, because they acted not by their own, but by Christ's power.

† Here our Lord accurately speaks of the works, which he then wrought, saying, in the present tense, (*ἃ ἔγω εὐνοῶ*) which I do: For he was likewise the author of those greater works, that the apostles were afterwards to do, because he went to the Father to exercise all power at his right hand: And these greater works might partly respect one apostle's working miracles, merely by his shadow, and another by handkerchiefs carried from his body, (*Acts* v. 15. and xix. 12. but principally their speaking all sorts of languages, for the propagation of the gospel among all nations, and the wonderful power of the Holy Ghost, that attended their ministrations, for the conversion of three thousand at once, and afterwards of innumerable multitudes of Jews and Gentiles, for many succeeding years together, beyond all that was ever done by Christ's personal ministry.

do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

on earth; but he shall be an instrument in my hand, of doing still greater works than these, with longer continuance, and wider extent, among *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, and with more remarkably happy effects, to the conversion of vast multitudes of both, through all nations of the world; because I go to be enthroned in glory, and to exercise all power at the Father's right hand.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask, upon the foot of my warrant and promise, with humble dependence on my wisdom and power, faithfulness and grace, and on my merit and advocacy, that ye may honour me; I will certainly perform it in answer to your prayers, that the Father himself may thereby manifest his glorious perfections, in my gracious and almighty operations, and through my obedience and sufferings, who am his own Son.

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

14 Whatsoever ye, I say, making mention of my name, shall in this manner pray for, that may be for the glory of God and your good, and particularly for your assistance and acceptance, support, encouragement and success in your work; I will not only take care that it be done, but I myself will certainly do it, as working together with my Father therein.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

15 Since therefore these will be some of the principal fruits of my departure, If ye indeed love me, give proof of it, not by being troubled at the thoughts of losing my company, and your secular expectations from me, which self-love will prompt you to, but in having a conscientious respect to all my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

16 And, for your encouragement herein, I, as your High-priest and Advocate, will intercede effectually with my Father for you; and he will join with me, (*chap. xv. 26.*) in sending you * another counsellor, advocate, and Comforter, to supply the want of my corporal presence, in instructing, assisting, and exciting you to every duty, in pleading your cause against your adversaries,

N O T E.

* The Spirit is here evidently spoken of as a distinct person from Christ: He was one *Paraclete*, and the Spirit, who after his departure should come from the Father, was another, (*ἄλλος*) another person, though not (*ἄλλος*) another being, nor (*ἄλλος*) a different sort of Comforter; the Son and Spirit being one in essence with the Father; and the Spirit being the same sort of divine Comforter as Christ himself had been to his disciples. The verb *παράκλησις* signifies to exhort, comfort, intreat, and plead; and the word *παράκλητος*, derived from thence,

is most commonly used to signify an advocate that pleads another's cause: But as all that the Spirit does of this kind, is in a comfortable manner for the assistance and relief of his servants and people, he may be properly enough styled the *Comforter*, with regard to his work therein, as well as with regard to the divine consolations that he affords believers, under all their troubles, by shedding abroad God's love in their hearts, and witnessing with their spirits, that they are the children of God, and heirs of glory.

ries, and in comforting you under all your tribulations, that he may continue with you, nor, as I have done, for a little while only, but thro' every period, and in every turn and difficulty of life, till he shall conduct you safe, thro' death itself, to an eternal abode with me in glory.

17 Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

17 The Divine agent I mean is the Holy Spirit, who, being of the same nature with the Father and me, is likewise Truth itself, may be depended upon for his faithfulness, and is the author and teacher of all truth: The carnal men of this world, remaining such, cannot indeed entertain or embrace him, because they have no true knowledge of him, nor are well-affected toward him: But ye, who are enlightened, and renewed by his operation upon your hearts, are already in some measure experimentally acquainted with him: For he at present dwells, and works, and manifests himself in you, as his living temples, by his gracious, as well as miraculous influence, and in a little time he will work and manifest himself in you, with increasing light, and power, and consolation.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

18 Thus, though I am going from you by death, I will not leave you destitute and exposed, friendless, and forlorn, as if ye were fatherless children (*ορφανος*); I will soon take opportunities of visiting you again in person, and, after I am gone to the Father, will return by my Spirit, to your great relief and exceeding joy.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more: but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

19 It is but a very little while before the men of this world, who rejected, despised, and abused me, shall no more see me on earth, as they have for years past: But I will appear in person again to you, my beloved disciples, that ye may see me alive after my passion; and because I am the living one in my divine nature, and shall rise to a glorious and immortal life in my human nature, and shall always live in heaven, as the head of the body; ye, my members, shall likewise live spiritually, in conformity to me, and by virtue derived from me here, and eternally with me hereafter; in a state of justification, sanctification, and consolation in this world, and of glorification in the next.

20 At that day ye

20 Then, * when I am risen as your head and representative, and as a triumphant conqueror over sin and Satan, death and hell, and over all your and mine enemies, ye shall begin more clearly to apprehend; and, by the subsequent effusion of my Spirit, shall understand with

N O T E.

* That day may relate to the day when he should appear to them after his resurrection, by which he would be declared to be the Son

of God with power; or to the day, when he would send his Spirit to them; or to the day when they should live with him in heaven.

ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me : and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot), Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world ?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me he will keep my words : and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings :

* Some think that Judas, according to his notions of the temporal dominion and glory of the Messiah, spoke of Christ's personally appearing only to the apostles, under the power of ignorance, prejudice, and concern at the disappointment they were thereby like to meet with in their expectations of secular honour and advantages from him : But as nothing like this appears in his words, or in Christ's answer, I take them to be the language of holy admiration, according to the sense given in the Paraphrase.

with still plainer evidence ; and, at your coming to live with me in glory, shall know best of all, that I have the essential union with my Father which I have been speaking of, (ver. 9, 10, 11.) and that ye have a mystical and vital union with me by my Spirit, which, as I said, (ver. 17.) dwells in you, and shall be in you, to secure your living by and with me.

21 Every true believer who, by virtue of this union with me, not only hears, but heartily receives my commandments, and faithfully observes them, is one that sincerely loves, and shews his love to me : And he, who in this manner loves me, shall be accepted, approved of, and delighted in, by my Father for my sake ; and I, whose heart is the same with my Father's, will likewise approve of him, and delight in him, and will make rich discoveries of myself, and of my special love and favour to him.

22 Hereupon Judas, not he who was called Iscariot, and was gone out of the company before this, (chap. xiii. 31.) but another apostle of that name, who was the brother of James, (Luke vi. 16.) cried out with amazement, saying *, Lord, how astonishing, condescending and endearing is this, and how contrary to our desires, that thou shouldst thus graciously make thyself known, and shew thy peculiar favour to us, and not to the generality of the world ! (τὴν κοινότητα) What wonderful kindness is this to us, rather than to them !

23 Jesus, in reply, said to him, If any one sincerely loves me, this, as I told you, (ver. 21.) will engage him to receive my doctrine, and keep my commands : And such an one is a proper subject for, and shall be favoured with peculiar† manifestations, not only of mine, but likewise of my Father's love ; and we will multiply tokens of our special presence with him, by our word, ordinances, and Spirit, and continue to hold free and intimate communion with him, as in the spiritual house and temple, which we take pleasure to dwell in.

24 On the other hand, he, who does not heartily love me, has no conscientious regard to my doctrines or

N O T E S.

com-

† Judas's question was not, Lord, how is it that thou wilt love us ; but that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world ? Accordingly Christ's answer is to be understood, rather of the tokens and discoveries of his own and his Father's love, than of the love itself. But which ever way we take it, what he says here, and in the following chapter, on the like subject, is to be considered as characteristic of the objects of his and the Father's love, and not as the cause of their loving them.

ings: and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

24 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and

commands, and so is unfit for, and shuts himself out from these special privileges: And as the doctrine which I preach is not merely mine, but is likewise the word and command of my Father himself, who sent me to discharge the Messiah's office, neither he nor I will dwell and commune with, or manifest ourselves to him that disrelishes and rejects it.

25 These things have I delivered for your present comfort and encouragement, according to your capacities of receiving them, and as the little time would admit, which remains for my being personally present with you.

26 But after my departure, when the Holy Spirit shall come, who is that other guide, advocate, and Comforter, whom I mentioned, (*ver.* 16. see the note there) and whom the Father will certainly send, according to my merit and intercession, in my room, and as my agent, to promote my honour, and carry on my work; He shall lead you into a more clear and extensive knowledge of all truths, that are needful for yourselves to know, or for you to preach to others; and he shall revive the remembrance of all the particulars which ye have heard from me, that ye may fully apprehend and understand them, and know how to make a proper and seasonable use of them.

27 In the mean time †, I, like an affectionate and dying friend, take my farewell of you; and prosperity of the noblest kind, even peace with God, with one another, and in your own souls, is the blessing that I leave to you; my peace, which is such as I myself enjoy, and which I am the purchaser and author of, I freely give to you: I say this, not in a way of formal compliment, like the men of this world, who, at parting, only wish their friends happiness and peace; but I heartily and effectually leave the blessing itself behind me: Nor is what I bequeath and bestow of such little value, and uncertain tenure, as the best legacies are that they can leave; but it is such a sort of peace as passes all understanding, and as nothing in this world can either give, or take away from you. Therefore, as I said before, (*ver.* 1.) let not your hearts be discomposed with grief and terror, at the thoughts of my departure from you; nor be ye afraid of any difficulty or distress, that may befall you after I am gone to the Father.

28 I have already said that I am just ready to leave you,

N O T E.

† Christ's taking this leave of his disciples may either refer to the custom of friends at parting, or of a father or friend at leaving

this world; and therefore I have kept up both these views in the Paraphrase.

and come again unto you. If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

you, but that it is with a design of returning, to receive you to my Father's house and kingdom, that ye may be with me there, (*ver. 3.*) If then your love to me were truly spiritual, regular, and considerate, ye would be so far from being disturbed and grieved at my departure, that ye would rejoice for my sake and your own; because I told you that I am going to my Father, where I, as man and mediator, shall be possessed of the utmost blessedness, and of all power in heaven and earth, to exercise it for your advantage: For in the oeconomy of salvation, in which I act the part of the Messiah as my Father's servant, he is ^{*} greater than I, and will reward my obedience and sufferings, by exalting my incarnate person to reign with him in glory.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye might believe.

29 And I have told you of these things before-hand, that when ye see them accomplished by my death, and ascension to heaven, and by an effusion of the Spirit, in consequence thereof, ye may be the more confirmed in your belief, that I am the true Messiah, both able and willing to perform all my promises to you.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

30 The time wears off so fast, that I shall have little opportunity of saying much more to you before my death: For Satan, who in his former temptations pretended to offer me the kingdoms of this world, as if he had the disposal of them, (*Luke iv. 5,—7.*) and who works powerfully in the hearts of its princes and rulers, as well as in every child of disobedience, is just now making his last effort, by stirring up his evil instruments to unite stratagem and force for murdering me. And after all, he can find no corruption in me to work upon by his temptations, or to give him power over me; nor can he answer his own ends by all that he is able to do against me, who by dying shall destroy his kingdom, glorify my Father, and redeem my people; nor can he prevail against me, to bring about my death itself, without my own free consent.

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father:

31 But to make it evident to the whole world, and particularly to my disciples in it, that I love my Father, and

N O T E.

* It is evident that our Lord does not here speak of his Father as greater than himself, with respect to his divine nature and person, simply considered: For in the Deity there is neither greater nor less; and he had said that his Father and he were one, and had called himself the Son of God in such a sense, as to make himself, properly God, (*chap. x. 30,—36.*); he had likewise in this discourse (*ver. 9, 10.*) asserted, that his Father and he were one in another, in such a manner, that he who saw the Son, saw the Father also; and in a following part of his discourse he

says, (*chap. xvi. 15.*) All things that the Father hath are mine: But he is to be understood, as speaking of himself here only in that sense in which he was going to the Father; and that was in his human nature and mediatorial character, or as the incarnate Messiah: And whilst he was speaking of himself in this character, it was becoming both his Father and himself, and was suitable to his then present state of humiliation, and his care to honour his Father, that he should say, My Father is greater than I.

ther : and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

and that as I, in the quality of his servant, have received a command from him to lay down my life for the sheep, (*chap. x. 15, 18.*) so I am heartily willing to testify my love by my obedience. Come, let us rise up from table, and go away from hence to the garden where mine enemies are coming to apprehend me. (*chap. xviii. 1, &c.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a safe and suitable object of faith, is Christ, who neither will, nor can deceive us ! All divine perfections shine in him, as the Son of his Father's own likeness ; and there is no knowing God, or believing in him to saving advantage, nor any coming with acceptance and comfort to him, or getting to heaven, but by this great Mediator. How equally is he possessed of deity with the Father ; and yet how amazingly did he condescend to take upon him the saving office in our nature, with regard to which his Father is greater than he ! And how freely in the discharge of this office, and in the greatness of his love, did he obey his Father's will, in yielding himself up to sufferings and death, while no powers of hell and earth could have brought him to them without his own consent ! And as Satan found nothing in him to work upon ; so how signally were his designs defeated by the death of Christ, who rose again to an immortal life, and went to be glorified with the Father ! And what a confirmation is it to our faith to see these things which our blessed Lord foretold, so exactly accomplished according to his word ! He has now opened a new and living way to God and glory ; and there is no room for his disciples to be troubled or afraid, but the greatest reason for them to rejoice, since he, who was dead, is alive again, and is gone in their nature to heaven, to provide delightful mansions for them, and secure their interest there : And because he lives, they shall live also ; he doth not leave them comfortless while they are in this world, but gives them the noblest and sweetest peace to over-balance all their sorrows : he and his Father will dwell in, and commune with them that love him, will send his Spirit to guide, assist, and comfort them all the days of their lives, and will answer the prayers that they present with faith in his name ; and he will come again, and receive them into his own glorious presence at death and judgment, that where he is, there they may be with him for ever : He will give them an experimental knowledge of their vital union with himself, in gradual discoveries of it by his Spirit here, till at length they shall clearly understand, and be fully satisfied about it in heaven, where they shall likewise know more of his essential union with the Father, than they can now conceive. O what matter of admiration is it, that he should thus manifest himself to any of us, and not unto the world ! But as ever we desire further discoveries and indulgences of his grace, we should affectionately love him, and show our love, by faithfully keeping his commands, and cheerfully following him wherever he calls us, saying, *Arise, let us go hence.*

C H A P. XV.

A continuation of Christ's farewell sermon, in which he speaks of himself and his disciples under the similitude of a vine and its branches, 1.—7. Commands them to abound in fruits of holiness, and particularly in love one to another, by virtue of their union with him, 8,

—17. And comforts them against the hatred and persecutions of the world, 18,—27.

TEXT.

I Am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

PARAPHRASE.

OUR Lord and his disciples having rose from table in the guest-chamber, where he had celebrated his last passover, and the New Testament-supper, (*Matth.* xxvi. 26,—30.); he, immediately * after this, (*chap.* xviii. 1.) ; went on with his discourse, explaining more at large what he had hinted, (*chap.* xiv. 20.) about their vital union with himself, saying, In my peculiar relation to the church, I, as the fountain of spiritual influence, and the great medium of conveying it to its members, am, by way of eminence and excellence, like the root and stock of a generous vine, which forms and communicates sap for the production and life, nourishment and fruitfulness of its branches: And my heavenly Father, who sent me for this purpose into the world, and takes care of me and my true members, is like an husbandman, who plants, and has a peculiar property in, and watchful concern about his vine and its branches.

1 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

2 As in the noblest vine some of its branches are barren, and others fruitful, and a wise manager cuts away all those that are superfluous, as doing more harm than good, and, by pruning off the suckers, assists the growth and improvement of the fruitful branches, in order to their bearing still more fruit: So in the visible church there are some members, which are externally united to me, only in profession and appearance, without bringing forth any good fruit; and there are others, which are internally and vitally united, by my Spirit and by faith, to me, and by virtue thereof bear spiritual and holy fruit; and my heavenly Father, in his righteous judgment, cuts off all the hypocritical professors of my name, as unprofitable and injurious; and he in his infinite wisdom uses various methods, to purge away the superfluity of naughtiness, which still remains in true believers themselves, that they may abound yet more

N O T E.

* By comparing this with the places referred to in the Paraphrase, it appears that the discourse and prayer, which follow in this and the two next chapters, passed between the time of Christ's saying in the guest-chamber, *Let us go hence*, and the time of his coming to the brook Cedron. It is indeed uncertain whether this discourse were in the guest-chamber, after he got up from supper, or in the way to the garden, where he was betrayed: But, be that as it will, his having just before drank of the fruit of the vine with the disciples, in the New Testament-ordinance of his supper, (*Matth.* xxvi.

29.) gave a proper occasion for his speaking of himself under the emblem of a vine: Or if he delivered this discourse somewhere in the way to the garden, it probably was in one of the vineyards, which that country abounded with, or at least in sight of a vine: and so he might take a further occasion from thence to speak of himself under the metaphor of a vine, and of the true vine, in distinction from the Old Testament-church, which was often represented under that figure. *Psal.* lxxx. 8,—14, *1st Cor.* x. 1,—7, and *Jer.* ii. 21.

more and more in fruits of holiness and that their end may be everlasting life. (*Rom. vi. 22.*)

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

3 Now, † *Judas* being gone, all of you, my disciples, are of this sort of fruitful branches, and living members in me, ye being already partakers of my Spirit, and your hearts being purified by faith, and by means of my word, which works effectually in you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

4 Go on then to adhere by faith and love to me, (*ver. 9.*) and I will be as a root and source of perpetual supply by my Spirit to you. But as no branch, how lively soever it be, can continue to bear fruit, or bring it to perfection by any vigour in itself, unless it have an abiding union with, and communication from the vine: So neither can ye, (*ver. 12.*) notwithstanding your present attainments in grace, continue to bring forth fruit to God, any otherwise than by a continuance of your union and communion with me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

5 To impress a sense of this important truth the more deeply upon you, I repeat what I said, (*ver. 1.*) that I am in a spiritual and peculiar sense the vine, of which ye, as my members, are the branches, that derive all spiritual life, recruits, and nourishment from me: According to my meaning by this metaphor, he, and he only, who cleaves by faith and love to me, and has my Spirit dwelling in him, (*chap. xiv. 17.*) produces and abounds in spiritual fruit to the glory of God, and to his own and others advantage. For (*χωρίς μου*) separate, or apart from me, and without my continual influence, even ye, my disciples, can do nothing truly good, and acceptable to God, any more than a branch can bud, and blossom, and bring forth fruit, without union with, and communication of sap from the vine.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered: and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

6 If any one, who makes an external profession, and appearance of being my disciple, do not in this manner adhere to me, he is no better than a hypocrite, who shall be cast out of all relation to me and my church, and whose gifts, profession and specious appearances shall wither and die; and all such nominal professors shall be gathered together at the last day, as fit fuel for divine wrath, and cast into everlasting burnings, even as the withered branches of a vine are cut off from it, and men * use to gather them into a bundle, and throw them into the fire to be utterly consumed.

7 If,

N O T E S.

† While *Judas* was with them, Christ said, *Ye are clean, but not all*, (*chap. xiii. 10.*); but now they were rid of his company, Christ told them absolutely, without exception, *Ye are clean through the word, &c.*

* According to some expositors, *Mens gathering withered branches*, signifies hypocritical formal professors being seized by Satan and his agents in this world, that they may bring them to destruction in the next. And according

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye hear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

9 As the Father hath loved me; so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love: even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

7 If, on the contrary, ye stedfastly cleave to me, and I dwell in your hearts by faith, and by means of my word, as a principle that guides and governs, quickens and establishes you: whatsoever ye, as thus abiding in me and depending on me, shall ask according to my will, for the glory of God, and your own edification and fruitfulness, ye shall receive it, even to the utmost of your desires and wants.

8 * By your thus abiding in me, and my abiding in you, and by your petitions being thus granted, the glory of my heavenly Father's wisdom, faithfulness, and grace is exalted, *(ua)* to the end that ye may abound in fruits of righteousness, whereby he may be still further glorified; and so shall ye appear with evidence to others, and to your own consciences, and I will esteem and own you to be my true disciples, that have vital union with me, and are an honour to me. *(um)*

9 For as I myself, considered as the root and medium of all gracious communications to you, am beloved of my Father; so I have a peculiar love for you, as branches united to me, and deriving virtue unto all fruitfulness from me: Let it therefore be your great concern to cleave affectionately, and stedfastly to me, and to be still further approved of, and delighted in by me.

10 And if, from a principle of love, ye cheerfully attend to, and obey my commandments, as your Lord and Saviour, ye shall continue to be approved of me, and to know, for your abundant satisfaction, that I love you; even as I, in my human nature and office-capacity, have cheerfully obeyed my Father's commandments, in fulfilling all righteousness, and am continually approved of him, and know that he loves me.

11 These things have I thus freely and plainly declared to you, that I may rejoice in you as fruitful branches in me, and ye may rejoice in your union with me, and in my abiding love to you; and that, through a supply of my Spirit, ye may have such a fullness of joy to support you under all your troubles, as shall abundantly make up your loss of my corporal presence, and as shall issue in your compleats and everlasting joy with me.

12 Now

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according to others, it signifies their being gathered out of God's kingdom, and cast into hell, by the holy angels, as ministers of justice at the last day: But, as every expression in a parable is not to be strained, hypocrites and unbelievers being cast into everlasting fire to be perpetually tormented there, may be sufficient to answer the design of this part of the parable.

* *Herein* (w. 8. 9.) seems to refer back to

what Christ had been saying concerning himself, as the vine, and believers as branches in him: and *(iva)* *that*, being a final particle, naturally leads one's thoughts to the sense given in the Paraphrase: But, as all our fruits of righteousness are, by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God, I have likewise preserved the thought of God's being glorified by them.

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that

12 Now the great command, which includes many others, and which I insist on your observing as a proof of your sincere affection and discipleship to me, is, as I have said, (*chap. xiii. 34.*) that ye be affectionate, and ready to perform all offices of love one to another for my sake, in consideration, and in imitation of my fervent love to you, which I am going to demonstrate in the highest manner possible.

13 No man can be capable of having a more sincere and hearty love, or of expressing it by an higher instance than this, that where there is occasion for it, he freely put his own life in the stead of the life of his dearest friends and benefactors, and yield himself up to death for their redemption; and this I am about to do for you, as if ye were my most important and worthy friends, though I am neither indebted to you, nor can be profited by you, whom of enemies I have made friends.

14 And ye will approve yourselves to be my friends, whom I esteem as such, if, from a sense of my love to you, ye make conscience of paying a ready and impartial obedience to all my commandments.

15 I might indeed well speak of you, and accordingly treat you, only in the quality of servants: However, I will not keep you at such a distance; for a mere servant does not use to be let into the secrets of his lord and master: But I have conversed, and will deal with you as intimate friends; for as God *would not hide from Abraham, his friend, what he was about to do,* (*Gen. xvii. 17.*) so all my Father's hidden counsels, which I, as mediator and head of the church, have received * in commission from him, to communicate for his glory and their salvation, I have begun to impart, and will proceed by my Spirit to discover still further, with all freedom and plainness to you, that ye may know them for yourselves, and for the good of others, and that none of them may be concealed from you.

16 All this I do, not as if ye were first in your choice of me, or had laid any obligation upon me; but, from my own mere love and grace, I have freely chosen you to salvation †, as well as to the apostleship, and have constituted you to be my friends and servants for this purpose,

N O T E S.

* This cannot possibly mean that Christ's disciples knew, or should know, as much of God's counsels as he himself did; but it evidently relates to what belonged to his commission to declare unto them, in the discharge of which he was faithful to him that appointed him, and withheld nothing from them.

† Judas being now gone, Christ here speaks of his choosing the rest of the disciples, not merely to the apostleship, to which he had chosen Judas as well as them, but likewise of his having chosen them to saving and eternal blessings, through faith and holiness as his friends; accordingly I have given both these considerations a place in the Paraphrase.

that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

purpose, that ye may go out in my name and strength; that by virtue derived from me, as your root, ye may bring forth fruits of righteousness in your lives and ministry; and that ye may persevere therein, till ye and the converts, made by means of your labours, shall propagate my cause for its continuance on earth, and shall arrive safe to heaven; as also that my Father may grant your petitions, in whatsoever ye shall ask to these holy purposes, with faith in my name, as your prevailing advocate and friend.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

17 Now these things I recommend, and enjoin upon you, that ye, after my example, may heartily love one another, as members of the same body, and partakers of the same blessings, and as disciples and friends, as well as servants of the same Lord.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

18 If, according to the original enmity between the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman, (*Gen. iii. 15.*) ye meet with great opposition from men of a carnal spirit, that are wholly devoted to this world, and under the government of Satan, its God; do not wonder, or be discouraged at it: For ye well know that they began with me, and have been as full of spite and rage against your head and chief, (*πρωτος υμων*) as they possibly can be against you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

19 Were ye of the same carnal temper and disposition with the men of this world, soothing and encouraging them in their sinful courses, they would esteem and care for you, as persons of their own party and likeness; but because ye are not conformed to their corrupt principles, manners and customs, but I have, by a peculiar choice, distinguished you from the rest of the world, and set you apart for myself, that ye may exemplify and preach my spiritual and holy gospel; hence it is, that the men of this world have an irreconcilable antipathy to you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than the lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

20 Therefore, to compose your spirits, and silence all murmurings, under the utmost malignity of your enemies against you, reflect seriously and often upon what I have told you, once and again, (*chap. xiii. 16, and Matth. x. 24*) that the servant is neither worthy of, nor is to expect more regard, or better treatment than his lord and master: If then these carnal, worldly-minded men have vented their enmity in all manner of revilings and persecutions of me; no wonder that they will shew the like rancour and severity against you: Just as they have treated my discourses, they will treat your's: If they have * carped and cavilled at my doctrine as deli-

N O T E.

* Several critics have supposed that *κατασπιν* is here used for *απασπιν*, which signi-

fies to observe with a malicious, cavilling intent, *Mark iii. 2. Luke vi. 7, and xiv. 1, and*

vered by me, because it is so contrary to their depraved sentiments, temper and views; it is to be expected, that for the same reason, they will set themselves against it when delivered by you; whereas had they received, the truth in the love of it from me, no doubt but they would do the same from you.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

21 But their utmost hatred, persecutions and opposition will turn against you, on account of your relation to me, as ye bear my name and image, stand up for my honour, profess and publish my gospel; and the reason of their enmity to you on this account is, because they have not a true knowledge of God, nor of his having sent me into the world, to redeem *Israel* from all their iniquities.

22 If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

22 If I indeed had not come and acquainted them with my true character, there would have been no sin in their rejecting me; or if I had done this only in obscure hints, there would have been, comparatively, but little guilt in their refusing to believe in me: But now, since I have appeared among them with the clearest demonstrations of my being the promised Messiah, and have long preached to them with such evident authority and affection, as prove my doctrine to be of God, their sin in disbelieving, opposing, and despising me and my words, is highly aggravated, and they have nothing to plead in excuse for it.

23 He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.

23 And whoever he be that, notwithstanding all this, hates and opposes me, he is really, at heart, no better than an enemy to my heavenly Father, who sent me, and has given public testimony to me, as his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen, and hated both me and my Father.

24 Furthermore, had I not, together with my divine doctrines, performed such merciful and miraculous works among this people, to confirm them, as neither *Moses*, nor the prophets, nor any other man ever wrought, especially in such a sovereign, Godlike manner, as I performed them, they might still have had some pretence of excusing their infidelity, or at least of lessening its guilt: But they now continuing obstinately to persist in it, after they themselves have been eye-witnesses of those my numerous and undoubted credentials, and of my Father's acting with and by me, it is plain, that their rejecting me, proceeds from a rooted aversion in their

N O T E.

xx. 26. But others, not finding that the word is ever thus used, especially in this Evangelist, take it in an ironical sense, as strongly intimating that the Jews had not kept his words, nor would they those of the apostles: And as in all the context our Lord is speak-

ing of the opposition, that was made to him and would be made to his disciples after him it seems as if this clause were to be understood, of rejecting his doctrine. But that the reader may have his option, I have put it both ways in the paraphrase.

their wicked hearts, to the holiness and authority both of my Father and me ; so that their sin is exceedingly aggravated, and they are altogether without excuse.

25 But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

25 But ye need not be stumbled at this : For their wilful obstinacy and prejudices have been suffered to work in this manner, that another character of the Messiah might be fulfilled in me, according to what is said in the sacred writings, (see the note on chap. x. 34.) where *David*, my type, complained with a prophetic view to the sufferings of the Messiah, (*Psal.* xxiv. 19. and lxix. 4.) *They hated me without a cause*, or any just provocation to it.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

26 But notwithstanding all this furious, though causeless enmity to my person, truths, and interests, they shall triumph over all opposition. When that divine person *, whom I told you of, (*chap.* xiv. 16) shall come to shed abroad his gifts and graces, and whom, in consequence of my death and exaltation, I, with the concurrence and approbation of my Father, will shortly send unto you, even the Holy Spirit, who is faithfulness and truth itself, and who, in a divine and incomprehensible manner, proceeds from the Father : He, as an advocate to maintain my cause, and as a counsellor and Comforter to direct, encourage and support you under all your difficulties and dangers, shall bear a convincing witness to me, by the revelations he will further make of my character, and the miraculous operations he will enable you to perform ; and by his assisting, owning, and succeeding you, unto the confutation of all your enemies, and bringing vast multitudes of all nations to the obedience of faith ; as well as by those inward joys, that he will raise in your own souls.

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because

27 And ye yourselves, under the Spirit's conduct and influence, shall give a noble, plain, and courageous

N O T E.

* The Spirit's coming, and being sent by our Lord, from the Father to testify of him, are *personal* characters, and plainly distinguish him from the Father and Son : And his title, as the Spirit of truth, together with his proceeding from the Father, can agree to none but a *divine* person : For this title is too high for a creature, and I cannot see any sufficient reason, why his proceeding from the Father is mentioned in the present tense, in the midst of a sentence, where Christ's sending him, and his testifying of Christ, are spoken of as future ; unless it be to intimate his necessary, unbeginning and never ending procession, as a divine person, from the Father in such a sublime manner, as lies beyond the reach of all our ideas, but is some way answerable to what is called eternal generation,

with regard to Christ, in correspondence to his character as the Son : And yet that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Son, as well as from the Father, may be fairly argued from his being called *the Spirit of Christ*, and *the Spirit of the Son*, as well as of the Father, (*1 Pet.* i. 11. and *Gal.* iv. 6.) and from his being here said to be sent by Christ from the Father, as well as sent by the Father in his name. (*chap.* xiv. 26.) And this, at the same time, shews the equal divinity of the Father and Son, in as much as they have equal power of sending the Holy Spirit to bear the peculiar part, and to have the glory that by agreement belongs to him in the work of salvation : So that the sacred Three are here represented both in their personal characters, and in their divine and economical glories.

because ye have been with me, from the beginning.

ous testimony to me and my cause, in your doctrines, miracles, lives, and deaths; and your witness will be unexceptionable, because ye have been my constant attendants, and all along familiarly acquainted with my discourses, miracles, sufferings, and behaviour, in public and private, for between three and four years, from the very beginning of my ministry, and shall continue so till I be crucified, raised again from the dead, and taken up from you to heaven.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

What blessed provision has God made in Christ for the spiritual life and growth, fruitfulness and happiness of believers, and for his own glory in and by them! And how intimate, beneficial, and endearing is their union with Christ! How effectual is his influence upon them! And how vigorous should their faith and love be toward him, who has freely chosen and set them apart for himself, counted them his friends, and loved them, even to the laying down of his life to redeem them! There is no doing any thing spiritually, and acceptably in religion, without him; but the richest abundance of precious fruits are brought forth in union with him, by a communication of grace from him, and by means of his word, ordinances, and providence to subserve his work in true believers. Was faith more in exercise, their fruits of righteousness would increase; and whatsoever they ask for the glory of God and their own good, they would receive, and their fruit would evidently remain to eternal life. But ah, how sad is the case of hypocritical, carnal professors, who take up with external forms and appearances, instead of vital union to Christ, and who produce only dead works! They are fit for nothing but the burning, and must be cast into everlasting flames. What evidence can we have of our union with Christ, or what comfort in our thoughts about it, if we do not heartily cleave to him? Or what manifestation and enjoyment can we expect of his love, unless we love him, and keep his commandments without reserve? But O the delight and pleasure of knowing that he loves us! And how should his love to us, and ours to him, excite us to obey and imitate him in a sincere, affectionate, and active love to one another! All this, and every thing else necessary to salvation, has our dear Lord made known to his disciples by his word and Spirit, therein dealing with them as friends; and this Divine Spirit, who comes from the Father and Son, is able to silence all objections against every important truth of the gospel: If we have him for our advocate, guide, and Comforter, he will inspire us with a noble courage in our holy profession of Christ's name, and will be our support under all the tribulations we endure, because we are not of the world, but belong to him who hath chosen us out of the world. And why should any of the disciples and servants of the blessed Jesus wonder, or be discouraged at hatred, reproaches, and contempt from the men of this world, or at sufferings for his sake, when he, their great Lord and Master, has gone through them all, and worse, for theirs? But O how great is their guilt, who, in the midst of the clearest light of divine revelation, persist in their enmity and opposition to Christ and his gospel, his servants and followers! It is all without any just cause; and, whatsoever they pretend, they really do not know God, but are strangers, and avert to him and holiness, and therefore shut their eyes against the light, which is a high aggravation of their sin, and leaves them without excuse.

C H A P. XVI.

The conclusion of Christ's farewell sermon, in which he forewarns his disciples of persecutions, and takes notice of their present griefs, 1,—6. And promises to send the Holy Ghost, 7,—15. To visit them again in person, as well as by his Spirit after his resurrection, 16,—22. To secure a gracious answer to their prayers in his name, 23,—32. And to give them peace amidst all their tribulations in the world, 33.

TEXT.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

1 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service.

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I told you, that, when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

PARAPHRASE.

I HAVE now told you, my disciples, before-hand, of the trials and comforts which I ye before you, that ye may not be discouraged in the way of your duty; nor stumbled at my dying and leaving you, nor at the troubles that ye will meet with from mine enemies and yours for my sake.

2 Their rage will rise to such an height, that they will proceed to all manner of violence and cruelties against you; the men of ecclesiastical power, such as the chief priests and rulers, will excommunicate you, as apostates from their religion, (see the note on chap. ix. 34.) loading you with reproaches, and exposing you to all religious and civil hardships, as if ye were the most abandoned of wretches: Nay, the time is just at hand, when there will be such a general run of mad and furious zeal against you, that every one, who can but have a hand in putting you to death, will take a barbarous pleasure in it, from a superstitious blind conceit, as if he were thereby honouring God, and serving his cause and interest in the world.

3 And these immoral and pernicious principles and practices will they go into against you, as my disciples, because, through the wilful blindness and hardness of their hearts, they neither know, so as to believe and love, my Father, nor me.

4 But I have given you plain notices of these things before-hand, that when the time of your hottest trials come, ye may recollect, to the silencing of all your objections and prejudices on their account, and to the confirmation of your faith in me and my gospel; that I, your Lord and friend, have, by a divine foreknowledge, and with all faithfulness, assured you, that thus it would be: And the reason of my not telling you, so plainly and particularly, of all these troubles and comforts, when I first called you to be my disciples was, because I myself was with you, to bear the chief brunt in my own person, and to screen you from it, as also to support and comfort you under such trials as have hitherto befallen you for my name's sake.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but, if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And, when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

5 But now, as I am just going to leave you, and return to my Father, who sent me into the world, I thought proper to acquaint you with these things: And tho' when I first mentioned my departure some of you, out of curiosity, and with temporal views, asked me whither I was going? (*chap. xiii. 36.*) yet upon telling you, that it is to my Father's house, to prepare blessed mansions for you there, ye neither rejoice in it, nor readily understand my meaning, (*chap. xiv. 5.*) nor make any further inquiries about it.

6 But because I have spoke of leaving you, and of the troubles that will thereupon befall you, your spirits are swallowed up with over-much sorrow; so much quicker are your apprehensions of grievous, than of joyous tidings.

7 However, the truth of the case, as I have hinted, and will now further explain to you, is this: Notwithstanding all your dejected thoughts, and formidable expectations of the consequence of my departure, with regard to your temporal concerns, it is really convenient and necessary for yourselves, as well as me, that I should go from this world to my Father: For such is the settlement of things in eternal counsels between him and me, and such is their just connection and order, that unless I depart, the Holy Spirit, that blessed guide, advocate and Comforter, whom I mentioned, (*see the note on chap. xiv. 16.*) as more than sufficient to supply the want of my bodily presence, will not visit you with his richest gifts and graces, counsels and assistances, supports and joys: But (44) when I go to be enthroned in my heavenly kingdom, I will send him to answer all the great and glorious purposes for which ye and my church shall need him.

8 And he coming from on high, by virtue of my death, and in consequence of my resurrection and exaltation, shall carry on my cause in this lower world by demonstratively convincing both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, wherever my gospel comes, of their guilt, depravity, and obnoxiousness to the wrath of God; of the righteousness which I bring in by my obedience and sufferings, for the justification of such as are helped to see that they have no righteousness of their own to recommend them to the divine favour and acceptance; and of my holy and judicial power, in setting to rights the disorders of human nature, by sanctifying grace, in overthrowing Satan's dominion, and in passing judgment against the finally unbelieving and unrighteous at the great day of account.

9. Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

12. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13. Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide

9 To explain my meaning a little farther, This Holy Spirit, by his miraculous gifts and operations for confirming the gospel, and by his internal illumination and gracious influence, shall convince many, among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, of all the wickedness of their hearts and lives, and especially of their great sin of unbelief; because they wilfully rejected me, and chose rather to go on in their iniquities, than believe in me for everlasting life.

10 He shall likewise convince them of the righteousness of my person and cause, and of the necessity, suitableness, and perfection of that everlasting righteousness which I am come to work out by my obedience unto death; because I am going to be exalted at my Father's right hand, in testimony of his having entirely approved of, and accepted me, as one that has answered all his demands; and ye shall no more see me again in this humble state of sufferings and abasement*, as if I had not fully satisfied his justice, and finished the work he gave me to do on earth.

11 And this Spirit shall convince them of my power and will, to renew and sanctify sinners, to destroy the kingdom of darkness, and to execute judgment upon all the finally wicked, impenitent, and unbelieving; because Satan, who, as the god of this world, has ruled in the hearts of the children of disobedience, is tried, and cast, and judicially defeated in all his power and claims, by my death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, from whence I will send the Spirit, as my grand agent, for demolishing the powers of darkness, and setting up my kingdom of light, and grace, and holiness, on its ruins, till I shall come to judge the world at the last day.

12 I have still many other things to communicate to you, relating to the great alterations that shall be made in the state and worship of the church under the guidance and operations of the Spirit, as the fruit of my going through sufferings and death to glory: But, at present, by reason of the weakness of your faith, and the strength of your prejudices and carnal expectations, ye cannot easily take them in, or be reconciled to them.

13 But when the Divine Spirit, who is faithfulness and truth itself, shall come to do his work upon you, and by you, he shall be an unerring and efficacious guide,

N O T E.

* This appears to be Christ's meaning, because he said this to comfort, and not discourage his disciples; and they did see him again on earth after his resurrection, and he pray-

ed, that all whom the Father had given him, might be with him in heaven to behold his glory, chap. xvii. 24.

guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

13 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

16 A little while and ye shall not see

* I have referred the *little while*, in the first clause, to the time before which Christ would be taken from his disciples by death, and appear to them again after his resurrection; and in the second, to the time during which he would be absent from them, and appear again to them; because from the grammatical construction, it seems uncertain which of these are referred to, and neither of these senses is absolutely disagreeable to the con-

guide, to give you an understanding and approbation of the whole scheme of the gospel-kingdom, which is infallibly true in every part of it: For as I have always acted in concert with my Father; so the Spirit will act in entire concert with us, by revealing these things, not like a private person, as from himself only, but in exact agreement with the counsels of peace between the Father and me, as one that is privy to them all, and searches the deep things of God: And, according to ancient predictions concerning him, (*Joel ii. 28.*) he will be a spirit of prophecy in you, and will acquaint you with all that may be needful for you to know, or make known to the church, for ages to come on earth, and for a blessed eternity afterwards in heaven.

14 His very coming in my name, to do my work, will redound to my honour; and his great business and design will be, to manifest my glory: For he will take into his province the things that relate to my person and office, cause and kingdom, and will discover them to you, that ye may have clear, exalted, and endearing thoughts of me, and my love and grace, of what I am, and have undertaken for, and of what I have purchased by my death, and have authority to bestow in my re-assumed and glorious life.

15 This will be a rich discovery, and include what relates to the Father together with me: For as I and my Father are one, (*chap. x. 30.*) so his nature and perfections, blessedness and glory are mine, (*Col. ii. 9.*); his Spirit is mine; and whatsoever he makes known and communicates by the Spirit, is from me in common with him: In a word, all things whatsoever (*παντα οσα*) the Father has, (only excepting what the very notion of his being a Father imports) are already mine by original right and claim; and, in my office-capacity, the administration of all that he does, is in a peculiar manner committed to me, as one every way equal to the important trust: Therefore I said with great propriety, that, in the whole of the gospel-dispensation, the Spirit will take into his province what relates to me and my glory, and will make it known to you.

16 It is now * but a very little while, that ye shall

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see text. Some indeed suppose, that the *little while* in the first clause, relates to the time between Christ's speaking these words, and his ascension to heaven: and that in the last clause, it relates to the time between his ascension, and their own death, or his second appearing to judgment: But one or other of the senses given in the Paraphrase, appears to be most natural.

see me: and again, a little while and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

17 Then said some of his disciples amongst themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while and, ye shall not see me: and again, a little while and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while and ye shall see me?

20 Verily verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

see me in my present mortal state, before I be taken from you for a few days by death; and soon after that, ye shall see me again but for a little time longer, as risen to an immortal life, because I am going to be exalted in my human nature, at the Father's right hand, and to transact the affairs of my church with him there.

17 The disciples, thro' ignorance, grief, and carnal notions of a temporal kingdom, being at a loss about the unexplained meaning of these last words, some of them were exceedingly amazed and troubled at them, saying privately one to another, What can our Lord intend, by telling us that in, or for a little while, we shall not see him; and that in, or for a little while afterwards, we shall see him again? And what doth he mean by the reason he gives for it, viz. because he is going to the Father?

18 They therefore being in a great perplexity and concern about it, the question went round among them, saying, in a whisper to such brethren as were nearest, What means this *little while*, that our Lord talks of? we cannot imagine what he hints at.

19 Now as the heart-searching Jesus saw the confusion they were in upon this account, and that they had a great mind, though they were afraid and ashamed, to ask him to explain himself, * he said to them, Are ye at a loss, and troubled in your own thoughts, and solicitously inquisitive one of another, and desirous to ask me about my meaning, when I spoke of a little while, with relation to your not seeing me, and again of a little while, with respect to your seeing me afterwards?

20 I, the faithful and true Witness, solemnly assure you, that ye shall quickly be full of tears and bitter lamentation, for a short season, on account of my sufferings and death, (*Mark xvi. 10. and Luke xxiii. 27, 28.*); and at the same time the men of this world, rulers and people, will triumph and rejoice, as thinking that they have gained their point against me and my cause: Yea, for a while, ye will be exceedingly dejected in my absence, as if all your faith and hope in me were a delusion, (*Luke xxiv. 17, 21.*); but very soon, when I shall visit you again in person after my resurrection, and shall shed down my Spirit upon you after my ascension to heaven, all your distressing sorrows shall be turned into the greatest joy, (*chap. xx. 20. Luke. xxiv. 52, 53. and Acts. ii. 46.*)

21 Your

N O T E.

* That this relates to his knowing the secret thoughts and desires of their hearts, as well as their private whisperings one to ano-

ther, appears from the conclusion they drew from hence, (*ver. 30.*) that he knew all things, and needed not that any man should tell him.

21 A woman, when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, the remembereth no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father, in my name, he will give it you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in

21 Your case will be like that of a woman in labour, as she for a short time has sharp pains, and great anxiety of mind about the event, because according to God's ordination on account of the first sin, (*Gen. iii. 16.*) the unavoidable and expected hour of distress is come upon her: But as soon as she is safely delivered of a man-child, the joy of her having brought forth the desired offspring is so great, that she no longer groans or complains, or reflects with any uneasiness on the pangs she endured.

22 So ye now for a little while, under your present dismal apprehensions of my leaving you, and by means of the sore trials that are just coming upon you, are, and will be, full of distress and anguish of soul: But I will soon return to you in person, and afterwards by my Spirit, with clear manifestations of my triumphs and my love, as an earnest of your being with me for ever; and then ye shall forget all your sorrows, and shall have unspeakable joy and gladness of heart, in consideration of the great and glorious things which by my sufferings and death I shall have obtained for you; and whatsoever men or devils may design, or attempt against you, (*ver. 11.*) none of them shall ever be able to shake the foundation, or rob you of your spiritual and eternal joy.

23 And in this time of great consolation, under the light and influence of my Spirit, ye shall neither need my corporal presence with you, nor have opportunities of asking me * questions, for relieving your doubts and difficulties, and informing you about the things of my kingdom, as ye have been wont, and are now desirous to do, (*ver. 19.*) As I told you (*ver. 16.*) that I am going to the Father; so I, who am Truth itself, solemnly assure you, that whatsoever ye, by the assistance of the Spirit, shall afterwards ask my Father and your Father, with faith in my name, as your only Mediator, High-Priest and Advocate, he will readily grant it to you on my account.

24 Hitherto, whilst I have been with you, ye, under your great darkness and difficulties, doubts and

fears,

N O T E.

* Here is a plain reference to their wanting to ask him what he meant by a *little while*, &c. (*ver. 19.*) There it is said, *αὐτοὶ ἤθελον αὐτὸν ῥωτᾶν*, they were desirous to ask him: And here Christ says, *ἐγὼ οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἵνα ἐγὼ ἁρῶ, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἑγὼ δώσω*, I come not that I may take, but that I may give. But he is far from designing by this, to forbid their praying to him: For not only Stephen and the apostles did this after he was gone to heaven; but it is made the distinguishing character of Christians, that they call upon him, or, upon his name, (*Acts ix. 14. Rom. x. 12, 13, 14, and 1 Cor. i. 2.*) The reason of our Lord's not

mentioning this here, seems to be, because he was then going particularly to recommend the Father's love to them, (*ver. 26, 27.*) and to give them a hint of the gospel-scheme of worship, with regard to his mediation, *through whom we have access by one Spirit to the Father*, (*Eph. ii. 18.*) And as the disciples did ask him questions after his resurrection, (*chap. xxi. 21. and Acts i. 6.*) I think the day mentioned here, and in *ver. 26.* refers rather to the time of his pouring out the Spirit, than of his personal appearing to them after his resurrection.

in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

fears, have on all occasions had recourse to me; and, in your addresses to God the Father, ye have not applied to him with any express mention of my name; nor have ye well understood the grounds of worshipping him in that manner, so as to plead and depend upon my merit and righteousness, and my interest with him for you: But henceforth, in all your wants, present your petitions and pleas with faith in my atonement and advocacy, which shall be hereafter fully revealed; and he will certainly return an answer of peace, that your holy joy may be daily increasing, till at length it shall be as abundant and complete, as ye yourselves can wish for, or be capable of.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

25 These important things have I delivered to you in short, pithy sentences, which, by reason of your present ignorance, sorrows and prejudices, are as obscure to you as parables are to those that do not understand them: But the time is now coming on apace, when my Spirit shall so clearly enlighten the eyes of your understanding, and lead you into the whole scheme of the gospel, that what I have said, and shall further communicate to you by him, will no longer appear dark and mysterious like a parable; but I will then make a free, open, and full discovery of my Father; of his gracious counsels and will concerning you and the whole church; of the nature and design of my sufferings and death; of the reasons of my going to him; of the business which I go to transact with him; of the confidence which on these accounts ye may have towards him; and of the way, in which ye are to address him through me, for obtaining all the blessings ye need.

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

26 At that time, when I shall be with my Father, and the Spirit shall come down upon you, ye by his assistance shall offer up all your petitions, with an explicit mention of my name, and with an entire trust and confidence in me, as having made atonement on earth, and as interceding in heaven: And I need not tell you, nor do I insist upon it now, as I have before, (*chap. xiv. 16.*); that while ye thus address a throne of grace in my name, I will be your great Advocate to recommend your persons and prayers to the Father's acceptance.

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

27 For the heart of my Father himself is toward you, as a God of peace thro' my blood; and he, in the greatness of his love to you, will readily hear your prayers that shall be in this manner presented to him, because ye are indeed my disciples, that have a sincere affection for me, springing from that faith whereby ye believe in me as his only begotten Son, who came from him to be

be the Saviour of *Israel*: He has the greatest delight in those, who thus by faith and love embrace me, in whom he is well pleased.

27 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

28 To sum up all that I have been saying, in a few words, it is plainly this; I, who was with the Father from everlasting, voluntarily came forth from him into this world, in a way of peculiar manifestation and operation; and having gone through my great work, in a state of humble obedience and sufferings on earth, I now am taking leave of this lower world, and returning home again to my Father, that I may be glorified with him, may manage and secure the concerns of the redeemed in heaven, and by my Spirit may apply my purchase to them on earth for their salvation. Why then, upon the whole, should your hearts be troubled, or afraid? (*chap. xiv. 1, 27.*)

29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

29 Our blessed Lord having spoke in this plain and comfortable manner to his disciples; they at length understood him to mean, that he was going to be glorified with his Father in heaven, and cried out with ecstasy and assurance, Now we clearly take in the true sense of thy discourse, and it is no longer a dark saying to us.

30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

30 We are now likewise fully satisfied, that thou hast a perfect knowledge of all things, even to the very secrets of our hearts: And tho' we were afraid to tell thee the perplexity of our minds, and how desirous we were (*ver. 19.*) to ask thee about the very thing which thou hast now explained to us; we now find that thou didst not need to be informed of our thoughts, but hast, of thine own accord, as exactly and directly answered the question, that was in our hearts, as if we had expressed it in words: By this evident proof which thou hast given of thy divine omniscience, we are thoroughly confirmed in our faith, that thou art indeed the Son of God, who camest from him, and art returning again to him.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

31 Jesus however knowing that their faith was not so strong and stedfast as they imagined, and that notwithstanding their present confidence it would soon be shaken again, replied, Are ye now at last, as ye ought to have been before, so clearly apprehensive, and so well assured of what I have said? And is your faith so fully confirmed in me, that ye think yourselves established in it to such a degree, as never to be staggered more? Alas! ye are much mistaken.

32 Behold, the hour

32 Observe what I say to you, for your humbling, watchfulness and caution, and for further proof of my divine omniscience with regard to what *will be*, as well

hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone : and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

as is in your hearts : The time is just at hand, yea, is so very near, that in a manner it may be said to be already come, when ye will all be dispersed, and skulk about in a fright among your friends to provide for your own safety, according to former prophecy, (*Zech. xiii. 7.*) ; and not one of you will dare to accompany, own, or bear witness to me : And yet, destitute as I shall be left by you, I never am, nor then shall be alone, because my Father and I, being intimately and inseparably united, are ever present one with the other ; and tho' he, as a *Judge*, will withhold the comforts of his presence from me, who am come to bear the sins of many ; yet he will continue to be with me, * as a *Father*, to assist and own me, and carry me through all the conflicts which I have consented to undergo, as his servant, that he may be glorified. (*Isa. l. 7.*)

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace : In the world ye shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

33 Now all these things have I delivered to you in my farewell sermon, that by virtue of your union with me, and by faith in me, ye may find the noblest peace with God, and possess your own souls in quietness and patience : Ye may see, by what I have said, that while ye are in this world, great troubles and persecutions for my sake, will attend you ; but do not be disheartened at them, (~~beware~~) confide in me, and be courageous in hope of an happy event : For as I have weathered all opposition from men and devils, and come off with victory hitherto ; so, by my death and resurrection, ascension to heaven, exaltation to my throne, and effusion of my Spirit, I am just now going to obtain an entire conquest over the world, and every thing else, which stands in the way of your salvation, that I and you may dwell together in my Father's house, where, as I told you at the beginning of this discourse, I am going to prepare a place for you. (*chap. xiv. 2.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How often are we sorrowful at those things at which we ought to rejoice ! How much better is it for us, that Christ is now exalted on his throne, than that he should have always continued to be personally present on earth ! And O how divinely great and glorious is he, who came from the Father, and whose human nature is now removed from our world, and gone to heaven. He is possessed of all the same perfections, and is Lord proprietor, and disposer of all the same things with the Father himself ; and he sends his Spirit to carry on his work in the world, and know all things, even the secrets of our hearts. With what safety then may we believe in him !—How equally divine is the spirit of truth, who is perfectly acquainted with the Father and Son, and with their whole design, and who freely comes from them, to acquaint us with all needful truth, and to glorify Christ by acting in his name, and taking of his things, which are also the Father's, and shewing them to us ! And how efficaciously doth he convince apostate

N O T E.

* This interpretation easily reconciles what our Lord here says about his not being alone, and the Father's being with him, in his last

sufferings and death, with his saying on the cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?* (*Matth. xxvii. 46.*)

state men of sin, righteousness, and judgment ! O blessed work ! May it savingly prevail in our hearts, and spread far and wide through our world ! But how ignorant and dull of understanding are we, and how indolent in our inquiries after the most important things, which, how plainly soever they be delivered to us, appear as obscure as parables, till Christ opens the eyes of our minds ! And what an excellent teacher is our Lord, who suits his instructions to our circumstances, capacities and occasions, and to what he knows to be the distresses and desires of our hearts ! How soon can he scatter all our darkness, and turn our sorrow into joy, into such joy as no man can take from us, and as shall grow up to full perfection ! But alas ! when we think our faith is strongest, the greatest temptations are often nearest ; and therefore we should not be self-confident, but give ourselves unto prayer : And what rich encouragement have we for this, since the Father himself loves them that believe in his Son, and is well pleased with their love to him ! But as it is only on his account, that God is our Father and friend, how carefully should we always address the throne of grace, with a direct eye to Jesus, and with explicit pleadings of his name, as our great Mediator, according to the settlement of gospel-worship ; and with what humble confidence may we depend upon an answer of such believing pleas through him !—This world is a scene of sorrow ; and what if we meet with great tribulations in it for Christ's sake ? It is only from men that know not God, and it is no more than our Lord himself foretold would be : We should therefore be so far from being disheartened and stumbled at this, that our faith should be the more confirmed in the truth of the gospel by it : And what can be a greater comfort under it, than the peace that he has promised to give, and the victory that he has obtained over sin, Satan, and the world for us, that we may also overcome them by faith in him ! And if we are deserted, even by our friends, in the days of our greatest tribulation, we may encourage ourselves in this, that we shall not be alone, but Christ and his Father will be with us by the Spirit, to support and own us, and carry us safe to glory.

C H A P. XVII.

Our Lord's prayer before his death, for himself, 1,—5. For all that were already called, 6,—10. Most immediately for the apostles, that they might be preserved and sanctified, 11,—19. For the whole church, as well as the apostles, that they might be united and glorified, 20,—24. And particularly again for the apostles, 25, 26.

TEXT.

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy

PARAPHRASE.

OUR blessed Lord having given, his disciples a farewell sermon, closed it with a parting prayer, in which he, like an affectionate dying parent, committed his family, and, like a merciful and faithful high-priest, recommended the apostles, and the whole church, to his Father, and therein gave a specimen of the continual intercession which he was going to make for them in heaven. He therefore lifted up his eyes, with great solemnity, to the habitation of God's glory, and poured out the desires of his heart in the following manner, saying, "O my Father, the set time agreed upon in eternal counsels, for finishing my course of obedience and sufferings on earth, is now come; own me, I beseech thee, as the Son ; support me under my
last

thy Son also may glorify thee.

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth;

last agonies; and give me such a triumphant victory over death and the grave, and all the powers of darkness, as shall issue in thy receiving me up to glory; that I, thine own eternal Son, may honour all thy perfections by my death, and then, being exalted at thy right hand, may spread thy glory, by my word and Spirit, through the world;

2 "According to the design, for which thou, in consideration of my fulfilling my engagements to thee, hast given me an universal, absolute dominion over all the persons and concerns of the * fallen race of mankind, that I might authoritatively, freely and effectually bestow the great blessing of eternal life, with all the means tending to it, upon every one, whom, in the greatness of thy love, thou hast committed, as a peculiar property, trust and treasure to me.

3 "And the way to this eternal life, the beginnings and earnest of it, the evidences of right and title to it, and the complete enjoyment of it, I, not only in their approving and fiducial knowledge of thee, under the character of the only true and faithful God, in † opposition to all other gods; but also in the like knowledge of me, the anointed Saviour, whom thou hast sent into the world, under the character of the only true mediator, in opposition to all other mediators, or other ways of approaching thee, and finding acceptance with thee.

4 "I have all along invariably intended and displayed thy glory, in the whole of my doctrine, miracles, and life, and am ready to honour all thy perfections on earth,

N O T E S.

* *All flesh* is commonly used in scripture to describe the human race, as frail, mortal, and degenerate by the fall; and though the phrase, *As many as thou hast given me*, may have a particular respect to the apostles, as included in that number; yet it is not to be confined to them, much less is it to be referred merely to their office: For power over all flesh was given to Christ, that he might give eternal life to these many; but surely eternal life is given by him to more than the apostles: and he had not this office-power over all things to give eternal life merely to them, whose number was so small, as hardly to admit of propriety in meaning them only, by the many that were given to him: Our Lord therefore expressly tells us, that he *prayed not for the apostles alone, but for them also that should believe on him through their word, that they all might be one, and might be with him, where he is, to behold his glory:* (ver. 20, 21, 24.) So that Christ regarded all God's cho-

sen people in this prayer, that were committed to his charge, as the great Shepherd of the sheep: in some parts of which he had a respect to all that were then already called, whether apostles or other believers; in others, particularly to the apostles and their office; and in others, to the whole number of the elect, including those that were to be called, as well as those that were already called, that they might be eternally saved.

† That our blessed Lord here speaks of the only true God, in distinction from idols, and not to the exclusion of himself, appears from his speaking of himself, as the object of the same fiducial knowledge with the Father, and from his distinguishing himself from the Father, not by any essential title, but merely by his office-character, viz. *Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* And the same apostle, who recorded this prayer, expressly says of Christ, *This is the true God, and eternal life, in opposition to idols.* 1 John v. 20, 21.

I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they

earth, by my death, which I am so fully resolved upon, and which will be so certainly, and so soon accomplished, that I may speak of it, as if it were already over; and (*ver. 10.*) I have thereby perfected the great work of redemption, answerable to the utmost demands of thy justice and to the trust, which thou didst repose in me; as the head and surety of the church.

5 "And now, O my heavenly Father, I plead, that, according to thy engagements to me, thou wouldst advance my incarnate person to the highest glory at thy right hand, where I may appear in human nature, and in the mediatorial office, like myself, and may shine in all that divine majesty, which has been obscured in my state of humiliation on earth, and which I was possessed of, together with thyself, from all eternity.

6 "As to all my sincere * disciples, whom thou hast made my peculiar charge, by way of distinction from mankind in general, I have already begun to give them a spiritual understanding of thine excellencies, of my relation to thee, and commission from thee, and of thy mind and will about their salvation: They were originally thine by peculiar and eternal choice, as well as by creation-right; and thou gavest them to me, that I might take effectual care of them; and they, under my powerful influence upon their hearts, have embraced, and adhered to the testimony which thou hast given to me, and to the doctrine which I have delivered from thee.

7 "They now have been brought to understand, and believe that all things, which I, as Mediator, have undertaken, taught and performed, are by thine appointment and commission, and are the fruits of thy infinite wisdom and sovereign grace.

8 "For I have effectually revealed to them those mysteries of the kingdom, relating to my person-office and benefits, which thou hast authorized me to make known for their instruction and edification; and they, by the internal light and energy, that attended my words, have cordially entertained them with faith and love,

N O T E.

* Though this part of Christ's prayer, to the end of *ver. 10.* may have a principal reference to the apostles; yet I take it to extend likewise to the seventy, and to all that had been already effectually called under his ministry: For there seems to be nothing peculiar to the apostles, till we come to *ver. 11.* where our Lord begins to speak more immediately of them, as appears to me by his there altering the pronoun, from (*αὐτοί*) they, to (*αὐτήν*) these, and then going on to mention

things more peculiar to the apostles: And his speaking of what he had done, in the saving illumination of all these converts, may very well be considered as a specimen of his faithfulness, in what he would likewise do, in proper season, for all the rest, that the Father had given him, especially since he closes this part of his prayer with saying, (*ver. 10.*) *All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.* See the note on *ver. 20.*

they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine; and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep thro' thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

love, and accordingly have been well assured in their own minds and consciences, that I, as a divine person, came into this world from thee, (*chap. xvi. 30.*) and they have savingly believed in me, as the true Messiah, whom thou hast sent.

9 "I therefore affectionately recommend them to thy fatherly care for perfecting every thing that concerns them, my prayer being designed, not universally for all mankind, but only for those whom thou, in thy peculiar love to me and them, hast committed to my charge; for they are by eternal choice and designation thine.

10 "And our joint interest in them, answerable to the original communion that we have one with the other * in all things, is so entirely and inseparably the same; that all whom thou hast given me are still as much as ever thine, and all that thou hast chosen for thyself are equally mine; our property in them is not divided, nor transferred from one of us to the other, but is common to us both: It is therefore for them, who are both thine and mine, that I pray; and I, together with thee, am, and for ever shall be, glorified in their redemption, and effectual calling, in their faith, love, worship and obedience, and in their eternal glorification with thee and me.

11 "And now the time is come, when I must die a sacrifice for their sins, and shall afterwards be but a little longer with any of them corporally in this world, to instruct, defend and comfort them; but (*ver.*) these † my apostles; here present with me, as well as the rest of my disciples, are still to be left, for a while, in a world of sin and sorrow, attended with many infirmities, temptations and dangers: And as I am coming to appear in thy presence for them, therefore, O my Father, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, I beseech thee, that, after my departure, thou wouldst by thy mighty power, and for thine own name's sake, preserve them stedfast in their faith and holy profession, whom thou hast appointed, and given to me for special

N O T E S.

* The words (*τα εμα εωρισα εν εα, και τα εα εμα*) being in the neuter gender, may be most properly rendered, *all things that are mine are thine, and that are thine are mine*: And these are very high and strong expressions, too grand for any mere creature to use, as intimating that all things whatsoever, inclusive of the divine nature, perfections and operations, and of all creatures, are the common property of the Father and Son; and that this is the original ground of that peculiar property, which they both have in the per-

sons who were given to Christ as Mediator, according to what is said in the close of the verse, about his being glorified (*εξαυτισ*, in the masculine gender) *in them*: For none but a divine person was equal to the honour, or difficulty of so important a trust, as was therein committed to him.

† Here, as I apprehend, our blessed Saviour enters on his prayer most immediately for the apostles, and so on to *ver. 19.* See the notes on *ver. 6.* and *20.*

cial service, as my witnesses and chief ministers in my kingdom, that they may be entirely united in heart and affection, testimony, interests, and designs, as we are in ours.

11 While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition: that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

12 And now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

13 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

12 "Whilst I have been personally conversant with them in the world, I have, according to thy commission, kept them from apostacy, by my doctrine and example, and by my powerful influence upon their minds and hearts: I have so faithfully watched over, established and preserved them, whom thou gavest me for the apostleship, that not one of them has miscarried * except the perfidious Judas who has forsaken me, and is gone to betray me to death; and who has deserved, and brought destruction upon himself, under divine permission, in accomplishment of antient predictions of his treachery and ruin, *Psal. xli. 9. and cix. 8, &c.*

13 "But (thou) now I am coming to be glorified with thee in heaven; and as my apostles will no longer enjoy the benefit of my company, to guide, protect and comfort them, I make this address to thee in their favour, and in their hearing, whilst I am with them in this lower world, that they may rejoice in hope, according to my promise, of thy preserving, teaching, and comforting them by thy Spirit in my absence, and that their joy may be more abundant, than they ever found in my personal presence with them.

14 "I have given them an understanding of, and a commission to preach thy gospel; and the men of this world, whose hearts are carnal and unbelieving, are full of enmity, rage and violence against them, because their principles, tempers and views are utterly disagreeable to the sentiments, lusts and interests of natural and worldly minded men, even as I myself, and the doctrines I have preached, are contrary to their corrupt judgment and taste.

15 How-

N O T E.

* If, as some suppose, our Lord in these verses, as well as in the former part of his prayer, intended the elect and called, whom the Father gave him, that he might give eternal life to them; when he says that *none of them is lost, but the son of perdition*, the particle (*ὁ υἱος*) *but*, is to be understood here, not in the exceptive, but adversative sense, as it is often used, particularly in *Gal. i. 7. and ii. 16. and Rev. ix. 4. and xxi. 27.* For of all, whom the Father in this respect had given him, he says, It was his Father's will, that he should lose nothing, and that he would raise every one of them at the last day, (*chap. vi. 39, 40.*) And so the sense of this passage will be, None of them, whom thou hast given me, that I might give them eternal life, is lost; but the son of perdition is lost, he

being none of that number. But, taking this part of Christ's prayer, from the 11th to the 19th verse, to have an immediate reference to the apostles as such, (see the notes on *ver. 6. and 10.*) that particle *but* is to be considered in the exceptive sense, according to the Paraphrase, Judas having been one of their number, who were chosen to the apostleship, though our Lord knew from the beginning, that he would betray him, (*chap. vi. 64.*) and what Christ here says, about none of the other apostles being lost, is mentioned with a direct reference to them in the next chapter, (*ver. 8, 9.*) when he desired his enemies to let them go their way, that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spoke, *Of them I knew thou gavest me I have lost none.*

13 I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.

14 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 Sanctify them thro' thy truth; thy word is truth.

16 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

17 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

18 Neither pray I

15 "However, my desire is not that thou wouldst immediately rid my disciples of all their troubles, by taking them from earth to heaven, or that thou wouldst deprive this lower world of so great a blessing, as their holy lives and ministrations; but that thou wouldst support them under, sanctify to them, and carry them through the cruel persecutions they may meet with, till they have finished their testimony; as also from the iniquity and error in which the world lyes, and from that evil one, the devil, (*ὁ ὁ ὁ*) that none of his temptations may ever prevail against them.

16 "They are already of such a religious spirit and disposition, and engaged in such an excellent work and cause, as is directly contrary to the liking of the generality of this world, even as I myself, to whom they are herein conformed, have been before them.

17 "Let this holy temper be maintained, cultivated and increased in them, by means of thy word; and (*ἁγιασμοῦ*) * consecrate them, by the anointing of thy Spirit to their office, and for thy service, (*ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ σου*) in propagating the truth of the gospel, which they are, and shall be further instructed in: For thy word, in the faith, profession and preaching of which I desire they may be preserved, is infallible and important truth.

18 "Accordingly, as thou hast sent me into the world, with a commission to preach the everlasting gospel to mankind: So I have sent them with authority, as my ambassadors, to go on with the same work, wherever Providence may cast their lot on earth, after my departure from it.

19 "And one great reason for which I have devoted myself to the mediatorial office, and am going to be further consecrated to it, by offering up myself (*ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν*) in their stead, is, that they by the merit of my death, and in consequence of it, may have a supply of the Spirit to sanctify them throughout, by means of the gospel of truth, and to consecrate and qualify them for, and assist and succeed them in preaching it.

20 Not that I pray only (*ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν*) for these † my apostles; but

NOTES.

* As (*ἁγιασμοῦ*) is sanctify, frequently signifies to consecrate, or set apart to office; and the priests were set apart for the service of God, by sacrifices offered for sin, and by an holy anointing, (*Exod. xxix. 1, 14, 21. and xxx. 30.*); and as our Lord, speaking of his own consecration to office, by the sacrifice of himself, (*ver. 19*) says, *for their sakes I sanctify myself*; it is natural to take in, at least, the notion of consecration to office, by the anointing of the Spirit, when he speaks of sanctifying the apostles in both these verses: I have likewise given it the turn that re-

lates to real holiness, that the reader may take it in the sense which pleases him best.

† Here our Lord passes from that part of his prayer, which more immediately and directly related to the apostles, by using the same distinctive pronoun *ἐγὼ* the genitive case of *ἐγώ* these, as he began with, (*ver. 11. see the note on ver. 6.*) which to me is a plain key for understanding all the intermediate verses, as having a peculiar reference to them, who are evidently spoken of in this verse as the persons through whose word others should believe in him.

I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me thro' their word :

20 That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

21 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one;

22 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.

but likewise for all those, who I know shall henceforth, in this and succeeding generations, be brought to saving faith in me, by means of their publication of the gospel.

21 "My great petition is*, that the whole number of believers now, and in after ages, may be joined together as one body, in faith and love, worship and obedience, by one spirit, in as near a resemblance as possible of that inseparable union, which thou, O Father, and I have together by our mutual in-being; that they also, in their measure and proportion, may be united to us; to the end that others, of all nations, seeing its powerful effects on them, may be induced to believe in me, as the true Messiah.

22 And, in pursuit of this great design, I have given them an interest, and sort of partnership in the glory which thou hast given me, as their head, representative and trustee, that it may reflect a lustre upon them, and make them heirs of thee, and joint-heirs with myself, as thy children, and as members of my mystical body, who are made partakers of my Spirit, and shall at length be glorified with me, (*Rom. viii. 17.*); that so they may be united, in the most beneficial and honourable manner, to me and one another, in resemblance of that infinitely higher union, which is between thee and me.

23 "In order to their being thus united to me, and to thee through me, and so to one another, I will dwell in them by my Spirit, according to the measure of my gift to them, (*Eph. iv. 7.*) as thou dwellest in me by the same Spirit, which thou hast given, not by measure, to me, (*John iii. 34.*) that they, being joined to me, may be one Spirit, (*I Cor. vi. 17.*) and may attain to the most perfect union they are capable of in one body under me as their Head; and that, by means hereof, Gentiles as well as Jews, may be fully satisfied, that I am the Christ, whom thou hast sent into the world for the redemption of my body the church, and that thou hast a peculiar, affectionate and complacential love to them for my sake, and in resemblance of the supreme love

N O T E.

* As this part of the prayer, till we come to ver. 25, relates to all that should believe, as well as to the apostles, and those who had already believed; I apprehend that what is said (ver. 22.) is not to be referred to the glory which was given to the apostles in their working miracles, nor to any thing that was peculiar to them; but it is to be extended to the benefits which all believers are partakers of in common with them. For

the union, the glory, and the love, spoken of in this and the two following verses, are to be considered in a way of similitude, and not of sameness, or equality with the union of the Father and Son, and with the glory that is given to Christ, and the love that the Father has to him: For these things cannot be said of them in the same sense as they are of Christ, unless they were to be deified and bear the office of Mediators.

love, which thou bearest to me, as their head and mediator, and as thine eternal Son, partaker of the same nature and perfections with thyself.

24 Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

24 "The upshot, O my Father, of my will and pleasure, which I insist on as matter of right, according to my purchase and thy agreement, is, that all whom thou hast given me, that I might give eternal life to them, (*ver.* 2.) may not only stand in the nearest relation to thee, and be the objects of thy peculiar love and care in this world; but that, in due time, they may be also admitted into my immediate presence in heaven, where I already am in my divine nature, and for ever shall be in my entire person; and that there they may have an appropriating, beatific, and transforming vision of the glory which thou hast conferred on me, as their head and representative, because (*ver.*) from all eternity thou hadst an infinite delight in me, not only as thy Son, but as their surety, who engaged to glorify thee in their salvation.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

25 "To thee therefore I apply for all these things, as a righteous Father, who not only lovest me, and them in me; but wilt likewise be just and faithful to me, and to them on my account, who have purchased what I ask for them, and have promised to receive them to myself. (*chap.* xiv. 2, 3.) As for the unregenerate world, which lies in wickedness, they are ignorant of, and have rejected thee and thy counsels; but I am thoroughly acquainted with thy nature, perfections and will, and (*ver.*) these, * my apostles, have known and received me, as the true Messiah, whom thou hast sent to bring salvation to Israel.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

26 "And as I have fulfilled my commission, in delivering those parts of thy mind and will to them which I was to reveal on earth, and in savingly enlightening them in the knowledge of thyself; I will, after my resurrection, still more clearly and fully make known thy glorious name to them, by personal conversation before I go to heaven, and afterwards by the effusion of my Spirit from thence, that the infinite love, which thou hast eternally bore to me, may extend itself to them, and manifest itself in them, to their exceeding joy; and that I may dwell in their hearts by faith, till they, as well as all that thou hast given me, arrive at an endless enjoyment of that perfection of blessedness, which, in thy distinguishing love, thou designest for them."

N O T E.

* Here, as appears by the particle (*ver.*) turns again to speak particularly of the apostles, and the subject matter, our Lord relates. See the notes on *ver.* 6, and 20.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what solemnity is God addressed, when eyes and hearts are lifted up toward heaven ! But how different is the mediatorial intercession of our Lord from the humble supplications and prayers that he offered merely as man upon earth ! He not only avouched his office character, and his faithfulness in discharging it, but applied to his own Father, with such freedom and confidence in his claims and appeals, as would have been the highest presumption in any but a divine person. In what exalted strains did he speak of the Father's glorifying him, and of his glorifying the Father ; of the power he has over all flesh to give eternal life ; and of the knowledge of himself, together with the Father, as necessary to the enjoyment of it ! And with what majesty does he remind his Father of his own eternal existence and glory, and of his communion in property with him, in every thing that belongs to him ! How did he insist on his having come from him into our nature and world, and on his returning in that nature to heaven, to be glorified with him ! And with what assurance does he plead the Father's infinite love to him, and to his people in him, and the merit of his obedience and sacrifice, whereby he glorified him on earth, and finished the work which he gave him to do ! And what a claim of right did he thereupon make, not only that he himself might be glorified, but that all, whom his righteous Father had given him, might likewise be with him, and made completely happy in the vision and enjoyment of him in all his glory ! And O what an affectionate love and care have he and his Father to the elect and called ! How nearly are these united in one body, by his Spirit, and by faith and love to one another, to himself as their Head, and to the Father through him ! And what dignity and glory has he put upon them, as heirs of God, and joint heirs with himself ! None of them shall ever miscarry, apostatise and be lost ; they shall be kept from the power of sin and Satan, and of this present evil world ; they shall be enlightened, sanctified and saved, while the rest of mankind, and even those who were appointed to, and employed in his service, but were no otherwise given to Christ, are justly left to perish for, and in their own iniquity, as sons of perdition.—Faith comes by hearing and the gospel, through which many shall believe and be sanctified, is infallible and important truth ; it is the revelation which the great Mediator has made of the mind and will of God, and committed to the apostles, whom he sent with full authority and instructions to publish it, by preaching and writing, for the good of the church in all ages. How securely then may we depend upon this word of truth ! And what blessed effects may we hope for from it, through the intercession of Christ, and his gracious influence ! And when the designs of God's love, and of the Saviour's death, shall be fully accomplished, according to his word, what a transporting, and transforming view will believers have of their Head in all his glory, as God-man Mediator ; and how glorious will they be in his presence for ever !

C H A P. XVIII.

*Christ is betrayed by Judas, and apprehended in the garden, 1,—12.
Is examined, and abused in the court of the high-priest, and denied
by Peter, 13,—27. And is prosecuted before Pilate, who examined
him, 28,—40.*

EXT.

WHEN Jesus
had spoken
these words, he
went.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Jesus had finished his discourse and prayer,
he went with the eleven apostles, over the brook
Gedren,

went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered and his disciples.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft-times resorted thither with his disciples.

3 Judas then having received a band of men, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Ju-

*Cedron**, to a garden in *Gethsemane*, (*Matth.* xvi. 36.); into which he entered with them, that he might manifest his own willingness to suffer and die at the time, and for the glorious purposes which he knew were appointed of the Father: By this means, as the first *Adam's* sin was committed, and the first promise of a Redeemer was given, so the principal part of the second *Adam's* atoning sufferings began in a garden.

2 And this was a place, which *Judas*, who was gone to betray him, (*chap.* xiii. 30.) was well acquainted with, and thought to be the most likely for finding him: For it had been customary with our Lord, during the time of the feast at *Jerusalem*, to retire thither with his disciples at night for private devotion.

3 *Judas* therefore (**) taking with him a body of *Roman* soldiers, together with officers and servants belonging to the sanhedrim, conducted them to the garden; some of them carrying lanterns and torches, to search for Jesus, and others of them being armed with swords and staves, to apprehend and secure him; some of the chief priests, captains of the temple, and elders likewise went with them, (see the notes on *Luke* xii. 52.); and so *Jews* and *Gentiles* united against him, who came to reconcile both to God in one body by his cross. (*Eph.* ii. 16.)

4 Then (**) Jesus knowing in himself the design of their marching thither, and that the set time for his last sufferings was fully come, took no care to abscond, or get away from them, as he did from the people at one time, when they would have him made a king, (*chap.* vi. 15.) and at another, when they would have laid violent hands upon him before his work was done: (*chap.* viii. 59.) But he, of his own accord, advanced toward them, and with an entire calmness of spirit said to some of them, What is the meaning of all this company's appearing here, in such a manner, at this time of night? Whom are ye come to look for?

5 They boldly answered, We are come to search for Jesus of *Nazareth*. Our Lord replied, Ye need not go far to seek him; for I am he: But what occasion is there to come out in this hostile manner against me, as if I were a thief, or some desperate villain, who would oppose force to force; since I have often appeared publicly

N O T E.

* *Cedron* run on the east-side of *Jerusalem*, between that city, and the mount of *Olives*, and was the brook, which *David*, a type of Christ, went over with the people weeping, in his flight from *Absalom*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 23,

30; and there seems to be a reference to our Lord's passing over it, in a prophecy of the Messiah's sufferings, (*Psal.* cx. 7.) where it is said, that he should drink of the brack in the way.

dasalfo which betrayed him stood with them.

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, *I am he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

7 Then asked he them again; Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou hast given me, have I lost none.

10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high-priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put

thine sword up, and peaceably in the temple, and ye might easily have found me there, if ye were minded to apprehend me: (*Luke xxii. 52, 53.*) And Judas, who betrayed him into their hands, was at the same time standing among them.

6 No sooner had Jesus uttered these words, *I am he*, but such divine power and majesty attended them, that they, who came to apprehend him, were struck with the utmost consternation and terror; and immediately, retiring backwards, fell down to the ground, like men that had no spirit left in them: He thereby shewing, that he could as easily have struck them dead, as struck them down to the ground; and that, had he not been free to suffer, they could have done nothing against him.

7 Then Jesus, instead of taking that opportunity to make his escape, said to them a second time, they being in some measure recovered from their fright, Who is it, that ye say ye are come to seek after? Thereby putting it to them, whether, after such an awful repulse, they durst still persist in their design against him. But (2^d) so hardened were they in their wickedness, that, instead of being afraid of meddling any farther, they with a daring resolution answered, as before, It is Jesus of Nazareth, that we are come for.

8 Jesus replied, with the same mildness and composure as at first, I have already told you that I am he: If therefore ye are coming to take me, I am ready to resign myself into your hands; only I insist upon it, that ye offer no violence to these my friends and followers, that are with me, but let them go free.

9 And he put in this kind word, backing it with power, for their preservation, that his own declaration might be made good to the last, wherein, with a peculiar reference to them, he had just before said, *Those that thou gavest me, for the apostleship, I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition.* (See the note on chap. xvii. 12.)

10 Upon this the soldiers took him into custody, (*Mat. xxvi. 50.*); and Simon, who was surnamed Peter, seeing him in their hands, and having one of the swords which the disciples carried into the garden, (see the note on *Luke xxii. 38.*) rashly drew it; and in the heat of his inconsiderate, though honest zeal for rescuing his Lord and Master, he, instead of waiting for orders, immediately struck at the head of one Malchus, a domestick servant (*δούλος*) of the high-priest, and cut off his right ear.

11 Then Jesus being displeased at Peter's intemperate

Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

12 Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound him.

13 And led him away to Annas first, (for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.)

14 Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. That disciple was known

rate and unseasonable zeal, because that was no time for fighting, nor was his cause and kingdom to be maintained, or propagated by force of arms, said to him, in a way of rebuke, Sheath your sword again: What I am going to suffer is not for want of power to rescue myself, but in obedience to my Father's will: And shall I not freely submit to all the tribulation and wrath that he has appointed me to undergo for his glory, and the redemption of lost sinners? This bitter cup must be drank; I am ready for it, and will admit of no opposition to it.

12 He therefore so willingly resigning, the soldiers, with their captain, and the officers of the Jewish sanhedrim, joined in seizing him, (*συλλαβόντες*) and having so done, they cruelly bound him, as if he had been the worst of malefactors and slaves; he submitting to all this for his people, that he might loose their bonds of iniquity, and lay them under the highest obligations to himself, who was willingly bound to set them free.

13 And then the rude company hurried him away, first of all to Annas, that he might see how they had secured him, and, being an experienced old man, might give his advice how to manage their process against him: For this Annas was father-in-law of Caiaphas the high-priest of that year. (See the note on Luke iii. 2.)

14 After this, they carried him, still bound, to Caiaphas himself, (*ver. 24.*) at whose house, though it was so very late, the great council were met, waiting for him to be brought before them, that they might sit in judgment upon him, (*Matth. xxvi. 57.*); and (*sc.*) this Caiaphas was the man, who, in a former debate, shewed such an inveteracy against Christ, as to advise the putting him to death at all adventures, that their nation might not be exposed to the jealousy and rage of the Romans. (*Chap. xi. 49, 50.*)

15 Now (*sc.*) while Jesus was thus harassed, and led about from place to place, like a malefactor in bonds; Simon Peter recovering a little from his first fright, in which he ran away with the rest of the apostles, followed him at a distance with an heart full of fear and concern about the event; and so did * another of his disciples,

N O T E.

* Who this other disciple was, is uncertain. It does not seem to have been John; for he was a Galilean, as well as Peter, and was an unlikely person to be acquainted with the high priest, considering that he had been only a fisherman, and had carried on his trade in Galilee: But this disciple was pro-

bably a person of figure, who lived in Jerusalem, and was one of them that believed in Jesus, but had not made an open profession of him: and some have conjectured that it was either Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, or the person at whose house Christ had lately eat the passover with his disciples.

known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went not that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals, (for it was cold,) and they warmed themselves; and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine,

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever

disciples, who being acquainted with the high-priest, and not known to be a disciple, ventured to accompany Jesus into the hall, where the council were assembled.

16 But *Peter* being a noted follower of Jesus, and having no interest at court, was more cautious, and so stood some time without the door, waiting for an opportunity to get in, which being known to that other disciple, who had an acquaintance with the high-priest, he went, and, speaking to the young woman that kept the door, procured entrance for *Peter*.

17 Soon after her admitting *Peter*, she suspecting by his looks, behaviour, or speech, or by some other means, that he belonged to Jesus, challenged him with it, saying, Are not you one of the followers and disciples of this man, who is now under examination about the high crimes that are laid to his charge? to which he, all in a flutter, replied, No, not I; he is a perfect stranger to me. (*Luke* xxii. 57.)

18 And as there were several domestic servants, and officers of the court (*οἱ δούλοι καὶ οἱ ὑποπταί*) gathered together about a fire, which they had made to warm themselves, the weather being cold; *Peter*, instead of appearing as a witness for his Lord, mingled among these servants and officers, in a distant part of the hall, to warm himself with them, that he might seem to be of the same kidney with themselves, rather than one of Christ's disciples. (See the note on *Luke* xxii. 55.)

19 In the mean while, the high-priest at the head of the council, being desirous to fix a charge of *sedition* upon our Lord, strictly examined him about his disciples, and followers, who, and what they were, how great their number, to what purpose he constantly had so many attending him, and had lately gathered such multitudes about him at his public entry into *Jerusalem*, and what were become of all that pretended to own him, since none appeared in court to speak for him? And then, to fix *blasphemy* upon him, the high-priest examined him about the doctrine he preached, what was its nature and tendency, and whether it were not contrary to the law of *Moses* and the like.

20 Jesus, knowing the malicious and unfair design of these captious questions, took no notice of what was said about his disciples; since it appeared from the very circumstances of things, that there was no likelihood of his carrying on seditious views by them: But, as to his doctrine, he replied, Whatsoever I have taught, it has been (*καθ' ὅσον*) with all openness, freedom and plainness

never taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whether the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

plainness to all sorts of people; it having been my constant custom to preach it in the synagogues on sabbath-days, and in the temple at the solemn festivals, when there has been the greatest concourse of Jews to hear me: And as I have never sought to conceal my sentiments*; so I have never taught any doctrine in private, that is different from what I have preached openly, or that I am afraid or ashamed should be known to all the world.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

21 Why then should you thus interrogate me about my doctrine, as if I were bound to accuse myself, or as if you would pay any regard to my own testimony, who am brought before you, and treated like a criminal? Ask whom you please of my hearers; ask your own friends and party; ask the scribes and Pharisees, the chief priests and rulers themselves; ask the worst of all mine enemies that ever heard me preach: Behold, there are witnesses enow; and even some of these, (*οὗτοι*) here present, know what I have preached: Let them be examined; and, if they can, let them witness against me.

22 And, when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

22 Upon his saying this, with all the justness, decency, and calmness imaginable, one of the insolent public officers, (*ὁ τοῦ ὑψηροῦ*) to shew his zeal for the honour of the high-priest, and his malignity against Christ, rudely gave him a slap on the face, saying, How dare you answer the high-priest in so free and disrespectful a manner?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

23 Jesus, instead of striking him dead, or inflicting any other judgment upon him, or even threatening him, or shewing any emotion of spirit, replied, with wonderful meekness and patience, If I have said any thing unbecoming, or amiss, accuse me to the court, that I may be punished for it: But, if what I said was unblameable and just †, why should you strike me in the presence of the council, at whose bar I stand in circumstances that call for pity, and not insults.

24 (Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.)

24 Now Jesus having been before Annas, (*ver. 13.*) he had sent him, bound like a criminal, to his son-in-law Caiaphas the high-priest.

25 And Simon Peter

25 And Peter, as has been observed, (*ver. 16, 18*) having

N O T E S.

* Though our blessed Lord taught his disciples privately, when they were alone; yet it was not any different doctrine, but so explanation of what he had preached to others. (*Mark iv. 10, &c.*) And he expressly ordered them to publish to the world what he told them in secret. *Matth. x. 27.*

† This is no way contradictory to what

Christ says, about turning the other cheek to him that smites us, (*Matth. v. 39.*); for that relates to restraining passionate and malicious resentments, litigious prosecutions, and private revenge; but do not forbid a legal defence of our own innocence against those that abuse us.

Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.

having followed him, and got into the high-priest's house, stood warming himself among the servants and officers: And as the maid-servant, who let him in, had questioned him about his being one of Christ's disciples, (*ver. 17.*) so some others of the company a little afterwards attacked him again, saying, Can you really stand in it, that you are not one of this man's disciples? (See the note on *Luke xxii. 58.*) Peter, full of confusion and dread, peremptorily, and still more rashly than before, denied that he was; saying, and swearing to it, I do not so much as know him. (*Matth. xxvi. 72.*)

26 One of the servants of the high priest (being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off) saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

26 About an hour after this, there was, among others, (*Luke xxii. 59, and Mark xiv. 70.*) one of the high-priest's domestic servants, (*ἐκ τῶν δούλων*) a relation of *Malchus*, whose ear Peter had cut off, and he, seeing him, said to him, You certainly are a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth: How can you say to the contrary? Did not I myself see you in the garden with him?

27 Peter then denied again; and immediately the cock crew.

27 Peter was so nettled at this close and home charge, that he lost all patience and government of himself, and thinking to bear this man down, by language, more like a profane servant of the high-priest's, than an holy disciple of Jesus; he, under the power of violent temptation, denied with horrid imprecations that he knew any thing about him. (*Matth. xxvi. 74.*) immediately upon which, he heard a cock crow about three o'clock in the morning which was usually called, by way of distinction, the cock-crowing. (See the note on *Matth. xxvi. 34.*)

28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not in to the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the paschal

28 After this, the council having spent a great part of the night in examining Jesus, and suffering various indignities and abuses to be offered him, and having at length got a confession from his own mouth, of his being the Messiah, and Son of God, (*Mark xiv. 61,—64.*) which they thought might be a sufficient ground for an accusation of blasphemy and sedition before the Roman governor, they very early in the morning carried him away, bound as he was, from Caiaphas's house to the judgment-hall of Pilate, who was then governor of Judea. (*Mat. xxvii. 1, 2.* see the note there.) And, though they were going to shed innocent blood, they were so hypocritically scrupulous about external rites, that they would not enter into the hall themselves, which was full of Roman soldiers, whom they accounted unclean, lest, by touching Gentiles in the crowd, they should contract a ceremonial defilement, (*Numb. xix. 22.*) but they stood without doors, to avoid pollution, that they might be fit to eat the paschal feast upon

the sacrifices, which were to be offered that day*, and were called the passover.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring you against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death?

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the king of the Jews?

29 Pilate therefore (w) was so complaisant and condescending, as to come out to them, and ask them what was the reason of their bringing Jesus to him, or what crime they had to lay to his charge?

30 The Jews, answering haughtily, said to him, You may be sure that he is a notorious evil-doer, (κακοποιός) otherwise we should not have given ourselves or you the trouble of bringing him before you, especially so early in the morning, and on such a solemn day as this.

31 Then Pilate, being displeased at their insolent and unreasonable procedure, upon the foot of general defamation, without any formal proof against him, said to them, Een take him back again to your own court, and do what ye will with him, according to the directions of your own law: For my part I do not care to meddle with him, the Roman law allowing of no such preposterous methods of prosecution. They then, being a little more humble, replied, We cannot legally put any one to death†, which is the punishment this man deserves, as a traitor to Caesar, he having set up himself for a king.

32 And this was over-ruled by Providence, to accomplish what Jesus had foretold about the manner of his death, that he should be lifted up from the earth, (chap. iii. 14, and xii. 32.) and should be delivered to the Gentiles to be crucified. (Matth. xx. 19.)

33 Pilate having found that Christ's accusers alleged against him treasonable designs, in setting up himself for a king, returned back into the judgment-hall, and, summoning Jesus to answer for himself, said, Is it true that you pretend to be the king of the Jews, in opposition to Caesar? Have you ever presumed to offer

N O T E S.

* See the note about the passover-feast on chap. xiii. 1.; and see Winib. on this place; and his appendix to Mark xiv.

† It is hard to say how far the power of life and death was at this time taken from the Jews, considering the proceedings of the high-priest and council in stoning Stephen to death, (Acts vi. 11,—15, and vii. 1, &c.) and what power Saul received from them, for persecuting the Christians unto death, (Acts xxii. 3, 5.) and how they would have judged Paul, according to their law, had not Lystra prevented them. (Acts xxiv. 6.) But as the sceptre was departed from Judah, and the law-giver from Israel, by their being made a Roman province, and subjected to Caesar as their king, it is evident that this power

was under some limitations and restraints from the Roman government. (See Lightfoot on the place.) And whether the Jews meant absolutely, or only under some restrictions, that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death; or whether they said this only because it was the time of the passover, or that the odium of condemning and executing Christ, and the people's rage on that account, might be turned off from themselves to the Romans; it was over-ruled by Providence, that the judgment should fall into the Romans' hands, for accomplishing ancient prophecies, as well as Christ's own predictions, about the manner of his death: For crucifixion was not appointed by the Jewish law for any crime whatsoever.

fer at this, or said any thing to raise the peoples expectations of it?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell thee of me?

34 Jesus, to put *Pilate* upon serious consideration, answered him, Do you ask me this question from any suspicion in your own mind, about my setting up for a temporal prince, according to the notion that the *Jews* have of their Messiah? or is this what mine enemies have suggested against me, and you are pleased to mention only from them?

35 *Pilate* answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me! What hast thou done?

35 *Pilate* replied, Am I a Jew, that I should be able to judge of their expectations from their Messiah? I do not trouble myself about these matters: But your own countrymen, and the chief priests and rulers among them, have brought and accused you to me, as a pretender to the crown. What have you done to occasion this charge upon you? or what provocation have you given them; that they are so furious against you?

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

36 Jesus answered again, To tell you the truth of the case, I am indeed the Messiah, the King of *Israel*; but my kingdom is altogether spiritual and heavenly, consisting in a dominion over mens souls and consciences, and not over their secular affairs; nor doth it in the least interfere with, or tend to the disturbance of civil government: If it did, my followers, like the servants of other earthly princes, would have shewn it, by fighting for me; and would never have so tamely suffered my cause to sink, and me to be delivered into the hands of the *Jews*: But nothing of this kind was ever attempted, or intended, which is a plain evidence, that my kingdom does not take its rise from man, nor is built upon human laws, force, or policy, nor is designed for secular honour or advantage to my subjects, or myself.

37 *Pilate* therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born; and for this cause came I unto the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.

37 Upon this, *Pilate* said to him, What then! Degrade, mean and wretched, as you now appear at my bar and bonds, do you profess that, in the sense you speak of, you really are a king? Jesus replied, Yes, I stand to what your question supposes me to have affirmed, (see the note on *Luke* xxii. 70.) I freely own myself to be, in that respect, a king: And still further to satisfy you, that my kingdom is not of a worldly constitution and design, the end for which I was born of a woman, and the purpose for which I came, as sent of God into this world, is, that by my preaching and miracles I might reveal, and confirm the truth, and nothing but the truth, concerning God and myself, and concerning the way in which sinners may be restored to his image and favour, and made for ever happy thro' me. This is the means and instrument of all my con-

quests

truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And, when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews?

40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

quests and government, and every one, that is acquainted with, and begotten by the word of truth, heartily believes and embraces my testimony, and becomes a willing subject to me, while they that love falsehood reject me.

38 *Pilate* replied, What is the truth, that you speak of? or wherein does it consist? many philosophers among us, and many of your rabbins make high pretences to truth, but give us very different accounts of it; pray, let me hear your notion of it *, or what you mean by it: And having said this, he, not staying for an answer, immediately went out of the judgment-hall again to the multitude of the *Jews*, that stood before it, (*ver.* 28.) and said to them, I have examined this man upon the great article of your charge against him, as setting-up himself for a king; and, upon the whole, I cannot find but that he is an innocent, honest and undesigning creature, and has been guilty of no capital crime, for which, by the *Roman* law he ought to die.

39 However, ye having brought him bound as a malefactor to me, and it being customary, in honour of your passover-feast, that I should pass an act of grace for discharging some one prisoner at your request; will ye agree that your king should be the object of this mercy, since nothing appears to be proved against him?

40 *Pilate* said this in hopes of putting an end to their malicious prosecution, and of procuring his liberty: But, instead of falling in with his proposal, they all, both the rulers, and the people through their instigation, cried out in a rage, as with one voice, No, no; we will not have this man released, but beg that favour for *Barabbas*. Now this *Barabbas*, whom they so shamefully preferred to the holy Jesus, and that in defiance of *Pilate's* honourable testimony to his innocence, was an infamous criminal, who lay in prison for sedition, robbery, and murder. (*Luke* xliii. 19.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

Our garden-retirements may lead our thoughts to the ruining apostacy of the first *Adam*, and from thence to God's gracious promise, and the redeeming passion of the second. Was ever any creature so willing to suffer and die, at the divine appointment, as our dearest Lord, who went, as usual, to the place where he knew his enemies would come to apprehend him, and went forth of his own accord to meet them, who otherwise, with all their lanthorns and torches, might never have found him! And as he readily resigned himself into their hands

N O T E.

* This is a very important question, which many put, but, like *Pilate*, give up again before they get any satisfaction about it: and it is uncertain whether his asking it were merely from curiosity, or from some good opinion that he had of Christ's ability to give him an account of truth; or whether

it were only for information in a judicial way, that he might the better know how to proceed in the case before him; or whether it were in a way of contempt and scorn, as one that made a jest of truth, and derided Christ for his solemn profession of coming to bear witness to it.

hands, whom he could easily have struck dead, notwithstanding all their numbers, and their weapons; so he would allow of no opposition to the greatest distresses he was called to endure in obedience to his Father's will. But was ever any one treated so unworthily, as he, who, though he was the king of *Israel*, and had just given a demonstration of his divine power and mercy, was seized with force of arms, as if he had been a desperate ruffian, was led about like a malefactor in bonds, and rudely boxed by a petty officer in the presence of the whole council, as if he had been the meanest servant or slave? And how did *Jews* and *Gentiles*, priests and people, all ranks and degrees of men, and among them a treacherous disciple, join in affronting, and persecuting him even to the death! But while, contrary to all justice and truth; decency and humanity, he was charged with the highest crimes, and arraigned for his life, he undauntedly owned his character as Messiah, the king, whose kingdom is not worldly and carnal, but spiritual and heavenly, and is to be propagated and maintained, not by the power of the sword, but by the word of truth; and *Pilate* himself, whilst he was sitting in judgment upon our Lord, was forced to honour him with such a testimony of his being faultless, as shews that his sufferings were indeed, not for his own sins, but for the sins of the people: And how was all over-ruled by Providence, to accomplish divine prophecies concerning the manner of his death, and his coming; as the Messiah, just upon the sceptre's departing from *Judah*!—His doctrine, as well as his person and cause, will bear the test of the strictest examination; it is the truth, which he came into the world to reveal and confirm, and he will stand by it, how much soever others may be offended at it, or deride it. And O how much better is it to seek Jesus as a Saviour, than to seek occasions against him! And how much better to hear him saying, *I am he*, to our support and consolation, than to our terror and confusion! He can as easily speak a word for the preservation of his disciples, as for the defeat of his enemies. But how dangerous is it to go into the way of temptation! And how dreadfully may they fall, that venture into bad company without a warrant from God!—Let *Peter's* denying his Lord, the *Jews* thirsting after his blood, and preferring *Barabbas* to him, while they were hypocritically scrupulous about external rites and ceremonies; and let *Pilate's* cowardice, carnal policy and complaisance in complying with them, fill us with sacred horror and caution: And O may the wisdom, meekness, and patience of the holy Jesus, under all indignities and hardships, be reflected upon as our example, that we may tread in his steps!

C H A P. XIX.

The remainder of Christ's trial before Pilate, 1,—15. His condemnation and Execution, 16,—18. His title placed on the cross over his head, 19,—22. Several circumstances that attended his hanging on the cross, 23,—29. His death, and the piercing of his side, 30,—37. And his burial by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, 38,—42.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

THEN *Pilate* therefore took Jesus,

PILATE being unwilling to put Jesus to death, whom he believed to be innocent, and finding that his attempt for releasing him by a mere act of grace failed, and that the people were the more enraged by his barely proposing it, (*chap. xviii. 39, 40.*) he thought of another expedient to appease their clamour, and move their compassion toward the royal prisoner: And therefore

Jesus, and scourged him.

fore he took and delivered him to the proper officer, to be stripped naked, and whipped publicly in an opprobrious and severe manner, hoping that, after this punishment, they might consent to his being released. (*Luke* xxiii. 16. See the note on *Matth.* xxvii. 26.)

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

2 And *Pilate* turned him over to his soldiers, that they, as *Herod's* men of war had before, (*Luke* xxiii. 11.) might insult him, and make themselves merry with him, under the character of a king; accordingly they, in a way of barbarous derision, wreathing a crown of thorns, clapt it on his head, and threw a purple garment upon his wounded body, in mimicry of royal robes, (see the note on *Mark* xv. 17.) and put a reed or cane into his right hand for a sham sceptre. (*Mat.* xxvii. 29.)

3 And said, Hail, king of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

3 And having thus dressed him up, they scoffingly imitating the custom of kneeling before princes, and of saluting them with honour and joy, bent the knee before him, and cried out, in a ludicrous manner, Prosperity to the king of the Jews! They likewise buffeted him with their hands, and offered many other abuses and indignities to him. (*Matth.* xxvii. 30.)

4 *Pilate* therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

4 Then (*) *Pilate* ordering Jesus to be brought forth to the Jews, who stood without, went himself before him, to dispose them to compassion, saying, See now I am presenting to you this poor man again, in circumstances of as much misery and contempt as ye could wish him to be in, that ye may apprehend no danger from him, and may be satisfied that I find nothing worthy of death, nor indeed any cause for an accusation, (*subitus accusa*) in him, who is to be pitied and despised, rather than feared or envied.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man!

5 Upon his speaking in this manner, the meek, humble, and holy Jesus, appeared before them with his mangled body, crown of thorns, and purple robe, and with his face all over smeared with spittle and blood: And *Pilate*, pointing to him, said to the Jews, Behold the poor wretched man, look at him, see what a figure he makes! Let what has been done to him suffice; and now let me discharge him.

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. *Pilate* saith

6 But when the chief priests and Jewish officers saw him under all this misery and contempt, instead of being moved with pity, they hardened their hearts against him; and, instead of attempting to prove him guilty of any fault, were enraged at *Pilate's* repeated motion for his release: They therefore cried out in a tumultuous manner, and with great vehemence and outrage, No, no, this shall not satisfy us; we insist upon it, that he be crucified. Hereupon, *Pilate* seeing that there was

saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

no appeasing them, and being very loth to comply with their demands, said; in a passion, and with a sort of sneer, If he must be crucified, even take him, and do it yourselves: I cannot in justice condemn him to death; for I can see no manner of cause for it. (See the note on *Luke xxiii. 21.*)

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

7 The Jews finding that *Pilate* was still against crucifying him, and talked ironically of their own doing it, fled to another charge, saying, We have an express law for putting blasphemers to death, (*Lev. xxiv. 16.*) and by this law he ought to die; for, said they, he has been guilty of the highest blasphemy, by calling himself the Son of God, in such a peculiar and exalted sense, as to claim equality with, and make himself God. (*Chap. v. 18. and x. 33.*)

8 When *Pilate* therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

8 *Pilate* hearing that Christ assumed the grand and awful character of an incarnate Deity, was struck with great surprize, as not knowing what to think of it, and was more than ever afraid of proceeding any further against him, lest he should bring divine vengeance on his own head.

9 And went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

9 And therefore returning into the judgment-hall, to which he remanded Jesus, he said to him, What is your original? Are you only a man, or are you an incarnate God? Tell me your parentage, and from whence you came. But our blessed Lord, knowing that *Pilate* was no competent judge of this matter, and had forfeited his right to information about it, by so cruelly using him, whilst he believed him to be innocent, thought proper to make no reply to this unseasonable question.

10 Then saith *Pilate* unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

10 Then *Pilate*, full of wonder and resentment at this seeming contempt of his authority, said to him, with an haughty air, What is the reason that you stand mute, and make no answer? Do you neither know, nor consider that you are here, as a criminal at my bar, and that your life is in my hand, who have power either to condemn you to be crucified, or to discharge you, just as I please?

11 Jesus answered, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: there-

11 Jesus, to correct his mistake and arrogance, replied, Notwithstanding all this imperious boast, you have no legal authority but from God; nor could you exercise any power to my hurt, had not my heavenly Father appointed and permitted it, for glorious ends and purposes, which you are ignorant of, and far from designing to accomplish: Though * therefore your sin

N O T E.

* Therefore (*sin* *rela*) may probably refer to *Pilate's* having judicial power from above, which the Jews at that time had not; and therefore, though he was prevailed on by their

is

therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

is great in hearkening to the clamours of the people, and in abusing your trust, as a magistrate, by using me so ill, and that in defiance of your own convictions of my being faultless; yet the sin of *Judas* and *Caiaphas*, and of all the people of the *Jews*, who have brought me before you as a criminal, is still more abundantly aggravated, as being committed against known instances of my extraordinary power and goodness, and with the greatest ingratitude and malice.

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not *Cesar's* friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against *Cesar*.

12 From this time forward, *Pilate*, being still further persuaded of *Christ's* innocence, and of the *Jews'* malice, was more than ever desirous in himself, and industrious in dealing with them, to get him discharged: But the *Jews* finding that their last accusation rather obstructed, than promoted their blood-thirsty design, returned to their former charge; and enforced it with an argument, which touched *Pilate* in the tenderest part, crying out with still greater noise and vehemence, If you will not crucify him to oblige us; yet how will you answer it to the emperor? It will be proved against you that you betray your trust, and have not a due regard to his authority and government, in case you let his competitor go free; since whosoever sets himself up for a king, in one of *Cesar's* provinces, is guilty of high treason against him, and says, in effect, that he is not its rightful sovereign.

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called in the Hebrew, *Gabbatha*.

13 When therefore *Pilate* heard them talk as if they would accuse him of unfaithfulness to *Cesar*, his fears of *Tiberius's* wrath, who was a jealous prince, bore down his concern for Jesus; and being of a timorous temper, and chusing rather to sin than suffer, he ordered Jesus, with his thorny crown and purple robe upon him, to be conducted out of the hall; (*αγορευει εσω*) and he himself went, and sat down on a throne of judgment to pass sentence upon him, in another place, which was called the stone-pavement *, (*λιθοστρωτον*) but in the *Jews* language, *Gabbatha*, which signifies a raised or elevated place.

14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto

14 And, as to the time when things were brought to this crisis, it was the day before, and so the preparation † day for the passover-sabbath, and about six of the clock in the morning, a solemn day and time, when the *Jews*, and especially the priests, ought to have been

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N O T E S.

their importunity to abuse his power, his sin was less than theirs, whose malice and envy pressed him to it.

* Dr *Lightfoot* seemed to think that this was the room *Gazith*, where the sanhedrim used to sit; and so, when the *Jews* would

not go into *Pilate's* judgment-hall, he went into theirs. See his *Hebrew* and *Talmudical* exercitation on the place.

† This was on what is called *Good-Friday* and for the time of day, see the notes on chap. i. 19. and *Mark* xiv. 25.

unto the Jews, Behold your king.

employed in sacred work: And *Pilate*, having placed himself on the judgment-seat, called to the *Jews*, saying, Look at your king; see what a miserable and despicable appearance he makes: Is this the man, from whom any danger to the government is to be expected? Is it worth while to condemn such a one to death for pretending to the crown?

15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. *Pilate* saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but *Cesar*.

15 But they, instead of being in the least mollified or ashamed, cried aloud, and eagerly repeated it, Away with him out of our sight, we hate to see him; hang him up on a cross, as one that deserves to die under a curse. *Pilate*, seeing their implacable enmity and fury against him, replied, What then, have ye no compassion for him, nor concern for your own honour? Must I pass so ignominious a sentence, as that of crucifixion, upon your king? the chief priests, though at other times they were great sticklers for *Jewish* freedom, and boasted that they were never in bondage to any man, (*chap. viii. 33.*) yet now to please *Pilate*, and serve their malicious turn, virtually renounced God's dominion over them, and publicly owned that the sceptre was departed from them, in an express declaration, that *Cesar* was their only king.

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

16 Then *Pilate*, having no longer courage to strive against the stream, passed sentence upon our Lord, delivering him up, according to their demand. (See the notes on *Matth. xxvii. 26.*) And no sooner was this done, than they hurried him away by the assistance of the soldiers, who then took off his purple robe, and put on his own clothes again, (*Matth. xxvii. 31.*); and they led him to the place of execution, like a lamb to the slaughter, without delay, lest the governor should change his mind, or the friends of Jesus should rise to rescue him.

17 And he, bearing his cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew *Golgotha*:

17 And he, carrying his cross upon his shoulders, (see the note on *Matth. xxvii. 32.*) went out of the city to a place called *Golgotha*, in the dialect then used by the *Jews*, which signifies the place of a skull, and which was, ceremonially unclean, it being the common place where criminals were executed, and many of their skulls and bones were left, (see the note on *Matth. xxvii. 33.*) and so was a fit emblem of Christ's being made sin for us.

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

18 There they crucified him in company with two thieves, (*Matth. xxvii. 38.*) one of which hung on his right hand, and the other on his left, as if he had been the greatest sinner of them all, whilst in that manner he was numbered with transgressors. (*Isa. liii. 12.*)

19 And *Pilate* wrote

19 And as it was usual for the cause of condemnation

wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, **JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

19 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to this city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

20 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The king of the Jews; but that he said, I am king of the Jews.

21 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

22 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, (and made four parts, to every soldier a part,) and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

23 They said therefore among themselves, Let us

tion to be signified in writing, and placed over the heads of those that were crucified; so *Pilate* wrote this inscription, **JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS**; and ordered it to be fixed on the top of Christ's cross, above his head; which, whatever *Pilate* designed, was over-ruled by Providence, to be, in effect, a condemnation of his own unrighteous judgment; and an honour to the holy Jesus; as having been put to that shameful death, only for asserting a title, which he had a just claim to, and could not be divested of:

20 This title was read by great numbers of Jews, that were come from all countries to celebrate the passover at *Jerusalem*: For the place of crucifixion was near the city; and the inscription was made in large letters of the *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin* tongues, the most known languages of that day; and so, as the benefit of the Messiah's death was to extend to persons of all nations, many of them had an opportunity of reading the cause for which he suffered it.

21 This was indeed such an honourable and public testimonial to the dying Saviour, as might easily be construed to his advantage; and therefore the chief priests among the Jews were highly displeased at it, and went to *Pilate* with a request, that, instead of these words, **THE KING OF THE JEWS**, it might be wrote, **HE SAID, I AM THE KING OF THE JEWS**; and so the infamy of a pretender might be fixed on his memory, and the disgrace of their king's being crucified might not lye upon them.

22 But *Pilate* was so much out of temper, for their having, in a manner, forced him to condemn Jesus, and was so offended at their boldness, in pretending, after all, to correct the form of his inscription, and God so influenced his mind to abide by this constructive testimony to Christ's real character, that he resolutely replied, What I have written shall stand without any alteration.

23 Now the soldiers having stripped Jesus of his clothes again, when they came to fasten him to the cross, took them as their own perquisite, and, while they were watching him, diverted themselves with dividing the spoil; the bulk of his clothes they laid in four parcels, of which every soldier had one, there being only four of them that were immediately employed in crucifying him: But as his upper-garment was without any seam, being woven or knit all in one piece from the top to the bottom;

24 They therefore said one to another, Do not let

us not rent it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son.

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother. And from that

us divide this coat into four parts, which would utterly spoil it; but let us cast lots, to determine which of us shall have the whole. This they accordingly did, God so ordering it in his providence, that, contrary to their design or knowledge, a remarkable prophecy of the Messiah might be fulfilled in this very circumstance, where it is said, (*Psal. xxii. 18.*) *They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture*: Hence it was that the soldiers were secretly influenced to do these things, relating to Christ's clothes.

25 And, (⁴) while Jesus hung upon the cross, several pious women stood near it, particularly his own mother, after the flesh; and her sister, *Mary*, who was the wife of *Cleophas**; and *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom he had cast seven devils. These having a touching and affectionate concern for him, ventured to get as near as they could, to behold with weeping eyes, and lament with aching hearts, the dismal tragedy, which was like a sword piercing through his mother's soul. (*Luke ii. 35.*)

26 Jesus therefore casting his eye upon his dear mother, *Mary*, as she was standing by the cross, together with that disciple whom he had all along distinguished by the most familiar tokens of his love, tenderly recommended her to his special regards: And this he did in such a prudent manner, as might soften her grief, and not expose her to the observation and fury of his enemies, as one so nearly a-kin to himself; and as might intimate, that her relation to him, according to the flesh, was then expiring, and that he died under a higher character, than that of her son, saying to her, and at the same time turning his head, and looking toward that disciple, Woman, observe the man, who will take care of you, and pay the duty, honour, and affection of a son to you.

27 Then he spoke to that disciple, saying to him, and turning his head again toward her, Behold your mother, whom I commit to your filial reverence, care, and kindness, as if she had bore you in her own body†: And

N O T E S.

* John, the writer of this Gospel, was also standing with them, as appears from the next verse; but out of modesty did not say it was himself: And *Mary*, who was of *Cleophas*, (*Μαρια ντ Κλεοφα*) is thought by some to have been, not the wife, but the daughter of *Cleophas*.

† Her husband *Joseph* was probably by this time dead: And Jesus, who had taken care of her hitherto, having none of this world's goods to leave her, gave an example

of filial love and duty, in putting her under the care of the apostle *John* to provide for her; who, though he, like the rest of the apostles, had quitted all his business and affairs in life to follow Christ, might nevertheless retain his property in what he had before he left off trade, or in what his father *Zebedee* had afterwards given him. But it is uncertain where he dwelt, and how long *Mary* lived with him.

that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

And that disciple was so affected with these words, that, in love and obedience to his Lord, he, from that time forward, took her into his own house and family, and treated her with all the respect due to a parent.

28 After this, Jesus knowing that, according to eternal agreements between the Father and him, and according to ancient prophecies concerning him, every thing (*τα πάντα*) was just upon the point of being perfectly accomplished, to the full satisfaction of divine justice; he said, as well he might, considering what a fever he was in, thro' fatigue, pain, and anguish, * I am grievously a-thirst.

29 Now there was, near at hand †, a vessel full of vinegar; and the soldiers, filling a sponge with that liquor, stuck it upon the top of a reed, or long stalk of hyssop, and lifted it up to his mouth, that he might suck it.

30 When therefore Jesus had tasted the vinegar, in accomplishment of a prophecy relating to his last moments, (*Psalms lxxix. 21.*) he said, to the honour of his Father, the confusion of devils, the joy of saints, and his own triumph, Now all is over, and done to perfection: (*τετέλεσται*) the great counsel of God my Father, my engagements to him, the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, relating to the work of redemption, and the full measure of my sufferings according to all these, are now accomplished to the utmost; the ceremonial law is fulfilled and abolished; the moral law is satisfied and magnified; and end is made of sin; an everlasting righteousness is brought in; the covenant of grace is fully confirmed; the foundation of the church is completed; God is glorified; all the powers of darkness are vanquished; and the whole work, which my Father gave me to do upon earth, is finished: And, having spoke in this manner, he, to shew his willingness to die, immediately bowed down his head, and breathed out his holy soul, saying, with faith and fervour, and with a loud voice, *Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.* (*Luke xxiii. 46.* see the note on *Matth. xxvii. 50.*)

31 Then

NOTES.

* The reason of our Lord's saying this, was not from any murmuring complaint of his sufferings; but to evidence that the most minute circumstances, which the scripture had foretold of the Messiah, were fulfilled in him, as particularly in *Psalms xxii. 15. and lxxix. 21.* *My tongue cleaveth to my jaws: and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.*

† Vinegar, mixed with water, is said to have been the drink of the Roman soldiers; and so this vessel of vinegar might be set for

their use, as they should have occasion for it, while they were attending the crucifixion: This sour liquid they gave to Christ, instead of a cordial or a cooling draught: And their hyssop, like their mustard-tree, being of much larger growth than ours, might afford a stalk long enough to reach up to his mouth, as he hung upon the cross: or a sponge full of vinegar might be stuck on the top of some other reed, in the midst of a bunch of hyssop. (*υποκατακλισηται*.)

31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day, (for that sabbath-day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

31 Then (*) the Jews went, and intreated Pilate to give orders for the legs of the three crucified men to be broken, that they might be the more effectually dispatched, and that thereupon their bodies might be taken down from the cross before the sabbath; because the day on which they were crucified was the day of preparation for an extraordinary sabbath of peculiar solemnity, it being in the passover-week: And these hypocrites pretended to have so high a veneration for this sabbath, as not to be able to bear the thoughts of its being defiled and disgraced, by the crucified bodies continuing to hang upon the cross, and being exposed to public view on that day; though, instead of making due preparation for it, they had been in the vilest manner imbruing their hands in the most innocent and noble blood that ever was shed.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

32 Accordingly, Pilate still gratifying them so far as to comply with this request, some of the soldiers came, and broke the legs of both the malefactors that were crucified with our Lord, there being symptoms of remaining life in them.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs.

33 But when they came up to Jesus, with a design of doing the like to him, as (**) they plainly saw that he was certainly dead already, they forbore breaking his legs, there being no occasion for it.

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

34 But, to put the matter past all dispute with others, as well as themselves, and to shew their spite at him, as well as to make sure of his death in the most effectual manner, one of the soldiers thrust a spear into his side; and immediately there ran out of the wound * both blood and water, so distinctly, as to be easily discerned by their different colours.

35 And he that saw it bare record: and his record is true: and he knoweth

35 And the writer of this Gospel, who was an eye-witness, took very particular notice of it, as a remarkable circumstance, which not only proved that Jesus was really dead, but likewise (as he afterwards knew) carried an intimation of the justifying and sanctifying virtue of his death; and this historian's record is faithful and true: Yea, he being not only an eye-witness of it,

N O T E.

* How far the spear entered Christ's body, and whether it struck into the cavity of the breast, or into the pericardium, and let out the liquid, in which the heart swims there; or whether it pierced the heart itself, has been variously conjectured: and possibly it may be difficult to account for this distinct flow of blood and water, upon the principles of anatomy. But it was an evident proof that Jesus was really dead; and there was something extraordinary and mysterious, if not mira-

culous, in this circumstance of his death, since the Evangelist here takes such particular notice of it, and lays such weight upon the truth of his record about it, (ver. 35.) and refers to it, (1 John v. 6, 8.) as a matter of great importance, saying, *This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood. And there are three that bear witness on earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood, and these three agree in one.*

knoweth that he
saith true, that ye
might believe.

it, but being likewise under the conduct of the Spirit of truth, is fully assured that his senses did not deceive him; but that what he here commits to writing is infallibly true, which he declares, (*1st*) to the end that ye, to whom this testimony shall come, in every age, may believe in Jesus as the true Messiah, who died and rose again for cleansing from the guilt and defilement of sin, by his blood and spirit, through faith in him.

35 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

36 For how trivial soever the circumstances of not breaking his legs, and of piercing him with a spear, may seem to be; they were ordered by Providence, that two different predictions of the Messiah might be literally fulfilled in him: One is, what God commanded about the paschal lamb, which was an eminent type of Christ, (*1 Cor. v. 7.*) saying, * *Not a bone of it shall be broken.* (*Exod. xii. 46.*)

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

37 And the other is, what the scripture says, with a plain reference to him, (*Zech. xii. 10.*) *They shall look on him whom they have pierced.*

38 And after this, Joseph of Arimathea (being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews,) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

38 And, after it appeared that Jesus was really dead, Joseph of Arimathea, that honourable counsellor, (see the note on *Luke xxiii. 50, 51.*) who was in heart well affected toward him, and a believer in him, though hitherto he had not ventured to make an open profession of it, for fear of suffering reproaches and injuries from the Jews: This Joseph, I say, being a man of figure and interest, now took courage, and going to Pilate, begged a warrant for empowering him to take down the body of Jesus, and to have the disposal of it; and Pilate granted his request, who accordingly went, and took the body down from the cross, that he might give it an honourable burial.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, (which at the first came to Jesus by night,) and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

39 There came likewise Nicodemus, who was also a ruler of the Jews, and a member of their great council, and who had formerly gone to Jesus in private by night, for satisfaction about his doctrine and character, (*chap. iii. 1, 2. and vii. 50.*); and he being a rich man, and having got more courage now than before, brought a great quantity, about an hundred pound weight, of a fine embalming mixture, composed chiefly of myrrh and aloes, for his funeral.

40 These

N O T E.

* Though God is sovereign in his institutions, and his bare command is a sufficient obligation to observe them; yet as he appointed Israel to eat the passover, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand; and they were, in that manner, to eat it in haste, because it was the Lord's passover, (*Exod. xii. 11.*) so his command that a bone of the paschal lamb should

not be broken, as well as their eating unleavened bread might likewise be designed to keep up a memorial of the haste with which God delivered them, and, as some have thought, might possibly prefigure the strength signified by unbroken bones with which Christ our passover wrought salvation, by his being crucified for us. *See Lamp. ix. Lec.*

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes, with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

40 These two persons therefore, (*) who were so remarkable for their high rank and station, and for their former cowardice and weakness of faith, joined together in testifying their affection and respect to Christ, by taking down his body from the cross, and wrapping it up with linen clothes, and with preservative, as well as fragrant spices, according to the Jewish custom in burying persons of reputation and eminence; whose bodies did not use to be embowelled, but perfumed and embalmed.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

41 Now there was a garden near that spot of ground where Jesus was crucified; and as, among the Jews, great men often built sepulchres in their gardens, which might remind them of their own mortality, amidst the delights of life, and might assist their meditations and hopes of their dead bodies rising again, like the springing of plants and flowers out of the earth: So in this garden Joseph had a new tomb hewn out of a rock, (Mat. xxvii. 60.) in which no one had ever been buried before. (See the note on chap. xi. 38.)

42 There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews preparation-day, for the sepulchre was high at hand.

42 In this sepulchre therefore, because it was so very near, they interred the body of Jesus for the quicker dispatch, it being a solemn day of preparation for the passover-sabbath among the Jews: And Providence so over-ruled these circumstances, that though he died so poor, as to have no burying-place of his own; yet he made his grave with the rich in his death*, in accomplishment of a prophecy concerning him, (Isa. liii. 9.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What struggles are there in carnal hearts, between convictions of conscience and secular interests, the fear of God and the fear of man; and how dreadfully prevalent is the corruption of nature, which bears down all religion, truth, and justice, as it did in Pilate! But how shocking must their sin be, which is committed with still higher aggravations, as the case was with the Jews! With what outrage, indignity, and barbarity was the great King of Israel used, when they cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him*, and their unrighteous demand was fulfilled in every circumstance of contempt and horror, even to the ignominious and painful death of the cross! Behold the man, who endured the cross and despised the shame; look and love, wonder and mourn. There was no fault in him: For whose sake then did he freely undergo all this, but for his people's, in the greatness of his love to them? He was falsely accused, that they might be honourably acquitted; he was wounded and scourged, that they might be healed by his stripes; he was clothed with a robe of derision, that they might be adorned with a robe of righteousness; he was crowned with thorns, that they might wear a diadem of glory; his kingly office was insulted and ridiculed, that they might obtain royal dignity, as kings to God: he was condemned, that they might be justified; he carried his own cross, and was crucified upon it, that he might

N O T E.

* As *En* and death commenced in a garden, the conqueror of both rose and triumphed over them in a like place; and Christ's

rising from a new tomb might be an emblem of his sanctifying the grave, as the first-fruit of them that sleep in Jesus.

might bear their sins and sorrows, and the curse due to them, and that they might take up their cross and follow him; he was numbered with transgressors, that they might be numbered with the righteous; he had vinegar to drink; that they might pledge him in a cup of salvation, joy, and praise; he bowed the head, and gave up the ghost, that they might be exalted, and live for ever; he was buried in the grave, that he might sanctify it for them; he finished the whole work of their redemption, that no demands of satisfaction to justice might be made upon them; and the benefit of all this extends to sinners of the Gentiles, *Romans*, and *Greeks*, as well as *Jews*. His enemies could have had no power against him, without his Father's appointment, and his own free consent; but many prophecies were hereby fulfilled in him, and the title, which *Pilate* ordered, as if it were a disgrace, owned him to be the Messiah, the King. With what holy confidence and joy may believers now behold their King! And how worthy is he of their imitation, in his meekness, patience, and holy fortitude under all his sufferings, in his filial care of his mother after the flesh, and in his resignation and faith, whereby he committed his departing soul into his heavenly Father's hand! And how can he embolden the most timorous of his disciples to own him in the worst of times! His crucifixion is recorded by a faithful eye-witness, that we might believe, and be partakers of the virtue of his death, as signified by the water and blood, which proceeded from his wounds, for the remission of our sins, and cleansing us from all unrighteousness.

C H A P. XX.

The resurrection of Christ is proved by his body's not being found in the sepulchre, and the grave-clothes lying in good order there, 1,—10. By two angels appearing to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, 11,—13. By Christ's own appearing to her, 14,—18. By his appearing that evening to all the apostles, except Thomas, 19,—25. And by his appearing to them again that day seven-night, Thomas being then with them, 26,—31.

TEXT.

THE first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene, early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

PARAPHRASE.

ON the first day of the week, after the sabbath was over, (see the note on *Matth. xxviii. 1.*) *Mary Magdalene*, with some other women, in the fervour of their zeal, and that they might the better pass along uncovered, set out early in the morning, before it was quite day, and got to Christ's sepulchre by sunrise, (*Mark xvi. 2.*) in order to a further embalment of his body; and, at their arrival, they found the great stone was removed, which, while they were looking on, *Joseph of Arimathea* had laid at the mouth of the tomb the day before the sabbath. (*Matth. xxvii. 60, 61.*)

^a Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have

2 Hereupon she, with the rest of the women, looking into the sepulchre, missed the body of Jesus, but saw two angels, who told them that he was not there, but was risen: (*Luke xxiv. 3,—6.* see the note there.) Then they, full of wonder, fear, and joy, hastened away to the apostles; and *Mary*, speaking particularly to *Peter* and *John*, the beloved disciple, said to them,

We

have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we knew not where they have laid him.

We have been at the sepulchre, and, instead of finding the body of the Lord Jesus, were surprized with something like an appearance of angels, who told us he was risen; (*Luke xxiv. 4,—9.* But, alas! we suspect the vision, and are ready to believe that, either some of his enemies in spite to him, or some of his friends, with a kind design of taking his body into their custody, have removed it to some other place, we know not where *

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

3 *Peter* and *John*, being startled at this unexpected and amazing account, immediately ran to the sepulchre, that they might see how things stood there, and that, in an affair of such vast importance, they might judge for themselves.

4 So

N O T E.

* Οὐκ οἶδμεν ποῦ, we know not where, in the plural number, intimates that the other women were with Mary at the sepulchre at least, and saw that the body of Jesus was removed, before she went to the apostles; it was likewise upon their telling what they had seen, and what the angels had said, that *Peter* got up and ran to the sepulchre: (*Luke xxiv. 9,—11. 23, 24.*) And we need not much wonder that, notwithstanding all this, the women, under their strong prejudices, fears, and unbelief, suspected the body of Jesus to have been removed by the hands of men; since we are assured that *Mary*, after she had seen the angels, expressed herself in the same manner to them, *ver. 12, 13.* of this chapter. It is indeed very difficult to settle the account of this part of the history, in its proper connection with what is said by the other Evangelists. But, upon carefully comparing them together, it seems to me, that there were two appearances of the angels to the women; and that *Mark* and *Luke* speak only of the first, whilst *Matthew* and *John*, after mentioning the womens coming to the sepulchre, and finding it open, with some other circumstances, pass on to the second: For *Mark xvi. 5.* and *Luke xxiv. 3.* speak of the womens entering into the sepulchre: but *Matthew xxviii. 6.* and our Evangelist, *ver. 11.* represent *Mary* as standing without: *Matthew* says nothing about the angel's message particularly to *Peter*; whereas *Mark xvi. 7.* expressly mentions it; and *Luke xxiv. 9, 12.* says, that, upon delivering their message, *Peter* ran to the sepulchre; and our Evangelist speaks of this as having been before *Mary* saw the angels here mentioned, *ver. 2, 12.* Again, *Mark xvi. 8.* says the women fled from the sepulchre, trembled and amazed, like persons terrified at the sight, as one might reasonably expect them to be at the angel's first appearing again, and speaking to them; but *Matthew xxviii. 8.* tells us,

they departed with fear and great joy, which mixture of passions very well suits the temper they might be supposed to be in at the angels appearing again, and repeating their former declaration. But that which seems to determine the point is, that *Matthew xxviii. 9.* says, As the women went to deliver the angel's message to the disciples, *Jesus met them*; and yet it appears from all the other Evangelists, that none of them had seen him, when they went with this first message to the apostles; But it is evident from our Evangelist, in this chapter, *ver. 12,—18.* that *Mary* saw him immediately after the vision of angels there mentioned, and then went to the apostles again to make her report of it; and, as appears from *Matthew xxviii. 5 —11.* the other women, immediately after the vision there recorded, saw Jesus, which was either in company with *Mary*, or soon afterwards by themselves; and then they went forward with the like tidings to the apostles. This appears to me to be the most natural account of these things, and takes off the difficulty of reconciling all the Evangelists together, beyond any thing I have met with, either in the harmonists, or other expositors, that have come within my notice. But as I had not fallen upon this thought, till after the Paraphrase on *Matthew* was printed, I hope what little disagreement with this scheme may be found there, will be excused by the reader.—Some suppose that the narrative from the beginning of this chapter to *ver. 18.* is of facts entirely new; but others take them to be mostly different circumstances of the same facts, and that *Mary Magdalene* only is mentioned, because she was the most remarkable zealous, and active woman, and the principal speaker in the whole of this affair; and I have chosen to represent it in a consistency with the last of these views, at least till we come to *ver. 11.*

4 So they ran both together; and the other disciple did overtake Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lying;

7 And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

4 So they both set out in all haste together, like men eager to run a race; and *John* being the younger of the two, and not so depressed with fear and guilt, as *Peter* was, on account of his having denied his Lord, ran faster than he, and reached the tomb before him.

5 And he, stopping at the mouth of the sepulchre, stooped down to look into it, and plainly saw that the body of Jesus was really gone, and that the linen clothes in which it was wrapped were left behind it; but being timorous, and full of consternation, he did not venture in, to make a more exact scrutiny.

6, 7. Then *Peter* hastening after him, as fast as he could, soon came up to the place, and, being naturally a man of a more adventurous temper, went directly into the sepulchre itself, that he might get the fullest satisfaction possible about the true state of things there: And when he came to survey it in the strictest manner, he not only found that the body of Jesus was removed, but saw both the linen clothes that had been wrapped about it, and the napkin which had been bound about his head; and observed that they were not thrown in a heap together, but were folded up, and laid apart in different places from each other, which was a certain indication that no person, whether friend or foe, had taken away the body in a hurry.

8 Thereupon the other disciple, who first arrived at the sepulchre, took courage, from *Peter's* example, to enter into it likewise; and he seeing all these circumstances, and comparing them with what the women had said about the vision and admonition of the angels, (*Luke* xxiv. 9.) was in some measure persuaded*, merely upon these considerations, that Jesus was really come to life again, and had no occasion for burial-clothes; as he indeed had not, being to die no more.

9 For hitherto, tho' Christ had so often referred to Old Testament-predictions, and declared that they must be accomplished in himself; yet such was the stupidity and backwardness of all the disciples, to entertain any notions of a dying Messiah, that neither *Peter* nor *John* understood the meaning of those scripture-prophecies, which spoke of his resurrection from the dead, or had any hope about it on that account†.

10 Then

N O T E S.

* *Peter* wondered at these things, (*Luke* xiv. 12.) but it does not appear that he, as yet, believed that Christ was risen from the dead: And as angels can appear or disappear at pleasure, neither of these disciples saw them at the sepulchre, to help their

faith, which was in a little time to be satisfied, and confirmed by Christ's own appearing to them.

† So wonderful was the wisdom of God, in giving unquestionable evidence of Christ's resurrection, that his enemies, who were afraid

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

10 Then these two disciples, having learnt as much as they could for the present, and being afraid lest, were they to stay long at the sepulchre, some suspicion might be raised about their tampering with the body of Jesus, returned home (*exiit*) to their own companions, to tell them what they had seen, and confer with them about it, and to wait for further discoveries of this important event.

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping: and as she wept she stooped down, and ~~was~~ *looked* into the sepulchre.

11 But, soon after these things, *Mary Magdalene* being returned to the tomb, with an heart full of perplexity, doubts, and fears, and desirous of hearing some good tidings of her beloved Jesus, stood lamenting her loss without-side of the entrance into the sepulchre; and as she was venting her grief in tears, she stooped down, and looked wishfully into the tomb, like one that could not tell how to depart till she found him.

12 And seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

12 And there she again saw two angels in bright and glorious apparel, and in human form, (see the note on *Matth. xxviii. 6.*) one placing himself where the head, and the other where the feet, of the body of Jesus had lain; and so they resembled the appearance of the cherubims at both ends of the mercy-seat, and paid a visible honour to their Lord, as if he had rose up between them, who had been so lately crucified between two thieves.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? she saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

13 And one of them spoke to her, saying, in a kind and tender manner, Woman, why should you thus grieve and cry, who have more reason to rejoice? She replied, Alas! I have cause enough for my sorrow and tears: For I have lost my dearest Lord; some unknown persons have removed his body from this sepulchre, where it was laid, and I cannot learn, by any means, where they have put it, or what is become of it.

14 And, when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

14 And, having spoke these words, she flung herself round *, like one in an agony, and one desirous to look every way, to see if she could get any tidings of her Lord, nothing short of which could satisfy her; and instantly she saw Jesus himself standing near her: But little expecting him there, and her eyes being dim with tears, and in modesty turned off from steadfastly looking at him, she knew not that it was he.

15 Then

N O T E S.

afraid of it, and did all they could to prevent it, were jealous about it; and his own disciples, who could not but heartily wish for it, thought nothing of it; though afterward, being fully convinced, they bore a brave and noble testimony to it.

* Perhaps she heard the noise of Christ's feet behind her, and looking to see who it

was, might not observe his face at the first glance; or if she did, he could easily so affect her organs of sight, as to prevent her knowing him, till the time was come for manifesting himself to her, as he dealt with the disciples in the way to *Emmaus*. (*Luke xxiv. 16.* See the Paraphrase and note there.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? she, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, *Rabboni*, which is to say, Master.

15 Then Jesus said to her, Woman! What is the reason of your weeping at this rate? Who is it that you want, and are inquiring after? She supposing him to be the man * who had the care of the garden in which the sepulchre was, replied, Sir, no wonder I am in so much trouble; the body of a dear friend of mine was lately buried here: If you, or any by your order, have taken it from hence, I earnestly beg the favour of you to tell me where it is lodged, and I'll take care to give it a safe and honourable interment.

16 Hereupon Jesus, designing now to discover himself to her, spoke with his usual voice, and in the same affectionate manner as formerly; and calling her by her name, said, What! Is it you, *Mary*, that are lamenting after your beloved? at which, she turned her face and eyes toward him, and immediately knowing him, said, with faith, affection, and reverence, in the *Jewish* language, † *Rabboni*, which was the highest title of honour that was ever given to any of their teachers, and signifies *my Master*.

17 Then she, in a perfect rapture of love and joy, running to embrace him, and to catch hold of his feet and adore him, as all the women did likewise, when they saw him, (*Matth. xxviii. 9.*) Jesus, to restrain her, said, Do not stay now to express your affection in this manner to me, whom you will have opportunities hereafter of seeing again: For as I have not yet ‡ ascended, so I am not just now going up to my heavenly Father: But hasten thou away, with all speed, to my poor, disconsolate, and distressed disciples, whom I still love as much as ever, and whom I esteem and own as my brethren,

NOTES.

* It was natural for her to think that it might be the gardener, his business lying there, and that he might be ready to give her what information he could, since he belonged to *Joseph*, who had shewn such friendship to Jesus: However, the distress of her spirit inspired her with courage to beg this favour of him.

† Several critics have observed that, as *Rabbi* is more emphatical than *Rabb*, so *Rabban*, or *Rabbon* is more emphatical than *Rabbi*, and signifies such a master as is of chief eminence and authority; and so *Mary* calling Christ *Rabboni*, with an appropriating pronoun, saluted the risen Saviour as her great Master, whom she affectionately loved, and revered, and claimed an interest in.

‡ The verb *ἀνέβη* and *ἀνέβησαν*, used here and in the latter part of the verse, is active, as it likewise is in *chap. iii. 13.* and *vi. 61.* and *Apb. iv. 8, 9, 10.* to signify that our Lord's ascension was by his own power, as his own act, or that he was not passive in

it, as believers will be, who, I think, are never said in a literal sense to ascend to heaven, but will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, (*1 Thess. iv. 17.*) And though his disciples had so lately forsaken him in the time of his reproach and sufferings, and he was now risen to, and going to take possession of his glory; yet he was not ashamed to call them brethren; and this being the first time of his ever directly calling them so, may intimate that he had then secured, and established this happy relation between himself and them, and that his exaltation would be no abatement of his condescension and grace to them. Dr. Goodwyn's sense of the former part of this verse is, (*μὴ ἀνέβη*) do not at present in so familiar a manner hang about me, for I am not yet ascended, as I shall be ere long: And when you and I shall be in heaven together with all my saints and children, you shall have familiarity enough with me. Vol. IV. Part II. pag. 112, 113.

ren, and say unto them, I ascribed unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.

thren, having taken them into my Father's family, and made them heirs with myself of the glory to which I am going : And tell them, as from me, that I am risen to immortal life, and not to set up a temporal throne among them on earth ; and that, according to what I lately said to them, (*chap. xiv. 2, 3.*) I am about to ascend to my own Father, who is so by nature, and to their Father, who is so by adoption and grace ; and to my God, who is in covenant with me, as their head, and to their God, who is in covenant with them, through me, and under me, and in whom they may have the greatest confidence on my account.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

18 Accordingly *Mary Magdalene*, preferring present duty to present enjoyments, went immediately in obedience to his command, and, with an air of pleasure and satisfaction in her countenance, told the disciples that the Lord Jesus had appeared to her, and had sent her with the wonderful condescending, and gracious tidings, which she rehearsed as from himself, to assure them of his great love, care, and concern for them.

19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

19 After this, in the evening of the very same day on which he arose and appeared to *Mary Magdalene*, viz. the first day of the week ; when the disciples were gathered together in a private room, and were comparing notes about his resurrection, (*Luke xxiv. 34,—36.*) after the doors were fastened, (*θυρὰν κλεισμένην*) for fear of being discovered and broke in upon by the Jews, Jesus himself, whose divine power could easily make his way, (*see the note on Luke xxiv. 37.*) came in his usual form, before they were aware, to confirm his love to them, and their faith in him ; and, standing in the midst of them, he, instead of upbraiding them for, or taking any notice of their having so shamefully deserted him in his late distress, saluted them in a friendly, affectionate, and authoritative manner, saying, All safety, comfort, and quietness, and the best of prosperity, be to you, as consisting of peace with God, with one another, and in your souls ; *I have blessed you, and ye shall be blessed.*

20 And, when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

20 And as, at this sudden appearance and salutation, they were in a great fright, imagining that they saw a ghost, (*Luke xxiv. 37.*) he, to rectify their mistake, immediately presented to their view his hands and feet, (*Luke xxiv. 39.*) and his side, that they might see the scars of the wounds, which had been made on all those parts at his crucifixion ; and so might be the better satisfied that it was really himself who then appeared among them. And they being thereby convinced that it was the same body which had been crucified, were fill-

ed with exceeding great joy, he therein making good his promise of *seeing them again, that their hearts might rejoice after their sorrow.* (Chap. xvi. 22.)

20 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

21 Then, they being recovered from their surprise, Jesus repeated his blessing upon them, with further enlargement, saying, The excellent peace, which I promised you, (chap. xiv. 27.) I am now come to confer in the most effectual manner upon you: And as my heavenly Father sent me into the world, to discharge the office of the Messiah; even so I, by my plenary authority, and in proof of my mediatorial commission, send you to discharge the office of apostles and ministers, in preaching the gospel to every creature, and to confirm it with miraculous signs wherever ye may go. (Mark xvi. 15, 17, 18.)

22 And, when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the holy Ghost.

22 And, having spoke these words, he breathed upon them, in an emblematical way, to intimate that the Spirit proceeded from his divine person, as truly as the breath did from his human body; and that as, in the creation of this world, God *breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul*, (Gen. ii. 7.); so in the new creation, he could as easily convey his quickening spirit to them, as breathe upon them; and at the said time he said to the disciples, with all the authority of a God, Receive ye now the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost, to enlighten your minds, and strengthen your faith in me, the risen Saviour, as an earnest of what ye shall receive more abundantly a little while hence, for your spiritual illumination, sanctification, and consolation, and for your assistance and success in the ministerial work, which I commit to you.

23 Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.

23 And this shall be attended with such divine authority, that whoever sincerely believes in me, according to the gospel which I send you to preach, and ye thereupon declare him to be forgiven all trespasses; he is certainly forgiven, by the riches of divine grace, on my account, and may take the comfort of it: And whoever persists in unbelief, finally rejecting me, and my gospel of salvation, which I send you to publish, and ye thereupon declare him to be in a state of condemnation; his sins are not blotted out, or forgiven, but lye in judgment against him, as he will find to his sorrow; so that the sentence of absolution or condemnation shall be valid, which ye shall regularly pronounce in my name and authority, according to my word, (Mark xvi. 16.) * God himself will confirm it,

and

N O T E.

* What is here said is applicable, according to the Paraphrase, to every faithful mi-

nister of Christ, as well as the apostles, to encourage them in the discharge of their office.

But

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came,

and proceed according to it in the great day.

24 But when the blessed Jesus made this gracious visit to the rest of the apostles, *Thomas*, who was likewise called *Didymus*, (see the note on chap. xi. 16.) and was chosen and set apart to be one of them that were originally twelve in number, was not present with them; and as this neglect was his own great loss, so providence over-ruled it to make way for such further evidence of Christ's resurrection from the dead, as might put it past all reasonable dispute, in that, and succeeding generations.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

25 The rest of the disciples therefore, meeting with him a little afterwards, said to him with a transport of joy, We ourselves have seen the Lord Jesus alive again, who spoke in the most endearing manner to us. But *Thomas*, though he had often seen Christ's mighty works, and heard him speak of his resurrection, and was present at the report that the women made of it, as actually come to pass, (*Luke xxiv. 9.*); and though he knew his brethren to be sober and faithful men, whom Jesus had chosen to be his witnesses; yet so desperate was his unbelief, that he replied, Alas! ye have been some way or other imposed upon, as we all know the women were, when they told us just such another unlikely story, (*Luke xxiv. 11.*) For my part, I do not believe a word of what you say, the thing itself is impossible; and unless I were to see him and his scars with mine own eyes, and feel him with mine own hands, so as to put my finger into the dents made in his hands by the nails that fastened him to the cross, and my hand into the hole that the soldier's spear made in his side, I will never believe that he is really risen from the dead.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within

26 And in this unbelieving condition he continued, distressed and comfortless, as a stranger to his brethren's joys, till the next return of the first day of the week*, when the disciples assembled privately again; and

N O T E S.

But if our Lord meant any thing further, which was peculiar to the apostles, it might refer to the power he gave them of discerning spirits, and thereupon of healing the corporal diseases of such as they perceived had faith to be healed, as in the case of the cripple at *Lystra*, (*Acts xiv. 8, 9, 10.*) and of inflicting corporal punishments on others, whom they knew to be hypocrites and enemies to the gospel: Instances of which we have in *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, and *Elymas* the sorcerer. (*Acts v. 3, &c. and xiii. 10, 11.*) see the note on *Matth. xvi. 19.*

* After eight days in the Jewish idiom sig-

nifies a week, or that day seven-night, which, including the day reckoned from, and the day reckoned to, is eight days, (see the note on *Matth. xxvii. 63.*); probably Christ, in his former meeting of the disciples on the first day of the week, gave them an intimation of his appointing it for the New Testament-sabbath, if not of his visiting them personally again at its next return: and some think that he appeared to them every first day of the week, between his resurrection and ascension to heaven: However, he so sanctified and blessed it, by these vouchsafements of his presence new and before, and by the wonderful

with in; and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

and *Thomas* having suffered so much by his late absence, took care to be with them, they still admitting him to their society as a sincere disciple, though at present under the power of unbelief, from which they hoped that Christ would some way or other soon recover him: Then Jesus came into the room, after the doors had been fastened in the same manner, and for the same reason as before (*ver.* 19.) and standing visibly among them, repeated his former friendly salutation, saying, I command that all the blessings of spiritual peace and prosperity may rest upon you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it in to my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

27 Hereupon Jesus, knowing the incredulity of *Thomas's* heart, and yet his real concern not to be deceived in a point of the last importance, so far condescended to his weakness, as to speak particularly to him by name; and instead of upbraiding him for his obstinacy and perverseness, in refusing the reasonable and sufficient evidence that had been given before, he, with amazing endearments of grace, said to him, Come *Thomas*, take the very proof that you yourself insist on, of my being risen indeed; reach hither your finger, and examine the wounds that were made in my hands by your own feeling as well as eye-sight; and then put your hand to the hole that was made in my side; satisfy yourself by all means possible, that this is a real body, the very same which was crucified; and be no longer incredulous; (*arise*) but believe that I am risen from the dead, depending on me for all its glorious consequences*: And this word of command was attended with such power, as worked effectual faith in his heart.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

28 Then *Thomas*, full of admiration at the condescension and grace of Christ, and at his own stupidity and backwardness to believe, and full of holy shame and joyful ecstasy, cried out, I now declare, before all the company, that I am fully satisfied, and do believe thee to be the risen Redeemer, and the God of all salvation;

N O T E S.

wonderful effusion of his Spirit at the following pentecost, that from thenceforward it was constantly observed by the apostles, and the primitive church, and was commonly called, by way of eminence and distinction, the *Lord's day*. (*Rev.* i. 10.)

* It is uncertain whether *Thomas* made the experiment, that was offered him; it rather seems as if he did not, by Christ's only saying in the next verse, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: But, be this as it will, his bare seeing and handling the risen body of our Lord would have been no more effectual of themselves to cure his unbelief,

than the other evidences were, that had been given him before; for a carnal heart might have raised some perverse and unreasonable objections against these proofs, as well as them: And therefore, though these were extraordinary means of this divine and appropriating faith, and strong inducements or motives to it; yet it was the word of Christ set home upon his heart with power, which began it in him; for it was immediately upon Christ's saying, *He not faithless, but believing*, that *Thomas* cried out, *My Lord, and my God*.

vation; as such I adore thee, and I take thee for my Lord, and my God.

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

29 Jesus replied, in a way of gentle rebuke; *Thomas*, you have indeed now believed, being induced thereto by the testimony of your senses; it is well for you, that any means have been at length made effectual to overcome your unbelief: But their faith is still more noble, spiritual, and ingenuous, and brings more honour to God, who believe in me, barely upon a divine testimony sufficiently notified, as the Old Testament-saints did, whose faith rested on a mere word of promise; and as they will do, who shall hereafter believe through the word of my inspired witnesses, though it be not confirmed to them by sensible evidence, as it hath been to you.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

30 And as Jesus gave these undeniable attestations to his resurrection, by doing and saying wonderful things, to satisfy the doubts of his disciples about it; so he added many other infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days after his passion, (*Acts* i. 3.) which are not recorded in this sacred history.

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life thro' his name.

31 But these particulars are recited, under divine suggestion and conduct, as sufficient specimens of the rest, that ye, to whom these presents shall come, may be induced to believe, that Jesus is indeed the Saviour of sinners, whom the Father has anointed to, and has owned and accepted in his office, and that he is the eternal Son of God, possessed of the divine nature and perfections, and demonstrated to be so, by his resurrection from the dead, (*Rom.* i. 4.) and that, thro' faith in him as such, ye may be partakers of spiritual and eternal life, by the merit of his blood, and the power of his resurrection, who is alive for evermore, and has the keys of hell and of death. (*Rev.* i. 18.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Blessed be God for the strong and numerous evidences he has given of Christ's resurrection from the dead. How clearly does this appear from the open sepulchre, from the orderly position of his burial-clothes there, from the testimony of angels, and from his own frequently shewing himself after his crucifixion to many faithful witnesses, who saw and conversed with him! And how were the jealousies, and distrusts of his disciples about it, over-ruled by Providence into occasions of transmitting to us the more abundant and unquestionable confirmation of this fundamental article of our faith, which we are assured was likewise attended with many other infallible proofs, that are not recorded in this book! And O the astonishing condescension and love of the risen Saviour to them, that had so lately forsook him in his last extremities; to *Peter*, who had so shamefully denied him; and to *Thomas*, whose unbelief was so obstinate and perverse! He appeared and pronounced peace unto them, and owned them, as he does all that believe in him, for brethren, and is gone to heaven to manage and secure their interests with his Father, and their Father, his covenant-God, and their God. Happy souls! that are brought to believe in the risen and exalted Jesus, and to claim and adore him, as their Lord and their God. Though we have not

the sensible evidence which he vouchsafed to those witnesses of his resurrection; yet we have faithful and unexceptionable records from one, whom he inspired with the Holy Ghost, to be the ground of faith in him, as the Son of God, and our Saviour: And though darkness and fears may sometimes over-spread our minds in an hour of temptation, Christ can easily speak us into faith and joy by his word and Spirit; and blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed; they shall obtain eternal life through his name. But with what care should we take all opportunities of attending religious assemblies, and observing the Lord's day, in hopes of meeting with Jesus, and of hearing him speak peace to our souls!

C H A P. XXI.

Christ discovers himself again to several disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and eats with them, 1,—14. Orders Peter to feed his sheep and lambs, 15,—17. Foretells the manner of Peter's death, 18, 19. And checks his curiosity about John, 20,—23. The conclusion of this gospel, 24, 25.

TEXT.

AFTER these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the appearances of Jesus, that have been already recorded, the disciples, as he had ordered them, (*Matth. xxviii. 10.*) retired from Jerusalem to Galilee; and as he had promised to meet them there, so before his interview with them all together on a mountain, according to his appointment, (*Matth. xxviii. 16.*) he took an opportunity to discover himself again to several of them, at the sea of Tiberias, which is also called the sea of Galilee; and it was in the following manner:

1 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

2 Simon Peter and Thomas, who was likewise called Didymus, and had now got over his unbelief, and Nathanael, an inhabitant of Cana in Galilee, as also James and John, the two sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples * of the Lord, were got together waiting for the appointed meeting, according to his promise, and in obedience to his command.

3 In the mean while, that they might not be idle, but employ themselves in some useful way for a livelihood, Peter said to the rest of his brethren, I'll go a fishing; and they, being desirous to keep together, told him they would go along with him: Accordingly they all went, and forthwith took a boat for their purpose, and spent their night in fruitless labour, catching nothing; God so ordering it in his providence, to make the

N O T E.

* It is uncertain who these were; but Andrew and Philip being Galileans, (*chap. i. 44.*) some have thought that they were these

other two: And yet it is plain, from *ver. 7.* and *20.* that John was one of this company, though he is not here mentioned.

the following miracle, and the instruction designed by it the more remarkable.

4 But, when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now, when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his father's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred fathoms,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw, a fire

4 And (th) the next morning Jesus came, and stood on the shore within sight and call: Nevertheless, (living) the disciples, not expecting to meet with him there, were so far from knowing him, that they took him for a perfect stranger.

5 Then our blessed Lord, as if he had wanted either to gratify his curiosity, or to buy provisions, called to them, saying, in a familiar manner, Have ye caught any fish, (trout) my lads? They replied, No, none at all.

6 Whereupon Jesus designing to discover himself to them by further miraculous signs, and to give them a hint of the great success they should have in their ministerial work, according to his appointment and command, and by his assistance, though without him they could do nothing to good purpose; he spoke to them again, saying, Throw your net on the right side of the boat, and ye will certainly find a great shoal there. Then the disciples being willing to try what might be done, rather than return without catching any thing, cast their net according to his direction; and it inclosed such a surprizing number of fishes, that they could not draw it up into the boat.

7 This was such a demonstration of Christ's dominion over the fishes of the sea, (Psal. viii. 6, 8. compared with Heb. ii. 6, 8.) and was so like the miracle he had wrought in the same lake before, (Luke. v. 5,—10.) that his favourite disciple John, reflecting upon it, and being under divine illumination, said to Peter, Undoubtedly this is no other than the Lord Jesus, who now again appears to us: Upon which Peter, being convinced that it really was so, immediately girded about him his fisher's coat*, and in the warmth of his love and zeal, jumped, at all adventures, into the water, to get to Christ with the utmost speed.

8 And the rest of the disciples made the best of their way to him, as fast as they could, in the boat, dragging the net, that was so full of fish, along with them in the water; for they were but about an hundred yards off from the land.

9 Now, as soon as they came ashore, they saw a good fire

NOT E.

* The critics variously dispute about this coat, (chiton) some taking it to be an inner, and others an outward garment; but which ever it was, there is no occasion to suppose that Peter was quite naked before: For persons are said to be naked, when they have only their shirt on, or even when they

have only stripped off some of their upper-clothes, (1 Sam. xix. 24. 2 Sam. vi. 20. and Matt. xxv. 36.); and sometimes when their garments only hang so loose about them, that their flesh may be seen, (Isa. xx. 2, 3); and perhaps Peter only girt the garment about him which was loose before.

a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught,

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus then cometh and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

fire ready made, to warm and dry them, and dress their food; and saw fish already broiling on the coals, and bread at hand to be eaten with it*.

10 And that they might take the more particular notice of the preceding miracle, in the great draught they had made, as also that they might eat the fruit of their labour, he ordered them to bring some of the fish, which they had caught, and to dress it on the coals to make up their meal.

11 Then Peter went, and, with the assistance of his brethren, drew the net, till they landed it; and it was found, upon a careful reckoning, to be full of large fishes, to the number of one hundred fifty and three: And though they were (*μεγαλὰ*) so great, strong, and many; yet, by another miraculous operation of Christ's power, the net was preserved † from being rent and torn.

12 Jesus seeing with what awe the disciples were struck at his presence, and at his performing these miracles, said to them, in a kind and affable manner, Come, sit down, and eat with me, (see the note on *Luke xxiv. 43.*); which he did as a further proof of the reality of his resurrection, and as an emblem of that spiritual, free, and friendly communion he would have with them, while they should remain upon earth, tho' he was risen to be glorified, and of the still more intimate communion he would admit them to in heaven. And they were so fully satisfied of its being the Lord himself, that none of them thought there was any room to ask him, whether he were or not: nor durst they venture to put such a question to him, because it would have carried an appearance of remaining unbelief.

13 Then, they sitting down, he went and placed himself among them, having, as the master of the feast, asked a blessing on the food, which he continued to do after, as well as before his death, to set us an example, (*Luke xxiv. 30.*); and he distributed both the bread and fish among them.

14 Now this was the third time, (*chap. ix. 19, 26.*) that Jesus discovered himself, as really alive, to any considerable number of his disciples together, after his resurrection, though he more privately appeared, on various

N O T E S.

* 'Tis highly probable that Christ, as the Lord of the earth, as well as of the sea, had miraculously provided all this for their speedy refreshment, and for a further manifestation of his power and mercy on their behalf.

† In a former miracle of this kind, (*Luke i. 6, 7.*) the net broke, and yet the fish were

secured; but in this the net was kept whole, notwithstanding the stoppage of the great fishes. Perhaps, as some have thought, that net was their own, and this was borrowed, the disciples having left off their fishing trade; and so Christ preserved it from damage, to teach us to take care of borrowed goods.

15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? he saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

various occasions, to several particular persons *.

15 After they had done eating, and Christ had thereby given them tokens of his friendship, he thought it a proper season tacitly to reprove *Peter* for his late shameful denials of him, and to intimate the greatness of his own love, in forgiving him, as also to admonish him of his duty for time to come, and to satisfy him, and the rest of the disciples, that he had restored him to his commission, as well as taken him into favour, notwithstanding all that had passed: And therefore he spoke to him particularly, by his original name, and not by that which he himself had given him with a view to his strong faith, (*Matth. xvi. 17, 18.*) saying, *Simon, son of Jonas, you not long ago said, Though all men be offended because of thee, yet will not I: (Matth. xvi. 33.)* Have you indeed a greater affection to me than † any of these my disciples have? *Peter* answered, Lord, thou were I to be judged of by my late behaviour, there is too much reason to suspect me, and though I dare not pretend to exceed my brethren in their love, having too much already experienced the vanity of such presumptuous thoughts; yet I dare humbly appeal to thee, that thou knowest I sincerely love thee. Jesus replied, Shew then your love to me, in exercising a tender care toward the weakest of my flock, by administering such doctrines, as may be refreshing and strengthening to them whom I now commit to your charge.

16 He saith unto him again the second time, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

16 Again he said to him a second time, *Simon, son of Jonas, have you then a hearty and affectionate love for me? Peter* answered as before, Yea, Lord, I trust I can abide by this appeal, that thou knowest I have a sincere desire toward thee, esteem of thee, and delight in thee. Jesus replied again, Let it then appear by your discharging the office of a faithful shepherd toward all my sheep that may come under your care.

17 After

N O T E S.

* This may likewise be understood of the third day of his shewing himself to any of his disciples: For his appearance to *Mary Magdalene*, and other women, to *Peter*, and the two disciples at *Emmaus*, and to all the apostles together, except *Thomas*, was on the day of his resurrection, (*Mat. xxviii. 9. and Luke xxiv. 13, 31, — 36.*); and his shewing himself to them all, when *Thomas* was with them, was on that day seven-night, (*chap. xx. 26.*); and after this we have no account of his appearing again to any of them till now.

† More than these, (*ἢ πάντων τούτων*) may, by the construction, refer to the objects of *Peter's* love; which would make the meaning of the question to be, Do you love me more than you do these, your earthly friends and companions, or more than these nets and boats,

and the pleasure and profit of fishing? But *Peter's* dropping this part of the question in his answer, seems to intimate, that he understood it to relate to his loving Christ more than his fellow-disciples loved him: For no doubt but he could have said, that he loved him more than those other earthly things, or else he could not have appealed to him for his sincerity therein; since if he did not love his Lord in preference to all things here, he could not be truly said to love him at all, (*Matth. x. 37.*); but a remembrance of his former self-confidence, and its dreadful effects, might well make him afraid of speaking of his love, as excelling that of the rest of his brethren; accordingly Jesus condescended to renew the question without the comparison.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily verily I say unto thee, When thou wast young thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And, when he

17 After this Christ put it close to him a third time, saying, *Simon, son of Jonas*, will you then stand to it, that you thus unfeignedly love me? then *Peter* being so plainly reminded of his having three times over denied his Lord a few days ago, notwithstanding his high professions to the contrary, was exceedingly troubled in spirit at this further repetition of the same question, and said, with still more earnestness than before, Lord, I know there is no deceiving thee, who art fully acquainted with all things, even to the most secret dispositions of the heart; but my great comfort is, that, how justly soever I may suspect myself, and deserve to be suspected by thee and others, thy omniscient eye sees the principle of love which is in my soul toward thee, and the uprightness of my appeal to thee about it. Jesus answered as before, Prove then the sincerity of your love*, by feeding my people with knowledge and understanding, like a pastor after mine own heart, whatsoever dangers and sufferings you may be exposed to for it.

18 And I, who am Truth itself, assuredly tell you, that though, in the days of your youth and vigour, you used to gird your clothes about your loins, and go wherever you pleased, as but now you girded your fisher's coat about you, and came to me, (*ver. 7.*); yet, in the declining age of life, to which you shall be preserved to feed my flock, you will be forced to stretch† out your hands in such a disagreeable manner, and others will bind and carry you to such tortures and death for my sake, as human nature cannot, but wish if possible, to avoid.

19 Our blessed Lord spoke these last words to intimate that particular sort of martyrdom, even the death of the cross ‡, by which *Peter* should at length seal his testimony to him and the gospel, should give evident proof of the power of divine grace, in its enabling him to submit to that cruel and shameful death, with a becoming

N O T E S.

* I do not see that any great dependence is to be had on the observations of the critics, about the different senses of the verbs *ἀγαπᾷ* and *φιλεῖ*, to love, and *προσκαί* and *κοιμᾷ*, to feed, in this and the two preceding verses: The two former of these seem to be, here at least, used promiscuously one for the other, as terms of the same import, as also do the two latter.

† Stretching forth the hands has a plain reference to the posture of a crucifixion, as the following verse explains it: And as it is here mentioned before *Peter's* being girded, and carried whither he would not, it may

relate to the custom of laying the cross on the shoulders of him that was to be crucified, who it seems carried it with his arms extended, and bound on the transverse piece of wood to which his hands were afterwards to be nailed, (*vid. Lamp. in Loc.*) And possibly the occasion of our Lord's expressing *Peter's* crucifixion in this manner, was taken from his having just before stretched out his hands with eagerness and pleasure in swimming from the boat, *ver. 7.*

‡ All antiquity agrees that *Peter* was crucified at Rome, though there is a great diversity in its account of the circumstances of it.

he had spoken this he said unto him, Follow me.

coming exercise of faith and love, and of cheerful resignation and patience, and should thereby encourage and establish the faith of others, for the glory of God. And Christ having said this, he further confirmed *Peter's* commission, and ordered him to yield himself up to his service, saying, Keep close to my instructions and commands, in all your preaching and labours, under the guidance and influence of my Spirit; and follow my example, in the exercise of every grace, through sufferings and death to glory; and for the present come along with me.

20 Then *Peter*, turning about, seeth the disciple whom *Jesus* loved, following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

20 Then *Peter* getting up, and going after his Lord, looked behind him, and saw that disciple also following, for whom *Jesus* had a peculiar kindness, as appeared on various occasions, and who particularly at the last paschal supper, leaning like a bosom-friend on his breast, said to him, at *Peter's* giving the beck, Lord, Who is it of all this company that will betray thee? (*Chap. xiii. 23,—25.*)

21 *Peter*, seeing him, faith to *Jesus*, Lord, and what shall this man do?

21 *Peter*, I say, observing this disciple, and being partly concerned as a friend for him, and partly curious to know what would become of him, said to *Jesus*, Lord, What is the lot that will befall this thy peculiar favourite?

22 *Jesus* faith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.

22 *Jesus*, not thinking proper to gratify his curiosity, replied, with some obscurity, If it be my pleasure that he should continue in life, till I come to appear in great glory; What have you to do with that? your duty is to mind your own business and concerns, and not trouble yourself about his: Whatsoever becomes of him yield you yourself up to me, and follow my steps, as I have already ordered you. (*ver. 19.*)

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet *Jesus* said not unto him, He shall not die: but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?

23 The determinate sense of this answer not being easily understood, a report was immediately spread abroad among the disciples, who were all brethren in Christ, and children of the same heavenly Father with himself, that this beloved apostle should never die, like other men, but should remain alive on earth, till their Lord should appear at the final judgment: But this notion, as is usual in oral traditions, was grounded on misconstructions of Christ's words, and additions of men to them; he having said no such thing to *Peter*, but only, If I am minded that he should prolong his days upon earth till I come*, meaning till I come to destroy *Jerusalem*, and after that to take him to heaven, not by a violent death, but in the ordinary course of nature,

N O T E.

* Both the senses given in the Paraphrase are fulfilled in *John*, who was the only apostle that survived the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and that died a natural death.

nature, at a good old age, what signifies that to you? It is no business of yours to inquire after it; nor is it for you to be made acquainted before-hand with it.

23 This is the disciple which testifies of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

24 This disciple, concerning whom these things were said to Peter, is he who here records them, and wrote the present history of Christ; and as he is an inspired writer of what he has seen and heard, his testimony is undoubtedly true: So that it is to be assuredly believed*, according to the best rules that men can have to judge of such things, what he hath said is already received with the fullest satisfaction by the churches as divine truth; and I who have committed it to writing, am infallibly certain of its being so.

25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

25 And now, to conclude the whole, so indefatigable was the Lord Jesus in his labours who went about doing good, (*Acts* x. 38.) that a vast abundance of other things, well worthy of remembrance, were done by him, besides those which are recorded; and were a particular account to be written at large of all his excellent prayers, discourses and performances of a religious, moral, and miraculous nature, I am persuaded (*οὐκ ἔστιν*) they would fill such an incredible number of volumes, as would over-load the mind and memory; and, after all, the unbelieving world, through their carnality and prejudices against Christ and the gospel, could not (*χρηνοῦν*) receive† the things contained therein; and so they would be of no more advantage, than this compendium may be to them. In ratification of all the foregoing record, I hereunto set my *amen*; and may every one that reads it say, by way of assent and consent, So it is, and so let it be!

NOTES.

* The words, *we know* have been drawn by some into an argument for this last chapter's being written by other hands than the apostle John's. But the beginning of this verse is a plain confutation of that opinion, where, referring to what Christ had mentioned concerning John, it is said, *This is the disciple which testifies of these things and wrote these things*; and in this chapter he apparently uses the same stile as he had in the foregoing parts of the history, continuing to conceal his own name, and speaks of himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved. Therefore, according to the various senses given in the Paraphrase, which are submitted to the reader's choice, *we know*, may relate either to the common sense of mankind, as to what we all know in like cases; or to what, in fact, is the

sense of true believers with regard to the things contained in this particular history; or to the apostle's own assurance, upon infallible evidence, of the truth of what he wrote; and so it agrees with what he had said before in a case, of which he was an eye-witness, *chap. xix. 35*.: For tho' he here speaks in the plural, he in the next verse resumes the singular number, saying *I suppose*; and this very apostle used the plural number, just in the same manner, when speaking of himself, *1 John i. 3, 5*.

† The word (*χρηνοῦν*) rendered *to contain*, is sometimes taken in a metaphorical sense, and signifies *to receive, or to have place in the mind*, as in *chap. viii. 37*. and *Matth. xix. 12, 13*. And so there is no necessity for an *Hyperbole* to account for this phrase.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How repeated, miraculous, and plain are the proofs of Christ's resurrection, who has given us such abundant satisfaction concerning it, as should make us afraid of entertaining a suspicion to the contrary ! He is often near his people while they know it not, is better to them than their own expectation, and visits them in the greatness of his mercy, even before they look for him : And O with what wonders of divine power, condescension, and kindness, does he manifest himself to them, since his resurrection from the dead ! But when they have misbehaved, he puts them to the trial, and to the proof of the sincerity of their love to him : And how happy is it, upon close and serious reflection, to be able to appeal to him, as the omniscient, heart-searching God, that he knows we love him ! We may then be assured that he first loved us ; and whatsoever trials he may further call us to, he will enable us to follow him, even unto death, that God may be glorified thereby : But let us take heed of indulging curiosity, by prying into his secrets, or meddling with things that do not concern us.—Whilst his ministering servants fish for souls, unless it be under his direction and blessing, how much soever they toil, they will catch nothing : But when, at his command, they cast the gospel-net, and he, by a secret, efficacious influence, brings a shoal under its power ; how surprizing is the success ! And when, by their ministry, he has gathered a church for himself, with what tenderness does he take care of the weakest, as well as the strongest among them ! With what solemn injunction has he laid it upon his servants to feed them with good doctrine ! And how can they shew their love to Christ, without attending to the charge he has given them of his lambs and sheep ?—Blessed be God for the sufficiency of the scripture, free from all the uncertainties of oral tradition, and without any need of supplements of that-kind, which are no way to be depended upon, unless they agree with the word of God : But we are well assured, that whatever is left upon record there is infallibly true ; as such may we believe it, approve of it, and rejoice in it, saying, as with one heart and voice, *Amen !*

The END of the SECOND VOLUME.

T H E

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M.DCC.LXXV.

THE
P R E F A C E
TO THE
THIRD and FOURTH VOLUMES,
CONTAINING THE
ACTS of the APOSTLES, and PAUL'S Epistles to
the ROMANS, CORINTHIANS, GALATIANS,
and EPHESIANS.

THE favourable acceptance which the former volumes on the Evangelists have met with, among many serious Christians and worthy ministers; the good use, which (as I have often been informed) is continually made of them in multitudes of religious families, to their instruction and edification, especially on the Lord's day evenings; and the repeated importunity of many valuable friends, together with the advantage and pleasure that I find in studying the gospel revelation, have encouraged me to proceed in the same manner on other parts of the New Testament. Having therefore obtained help of God to continue to this day, I have, at length, redeemed so much time from other services and avocations, as to carry on my design through the ACTS of the Apostles, the Epistle to the Romans, and the two Epistles to the Corinthians, according to the proposals published a while ago. These give us a more perfect view of the scheme of Christianity than can be gathered from the Evangelists, who wrote the history of transactions that passed before the gospel-dispensation was set up in its full light and glory.

GOD preserving life and health, and capacities of close thinking, a few years longer, I propose, by his assistance, to go through the remainder of the New Testament in two volumes more, of much the same size with the others; and to add, at the end, an alphabetical table of the principal things contained in the Paraphrase, and especially in the Notes, of all the six volumes. But I do not intend to let the world be troubled with any further proposals for a subscription, since it is to be presumed, that those who have purchased, and approve of what is already put into their hands, will scarce be backward to complete their set, with the additional advantage of so useful an Index to the whole: And to give them an opportunity of doing it, they may expect to see the fifth and sixth volumes advertised in the public papers, if ever they be finished.

AS therefore I may not have such another, I would lay hold on the present occasion, to express my grateful sense of the friendly approbation of these labours that has been discovered in the generous subscriptions to this, as well as to the former volumes: For these, though fewer than the first, are more than could be reasonably expected, considering how many of my acquaintance, who encouraged that, have been carried off by death in the compass of seven years: and how many other works, of a like nature, were offered to the public, about the same time with this; and especially considering the alarming troubles and dangers, confusions, losses, and expences, that attended the late detestable, unprovoked, and cruel rebellion against the best of kings and governments, at home: and the additional charges and obstructions to trade, that still arise from a long continued war with two formidable powers abroad.

THE reader may consult the Preface to the Evangelists, to lead him into the view and plan of my design, and into the method I have taken in composing the Paraphrase, Notes, and Recollections, and have recommended to be taken in reading them, either in the closet or family: Only I find, upon observation, that it may be best for the person that reads to others, to recite first the Text, and then the Paraphrase, verse by verse, naming the number of the several verses, both in the Text and Paraphrase, as they come in course: and it may sometimes be proper to read the Notes belonging to any of the verses, as soon as the Paraphrase on the verse itself is gone through. But the references to texts and notes, that are put into parentheses in the Paraphrase, or Notes, may ordinarily be passed over in reading to a family, and consulted at leisure.

I CANNOT but own, that, as I have constantly aimed at a practical, as well as doctrinal, and, (when apprehended to be useful) at a critical interpretation, and at giving as wide a scope to the mind of the Holy Ghost therein, as appeared to me to be consistent with the context, the Paraphrase on many verses may seem too long; and consequently may be drawn out, on some chapters, too far to be conveniently read at once, in the ordinary course of family religion. But, in such cases, I have rather chose to leave it to the discretion of the heads of families, to order how much shall be read at a time, than to break the chapters into sections, which might, perhaps, be deemed a disagreeable innovation, by some sincere and tenderly scrupulous souls, the least of which I would studiously avoid offending; and so, like the great apostle, be made all lawful things to all men, that I may by all means gain some, (1 Cor. ix. 19,—22.)

IT is to be supposed, that various sentiments in the following performance may not suit the judgment and taste of Christians of every character; and I am not so vain as to imagine, that I must needs be always right, and they wrong, in every point in which we differ: But as I have honestly represented every text and context in the fairest manner, according to the light God has given me, equitably and candidly, Christianity and

and humanity, and all the just laws of free-thinking, demand, that such would seriously and impartially read and consider the evidence that offers in the Paraphrase and Notes to support it: and I would recommend it to them to look, as I have always desired to do, to the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, to lead them into the truth as it is in Jesus: And whether they may be convinced, that the sense given of some passages is the true meaning of them or not, I earnestly intreat, that they would not throw the book aside, upon a dislike of those parts of it: but dismissing prejudices, would make a pious and candid use of the rest, in which I hope they will be entertained with many things, that, by the blessing of God, may be to their spiritual improvement in knowledge, faith, and practice.

THESE must be interwoven in the reader's aims and attainments, as they are in all the apostolic writings, if he would have a just and profitable view of the noble design of the gospel-revelation, according to the holy scriptures, which are able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus, (2 Tim. iii. 15)

IF the Holy Spirit shall bless the present humble attempt (for which I desire the assistance of all my Christian friend's prayers) to answer this important end, to any of the present, or rising generation, I shall greatly rejoice, and ascribe the entire glory of it to the God of all grace, through Jesus Christ: For I trust the highest of my ambition is, to be approved of the Lord, as his, and, for his sake, as all his peoples, most sincerely and religiously devoted, though unworthy, ministering servant,

LONDON, February 16,

1746-7.

JOHN GUYSE.

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A PRACTICAL
EXPOSITION
OF THE
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES,
In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the ACTS of the APOSTLES.

THE antients generally agree that *Luke* *, the beloved physician, (*Col. iv. 14.*) was the penman of this history, which refers back to, and stands in connection with, what he had wrote before in his Gospel, and is inscribed to the same person, viz. *Theophilus*, as appears by comparing *Acts i. 1.* with *Luke i. 3.* and so it may be esteemed as a second part of his history, which perhaps was wrote at the same time, or very soon after, and in the same book with the former, though *John*, who wrote last, is placed between them, for the convenience of having all the Gospels together.

In the former part, *Luke* gave an account of Christ from his birth to his death, resurrection, and ascension to glory; and in this, he draws a short sketch of what passed between our blessed Lord's resurrection and exaltation, and then carries on his narrative in an orderly series of what followed, in the wonderful effusion of the Spirit, and propagation of the gospel, first among the *Jews*, then among the devout *Gentiles*, chiefly under the ministry of the two great apostles *Peter* and *Paul*; and, last of all, among the idolatrous nations, who were *Paul's* peculiar province, and were converted by the power of divine grace, attending the discharge of his office to them: And this was sufficient for a specimen of what was done by his fellow-servants in the gospel, only allowing that this apostle of the *Gentiles* laboured more abundantly than they all, as he said of himself, (*1 Cor. xv. 10*)

The first eight chapters indeed, which bring us to the conversion of *Saul*, relate to all the apostles together in *Jerusalem* and *Judea*, till they were scattered abroad, and preached the gospel in different countries; and they take in a particular account of *Stephen* and *Philip*, who were chosen to be deacons, and were apostolic men; yet even

NOTE.

* Some learned men have thought that *Luke* was one of the seventy disciples; but others, that he was a later convert under *Paul's* ministry. See Dr *Whitby's* preface to the gospel of *Luke*.

even in those chapters, *Peter* is principally taken notice of; and from thenceforward the history is in a manner confined to him and *Paul*: But as *Luke* became in time one of *Paul's* companions, and was an eye witness to a great part of the things recorded as done by him; so he gives us the most particular and enlarged view of his travels, labours, and sufferings, of the triumphs of grace, by means of his ministry, over *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and of the churches planted and revisited by him, till his first imprisonment for two years at *Rome*, (*chap. xxviii. 30.*) with which this history ends, about thirty years after *Jesus* was exalted at the Father's right-hand.

C H A P. I.

A brief review of the history of Christ, especially after his death, 1,—8. His ascension to heaven from the mount of Olives, 9,—11. His disciples return to Jerusalem, and the choice of Matthias, to be an apostle in the room of Judas, 12,—26.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

THE former treatise have made, O *Theophilus*, of all that *Jesus* began both to do and teach,
 2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:

3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being

I *Luke*, have already given you, O *Theophilus*, (see the note on *Luke i. 3.*) an authentic account in writing, of all that might be needful for your information and satisfaction about the many admirable things which *Jesus*, the great and only Saviour, taught and did, for laying the foundation of the Christian church, during his abode upon earth, till the very day that he ascended, and was received up to glory; which was after he, by an unmeasurable anointing of the Holy Spirit on himself, as the great Prophet of the church, and by a communication of it in some degrees to his apostles*, had instructed and commissioned them, had explained the nature and design of their office, and therewith charged them to observe his orders, whom he had chosen and set apart to be his witnesses, and the chief ministers of his kingdom.

3 To whom also, as I have informed you, (*Luke xxiv.*) he presented himself alive, after he had been put to the terrible death of the cross; and, in his wonderful and gracious condescension, gave them abundance of remarkable and demonstrative evidences of his being

N O T E.

* Through the Holy Ghost, may relate either to Christ's giving the apostles their commission, or to his sitting and furnishing them for it, when he not only opened their understandings, but breathed upon them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, (*John xii. 22.*) as an emblem and earnest of what he would soon further do, in a more and plentiful effusion upon them: And the commandments he gave them, may relate either to what he

did of this kind before his death, or after his resurrection, when he said, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (*Mark xvi. 15.*) But as his appearing, and speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, after his resurrection, is mentioned in the next verse, it seems that what is here said, rather refers to what passed before his death.

being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God :

ing really risen from the dead ; *εὐ πολλοῖς τερασίοις*) they having plainly seen him at several times, and on various occasions, for the space of forty days, between his resurrection and ascension to heaven ; and having eat and drank, and familiarly conversed with him, (*chap. x. 41. and Luke xxiv.*) and been instructed by him in many particulars, that were proper to be then communicated to them, and insisted on in their preaching, relating to the kingdom of grace, which he would set up, and propagate with great success, by means of their ministrations, attended with the effusion of his Spirit in this world, and to the kingdom of glory, to which he was going, and in which all should be perfected in the world to come.

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye have heard of me.

4 And at one of their solemn assemblies, in which he was present just before his ascension, he, to raise their faith, hope, and joy, with regard to the great things he would further do for them, and by them, ordered them not to return to their secular business in the country *, nor leave *Jerusalem*, how dangerous soever they might think it for them to continue there ; nor yet enter immediately on their public ministry, for which he had given them commission ; but to wait in a way of public and private exercises of devotion, and in a dependance upon his power, faithfulness, and grace, for an accomplishment of the promise of the Spirit, which his Father and their Father had given by the ancient prophets, relating to the Messiah's days, (*Isa. xlv. 3. and Joel ii. 28.* and which he himself had often acquainted them with, and assured them should be fulfilled, and particularly a little before his death, at large, (*John xiv. xv. xvi. chapters*) for their encouragement and comfort, when he should be gone to the Father.

5 For John truly baptized with water ; but ye shall be

5 For, said he, according to *John the Baptist's* own testimony concerning himself and me, (*Luke iii. 16.*) he indeed initiated his disciples by baptism with water, and that was all that he could do ; but I, by a better baptism,

N O T E.

* Dr *Lightfoot* and some others have thought, that this assembly was when our Lord met his disciples, according to his own appointment, on a mountain to *Golilee*, (*Mat. xxviii. 16.*) where it is probable the five hundred brethren saw him at once, which the apostle speaks of, *1 Cor. xv. 6.* But *Christ's* here commanding the apostles not to depart from *Jerusalem*, carries an intimation, as if they were then there ; and immediately hereupon, perhaps the very same day, our historian tells us, that *Jesus*

led them out, as far as to the borders of *Bethany* in the mount of *Olivet*, from whence they saw him ascend to heaven ; and then speaks of their returning or going back again to *Jerusalem*, ver. 12. compared with *Luke xxiv. 50, 51, 52.* (see the note there.) Or *Christ* might first lead them to *Bethany*, from whence he took them with him to that part of the mount from whence he ascended ; and whilst he continued to bless them he was parted from them.

he baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence.

baptism, which that prefigured, will shed down my Spirit with his gifts and graces in a plentiful manner upon you, that ye may be more than ever confirmed in your faith, sanctified, and comforted, and may be thoroughly qualified with wisdom, courage, and utterance, for the great work and office to which I have sent you, (see the note on *Matth.* iii. 6.); and that my church and ministering servants may have a memorable pledge of my spiritual presence with them, under the gospel-dispensation, to the end of the world. And this he told them should be within a very little time; meaning as soon as the following Pentecost should come, which was ten days after his ascension, (*chap.* ii. 1. see the note there); tho', to keep them continually waiting for him in his way, he did not think proper then to acquaint them with the precise time when it should be.

6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

6 The disciples apprehending that the resurrection of Christ had put him into a state that might favour their fond notions of his temporal dominion, which they still were willing to indulge; they therefore, at their last solemn meeting, (see the note on *ver.* 4.) put a question to him, saying, Lord, as thou art now risen a conqueror over death, and all thine enemies, Is this the time that we have been looking and longing for, when thou wilt set God's people *Israel* at liberty from every foreign yoke, and restore their nation to a state of grandeur, influence, and power, and bring all the princes and kingdoms of the earth in subjection to them, according to our own expectations from ancient prophecies of the great power and glory of the Messiah's reign? (*Dan.* vii. 27.) And what! Wilt thou now, after all, admit those of our rulers and countrymen to the high honours of this kingdom, who have offered so many indignities to thee, and so shamefully and cruelly put thee to death?

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

7 But (*scilicet*) as the effusion of his Spirit would soon cure them of all their carnal sentiments about his kingdom, he, waving a reply to their mistaken notion in the question, gently checked their vain curiosity, saying to them, It neither belongs, nor would it be of any advantage to you, to know before-hand the exact time and circumstances in which the great revolutions that are coming on are to be wrought; these God, the sovereign Author and Disposer of all things, has reserved as a secret for the present in his own mind, who has authority to reveal them, or not, and will bring them to pass in the best manner, and in the fittest seasons, according to the counsel of his own will, whenever he pleases.

8 However

8 But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusa'em, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them

8 However, know ye for your comfort, that, weak and despicable as ye have hitherto been, ye shall receive much nobler powers of a spiritual kind than ye are aware of, for preaching and confirming the gospel of my kingdom, by the descent of the Holy Ghost on you; and hereupon ye shall go forth in my name to attest my resurrection, and publish the word of my grace, with holy liberty, wisdom, and courage, and with miraculous signs to confirm your testimony; and this shall be with great success*, first in *Jerusalem*, afterwards in all the land of *Judea*, and among your neighbours and kindred, the *Samaritans*, with whom this nation has been so long at variance, and to whom I formerly forbade your preaching: and then among the religious proselytes of the nations round about you; and last of all among the idolatrous *Gentiles* far and wide, even to the most distant parts of the world.

9 Then, whilst he was speaking in this authoritative, gracious, and affectionate manner to them, and pronouncing a blessing upon them, (*Luke xxiv. 51.*) to satisfy them that his heart was full of love at his parting with them, and that he would ever afterwards be mindful of them, he gradually mounted up in the air in their sight, as *Elijah* did in the view of *Elisba*, they continuing to look at him with the utmost care and attention: till their eyes could no longer discern him, by reason of a cloud of glory which inclosed him, and intercepted the ken of their eyes.

10 † And while they were thus eagerly looking up after him, and observing his ascent towards heaven, with consternation and intermingled grief and joy, with fear of losing him, and hope and desire of his returning to them, and while throngs of angels attended him, as his servants, to pay their homage and due honours to him, (*Psal. lxxviii. 17.*) Behold, a very remarkable circumstance! Two of the celestial host appeared in the form of men, and descending, came, and stood

N O T E S.

* Here our Lord specifies the order in which his commission was to be executed, as well as the extent of it; and the following parts of this history shew that accordingly, in fact, the apostles preached the gospel first at *Jerusalem*, (*chap. ii.—vii.*) then in various parts of *Palestine*, and among the *Samaritans*, on occasion of the great persecution of the church (*chap. viii. ix.*): and then to the *Gentile* proselytes of the gate, (*chap. x. xi. xii.*); and last of all to the idolatrous *Gentiles*, (*chap. xiii. to the end of the book.*)

† None of the disciples saw Christ rise

from the dead, nor was there any occasion that they should, since their seeing him afterwards alive, and conversing with him, &c. were as undeniable proofs of his resurrection, as if they had stood by when he came out of the sepulchre. But he ascended to heaven in their sight, that they might be equally assured of his being gone thither, which seems to have been, not by a swift flight or rapture, but in a leisurely gradual manner, that they might be in no danger of being deceived, and might have the fairest opportunity of distinctly observing it.

them in white apparel;

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem, from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath-days journey.

13 And, when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where

stood near to the disciples; in robes of illustrious light, an emblem of their grandeur, purity, and joy.

11 And they addressed them in a familiar, kind, and encouraging manner, saying, O ye *Galileans*, who are the disciples and followers of Jesus, be not dismayed at his being thus taken from you: Why should ye still continue to stand looking so wishfully upwards to heaven, as if ye were expecting him to return immediately to you from thence? This very Jesus, who lately died for your sins, and rose again for your justification, and is now gone before you to heaven, to be enthroned in his kingdom there, shall as truly, visibly, and personally, descend in a glorious cloud, and with a like retinue of angels, to judge the world at the last day, as ye have now seen him with your own eyes ascending into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for you. (See and compare *Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18. 1 Thess. iv. 16. 2 Thess. i. 7. and Rev. i. 7.*)

12 Then the disciples, being satisfied with the account the angels had given them, went back from the mount of *Olivet* to *Jerusalem*, in obedience to their Lord's instructions and commands, (*ver. 4.*) that they might wait with faith and patience for the descent of the Spirit upon them there, according to his promise, * *Jerusalem* being about a mile's distance from that part of the mountain which lay within the tract of ground that belonged to *Bethany*, (as was related, *Luke xxiv. 50.*) and from which he went up into heaven; and so at his taking leave of this world, as a triumphant conqueror, his feet stood upon the mount of *Olivet*, as was prophesied of him, (*Zech. xiv. 4.*)

13 And upon the disciples arrival at *Jerusalem*, they daily attended the worship of God in the temple, (*Luke xxiv. 53.* see the note there) and frequently met in an upper apartment †, fit for their purpose, to carry on religious

NOTES.

* A sabbath-day's journey was, according to some, two thousand cubits, or a thousand yards, and according to others, about eight furlongs, or one of our miles. Thus far it was lawful for the Jews to travel on the sabbath-day: Their cities, together with their suburbs, might be so long as to make it sometimes necessary for them to go so far to the synagogue; and as this is made a description of the distance between *Jerusalem* and that part of mount *Olivet* from which our Lord ascended, his ascending from *Bethany*, (*Luke xxiv. 50.* see the note there), may be understood only of that part of the mount which lay within the borders of *Bethany*, for that town itself was fifteen far-

longs from *Jerusalem*, *John xi. 18.*

† This upper room is thought by some to have been one of the upper chambers of the temple: But as these belonged to the priests, or at least were under their inspection, it can hardly be supposed that they would have permitted our Lord's disciples to meet there: I therefore take it to have been some upper room in one of their friend's houses, where they assembled, as the Jews were wont to do in such places for religious worship, and where they might meet with the greater privacy. Some suppose it to have been that in which Jesus had celebrated the passover with his disciples. See *Universal History*, Vol. IV. p. 249.

where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of the names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

religious exercises together; and there they continued assembling, and waiting with faith, hope, and joy, for the Spirit, which Christ had told them should soon be poured out upon them from on high; particularly there were the eleven apostles, whom Jesus had owned and favoured with his visits after his resurrection, and who were present at his ascension, viz. *Peter, James, and John*, who had likewise seen his transfiguration in the mount, and were eye-witnesses of his last sufferings in the garden; and together with them were *Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, with Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James the less*. (See an account of all these in the paraphrase and note on *Mat. x. 2, 3, 4*.)

14 All these (*Judas Iscariot* having before left them, and execrably betrayed his Lord, and laid violent hands on himself) kept and joined together, as with one heart and soul, in humble, earnest, persevering, and believing petitions and pleas, as well as thanksgivings and praises, (*Luke xxiv. 53*.) which were addressed to the Lord Jesus *, and to the Father in his name for an accomplishment of the great things they were looking for from him, to furnish them for the important services which he had assigned to them; and with these, many others cordially joined in this their religious employment, as particularly the holy women, that followed Christ from *Galilee*, attended him to his crucifixion, visited his sepulchre, and saw him after he was risen from the dead; and † *Mary*, the mother of our Lord, together with those of his kinsmen after the flesh, who by this time believed in him; and there were many others, as we shall presently observe.

15 Now at one of these solemn assemblies for prayer, at which were present about an hundred and twenty, or six-score persons, all faithful and affectionate disciples of the Lord Jesus, the apostle *Peter* took occasion to stand up among them, and addressed them, (not as one having

N O T E S.

* It is highly reasonable to suppose, that they directed their prayers to Christ, who had made them promises of sending the Spirit when he should go to the Father, (*John xv. 26. and xvi. 7.*) as well as that they prayed to the Father in Christ's name, according to the order he had given them, *John xvi. 23, 26.* (see the note there.) And it seems every way most natural to understand their prayer, *ver. 24.* as directed to the Lord Jesus; for all the apostles were at first immediately chosen by him, and were

to be his witnesses, whom he appointed and sent; and they had before believed in him, and spoke of him as their Lord, who knew the hearts of all men. *John xvi. 29. 30. and xxi. 17.*

† This is the last time that we have any mention of our Lord's mother in scripture; and as to those that are here called his brethren, (see the note on *Matth. xii. 46.*) they are now reckoned among his disciples, tho' they formerly did not believe in him, as appears from *John vii. 5.*

having authority over them *, but as one that was on a level with them) in the following manner :

16 Men and brethren, This scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

16 My dear friends and countrymen, whom I may also call my fellow-servants and disciples, and my brethren in Christ; I have an affair of vast importance to propose to you: Ye all know what has befallen one of our number, but it ought not to surprise or stumble you; for as *the counsel of the Lord stands for ever*, (Ps. xxxiii. 11.) and as this melancholy circumstance was foretold in prophecy, and so became characteristic of the Messiah, it was eventually necessary, the prediction delivered by *David*, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, (Ps. xli. 9.) should be remarkably fulfilled in the perfidious wickedness of *Judas*, of whom, as typified by *Achitophel*, it is there said, *Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, has lift up his heel against me*, (see the paraphrase on *John* xiii. 20.); and who accordingly directed the counsels of the *Jews* against the Lord Jesus, and conducted those that apprehended him in the garden, in order to their putting him to death. (*Luke* xxii. 3, 4, 47.)

17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

17 For this *Judas* was one of our fellow-disciples and associates, one of Christ's domesticks, whom he kindly treated and highly favoured, like an intimate friend, and one whom, of his mere good pleasure, he chose and called to the apostleship, and intrusted with the same important ministry in his kingdom, as he did the rest of us, who have been honoured with that office. (*Luke* vi. 13,—16.)

18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and,

18 But this base wretch (*εὐσεβής*) turned traitor to his great and benevolent Lord, whom he sold to the chief-priests at the price of a slave, (*Mat.* xxvi. 15. see the paraphrase there); and instead of getting any advantage thereby to himself, he was so terrified in his conscience for the detestable crime he had committed, that he returned the money to them, (*Mat.* xxvii. 3, 4.) who †

with

N O T E S.

* *Sitting*, in that age was a sign of authority in teaching, and was accordingly used by the scribes and Pharisees, and most commonly by our Lord himself, in speaking to the people. *Peter* therefore did not sit, like one claiming authority over his brethren; but stood up, as one that treated them with respect, and only made a motion to them, which, perhaps, was in pursuance of some of those instructions that Christ gave his apostles about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, (ver. 3.) And as men and brethren was a familiar appellation frequently used by equals among the Jews, and by the apostles in their discourses on various oc-

casions: So *Peter* here addressed the company in this style, without any marks of authority; and I do not find that our blessed Lord ever set himself so much on a level with his hearers, as once to use this phrase in any of his speeches to them.

† As *Judas's* money for which he sold his Lord was laid out for this purpose, he is said to purchase a field with the reward of iniquity, though he did not intend that purchase; as persons are said to get to themselves shame, and to receive damnation to themselves, (*Prov.* ix. 7. and *Rom.* xiii. 2.) tho' they do not design it.

and, falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; inasmuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, *Aceldama*, that is to say, *The field of blood*.

20 For it is written in the book of *Psalms*, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein; and his bishoprick let another take.

21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

with these wages of unrighteousness bought a field to bury strangers in, (*Mat. xxvii. 7.*); and he, in the horror and despair of his own mind, went and hanged himself, and, something giving way, tumbled headlong from that place with such force, that his belly burst, and let out all his intrails. (See the note on *Matth. xxvii. 5.*)

19 And this tremendous fact could not be concealed, but was universally known among all the inhabitants of *Jerusalem*; so that the field purchased by this iniquitous money, is commonly called, by way of infamy, in the vulgar *Jewish* dialect, *Aceldama*, which signifies a field of blood; intimating, that it was bought with that money * which was the price of innocent blood; and this was a righteous judgment of God upon him.

20 For as he deserved the severest and most exemplary punishment, so he is the person, to whom some other expressions pointed, under the type of *David* and his enemies, in the book of *Psalms*, not by way of execration, but of prophecy, (*Psal. lxxix. 25. and cix. 8.*) *Let his habitation be desolate, and let none dwell in his tents*; and as to the apostolic function, to which he was chosen together with us, *Let another take his office*.

21, 22 This plainly leads us to the duty that now lies immediately before us, for supplying the vacancy made by his villany, punishment, and death: Therefore as the Holy Ghost ordered before, that his office should be filled up by another, and our Lord himself originally designed the number of twelve to be his witnesses, it behoves us to pitch upon some proper person for this purpose, from among the seventy disciples, who have been our companions in attendances on the Lord Jesus, all along from the very time that he began to converse with us, and to preach and work his wonderful miracles in our presence †; even from the days when *John* baptized him at his entrance on his public ministry, unto the day when he was so lately removed from us by his visible ascent to glory; it is necessary that one of this character, who has been thus intimately acquainted with Christ's life, doctrine, transactions and death, resurrection and ascension to heaven, be appointed to this office, that he may be capable of joining his testimony upon personal

N O T E S.

* But Dr *Lightsfoot* and some others have thought it was called the *Field of blood*, because *Judas* himself expired there: and so it was stained with his blood that took the price, as well as was bought with the price of blood.

† The baptism of *John* may relate either to his beginning to baptize, or to his baptizing our Lord; but I rather take it, with

Greaves and *Hammond*, to mean *John's* baptizing Christ, because till then, Jesus did not go in and out among the disciples to exercise his public office, at this phrase sometimes signifies, (*Deut. xxxi. 3. and 2 Chron. i. 10.*) or to employ himself in his work among them, as it signifies at other times, (*Deut. xxviii. 6. and Psal. cxxi. 8.*)

personal knowledge with ours, concerning all that we are to publish relating to our Lord, and particularly to his resurrection from the dead, which is the grand article, and evidence of all the glorious things that we are to testify concerning him; and the foundation of all our hope in him.

23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

23 And this motion so thoroughly approved itself to the whole assembly, to whom it was made, (*ver. 15, 16.*) that they immediately agreed to nominate two persons of the above-mentioned qualifications, that should stand as candidates for the choice, or rather should be presented before the Lord for his designation of one of them to that office*: One was *Joseph*, who was also called *Barsabas*, and was surnamed *Justus*, and the other *Matthias*.

24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen.

24 And as all the rest of the apostles were chosen immediately by the Lord Jesus himself, the whole multitude joined in solemn prayer to him, (*see the note on ver. 14.*) saying, Thou, blessed Lord, who art the great head and ruler of the church, and whose prerogative it is to be intimately and infallibly acquainted with the most secret temper, principles, and views of all men's hearts, about which we may, but thou never canst be deceived; we humbly beseech thee to favour our design of referring this important affair to thee by lot, that as *the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord*, (*Prov. xvi. 33.*) so thou wouldst in that way point out to us, which of these two servants of thine thou thyself hast chosen, and designed, to fill up the present vacancy;

25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

25 That he, by the determination of the lot, may enter upon, and bear his part in, the labour and honour of the apostolic charge, which *Judas* infamously violated, and threw himself out of, by his monstrous wickedness, that he might no longer retain his part therein, but might go to the place which he justly deserved, and which was, by the righteous judgment of God, properly his own, (*ὅς τοι τότον τοι ἴδιον*) and there might receive the due reward of his iniquity †.

26 And

N O T E S.

* It is uncertain who these two men were; but some think that *Joseph* was the same with that *Justus* who is called *Justus*, *Col. iv. 11.* and others think it was *Joses* the brother of *James* the less, *Mark vi. 3.* and *xv. 40.* and that for his uprightness and integrity he was surnamed by the Romans, *Justus*, or the just, as *James* himself also was. And as *Matthias* and *Nathaniel* both signify the same thing, namely, *the gift of God*; it is not improbable but that this might be *Nathaniel* of whom Christ said, *Behold an is-*

raelite indeed, in whom there is no guile, *John i. 47.*

† The reader may consult *Dr Hammond* for another sense of this verse, who includes the words, *from which Judas by transgression fell*, in a parenthesis, and refers his own place, not to *Judas* and his place of punishment, but to *Matthias* and his place of office, to which he succeeded, as his own proper place in the room of *Judas*, when he was chosen to the apostleship.

26 And they gave forth their lots : and the lot fell upon Matthias ; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

26 And prayer being ended, they all in a religious manner, with faith and dependence on the over-ruling providence of God for the event, delivered their lots * ; and as the determining lot fell upon *Matthias*, in answer to their prayers, he from thenceforward was received and regarded, by the common consent and approbation of all the disciples, as a twelfth apostle, of the same rank and dignity with the other eleven ; and so they were again restored to their original number, according to the twelve tribes of *Israel* ; *Matthias* being made one of them before the approaching miraculous effusion of the Spirit, that he might have that glorious and public zeal of his apostleship equally, and together with the rest of his brethren.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What uncontrollable and glorious evidences have we of the resurrection and exaltation of the once crucified Redeemer, that our faith and hope might be in God ! He gave great numbers of his disciples such frequent opportunities of seeing, and conversing with him after his death, that they could not possibly mistake him for any other person whatsoever ; and they were eye-witnesses of his ascending with a real human body up to heaven. How delightful is the thought of his having carried our nature into that blessed world ! Who, that loves him, would wish for his return to a state of humiliation upon earth ? Our great concern is, that we may meet him with comfort at his second appearance to judge the quick and the dead ; when, as we are assured by the testimony of angels, he will personally come again in the clouds of heaven, and every eye shall see him in all his majesty and glory. In the mean while, how carefully should we attend to the duties to which he calls us, in humble dependence on, and waiting for the promised Spirit to assist, own, and comfort us in his way and work ! How cautious should we be of indulging a carnal curiosity, or of prying into God's secrets, that do not belong to us ; and how religiously should we commit every thing by faith and prayer to him, who searches the heart, and has the unerring and sovereign disposal of all events, though they may be as uncertain as lots to us ! And since lots are an appeal to Providence, it becomes us to use them seriously in important cases, that cannot well be determined otherwise, and not about trifles in a ludicrous way. God's determinations should always satisfy us ; and when by any means he testifies his call and approbation of his servants, we should receive, and own them with affection and full consent.

NOTES.

* *Cicero's* account of the manner in which this was done, seems as probable as any I have met with : They put their lots (says he) into two urns, one of which contained the names of *Joseph* and *Matthias*, and the other a blank, and the word *apostle* ; and in drawing these out of the several urns, the blank came up with the name of *Joseph*, and the lot, on which was written the word *apostle*, came up with the name of

Matthias ; and this being in answer to their prayers, they concluded that *Matthias* was the man whom the Lord had chosen to the apostleship : And some think that the whole company thereupon expressed their approbation by a common suffrage, together with the eleven apostles, according to *Beza's* translation of the words *συγκαταθέσαντες* *μετα τῶν ὀνείων ἀποστόλων*, *communibus consensu*.

C H A P. II.

The Holy Ghost is poured out upon the disciples in the appearance of cloven tongues of fire, 1,—4. Notice is taken of this by the multitude that came together, 5,—13. Peter's discourse on this occasion, 14,—30. The happy effects of his sermon in the conversion of three thousand, and their addition to the church, 37,—41. The eminent piety and charity of this new apostolic church, and the tokens of God's owning and blessing them, 42.—47.

TEXT.

AND, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW as Pentecost, so called because it was fifty days complete after the passover, (*Lev. xxiii. 15.*) was one of the three annual feasts on which all the males of *Israel* were obliged to appear before the Lord at *Jerusalem*, (*Exod. xxiii. 17.*); as this feast was kept in commemoration of God's giving the law at mount *Sinai*; and as the first-fruits of the wheat-harvest were then offered to the Lord, in like manner as the first fruits of the barley-harvest were at the passover, and oil was poured on the two loaves that were for a meat-offering, (*Exod. xxiii. 16.* and *Lev. xxiii. 10, 11, 16, 17.* compared with *chap. ii. 1.*) and as Pentecost this year fell on the first day of the week^a; so this was a proper time for the most solemn publication of the gospel; for pouring out the first-fruits of the Spirit, and gathering in the first-fruits of the Christian church; and for confirming the New Testament-sabbath, which commenced with Christ's resurrection on the same day of the week, being the fiftieth day, or seven weeks before, (see the note on *John xx. 26.*) Accordingly, when the evening was past, and the morning-light of the first day of this remarkable feast fully appeared, all the hundred and twenty disciples (*ch. i. 15.*) were assembled together, as with one heart and soul, and † in one room, for the worship of God.

^a And suddenly.
^b

2 And as they were united together in faith, worship, and love, and were waiting, looking, and longing for the

N O T E S.

* See for an account of this feast, relating to all these and several other particulars, *Lightfoot* on this place. *Ainsworth* on *Exod. xxiii. 16.* and *Lev. xxiii. 16.* and *Bedford's* *Script. Chronol.* p. 451, 452.

† Though the words (*ἐν αὐτῷ*) together, may not always signify in one room or place, as particularly, not in *ver. 42.* (see *Lightfoot* and *Whitby* there) yet this is its most common sense, as in *1 Cor. xi. 20.* and *xiv. 23.* and here: However, it is not certain whether this were in the upper room,

where they assembled before, (*chap. i. 13.*) or in the temple, where they met to celebrate the festival; but considering that the great multitude, which soon after came together, were more than their room can be thought to have held, it seems to have been in the temple, where we find them afterwards, *ver. 46.* and the multitude saw the appearance of cloven tongues resting upon them, as well as heard them speak different languages, (*ver. 33.*)

ly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

the promised gift of the Holy Ghost; there came all on a sudden a mighty noise from heaven, like the sound of an exceeding strong wind rushing forcibly into the room, to awaken their attention, and to intimate the powerful operation of the Spirit, which usually, like the strong wind that passed before *Elijah*, (1 *Kings* xix. 11.) begins with terror; and the divine gale filled the whole house where they were sitting, as an emblem that the gospel, attended with the Spirit, should scatter the mists and clouds of ignorance, sin, and error, should bear down all before it, and should fill the whole earth.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them:

3 And immediately after this, there was a visible appearance of such bright rays of glory in the place, as formed themselves into the shape of pointed flames, resembling tongues of fire (*ῥῆμα πυρός*, see the note on *Matt.* iii. 16.) that were cleft toward the tip; and the Spirit of God abode in this surprising form, for some time on the head * of every one of them. By all which it was signified, that they should be miraculously enabled to preach the gospel, with light and fervour, in divers tongues among *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; that the obstructions to the true knowledge of God, occasioned by the confusion of languages at *Babel*, (*Gen.* xi. 9.) should be removed; that the apostles gifts for propagating the gospel should be permanent and various; that all their diversities were one, in their design of proclaiming the doctrine of Christ, and were from one original, as proceeding from the same Spirit; and that his operation in them, and by their means, should enlighten and soften, melt and purify the heart, and kindle it into a sacred flame of love, zeal, and holy joy.

4 Here-

N O T E.

* It is highly probable that this appearance of cloven tongues rested on the heads, not only of the apostles, but of all the hundred and twenty; for it was on their heads, of whom it was said, (*ver.* 1.) that they were all with one accord in one place, which exactly answers to what was said of the whole company, inclusive of *Mary* and the other women, (*chap.* i. 14, 15.) and *Peter* afterwards in this chapter, *ver.* 16, 17, 18. expressly speaks of this as an accomplishment of *Isaiah's* prophecy, about God's pouring out his Spirit on his sons and daughters and on his servants and hand-maidens: And as those that were afterwards recommended by the apostles, to be chosen to the office of deacons, are described as men full of the Holy Ghost, (*chap.* vi. 3.) so it seems that the seventy disciples, and others of this company,

who were afterwards evangelists, pastors, and teachers, were at this time filled with gifts, in their measure and proportion proper for their work, as the apostles were for theirs; since furnishing out gifts for all these officers, is spoken of as the immediate fruit of Christ's ascension to heaven, (*Eph.* iv. 8, 11.) And that this was the opinion of the ancients, appears from *Jerom*, *Crisostom*, and *Occumenius*. (See *Hesly* on the place.) But if, as *Dr Leland* observes, the *all* that were with one accord in one place, *ver.* 1. may refer only to the apostles that had been mentioned just before, (*chap.* i. 16.) there is no necessity of supposing that the Holy Ghost fell in this miraculous manner, at this time, on any more than the twelve apostles. See his *Divine Author of the Old and New Testament*, vol. II. p. 313.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now when this was noised abroad the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these

4 Hereupon, answerable to the meaning of these figurative representations, all this company, though illiterate persons, were in an extraordinary manner filled with the gifts, as well as graces of the Spirit, who is holiness itself, and the author of all holiness in us; and under his powerful influence they began (*αροπληρυνθαι*) to speak the great things of God, with surprizing fluency and propriety in foreign languages, which they were before entirely unacquainted with, as the all-knowing Spirit enabled them, by suggesting matter, words, and pronunciation to them.

5 And this was a proper time, chosen by the wisdom of God, for notifying and proving the truth of this surprizing miracle, and making it subservient to the immediate spreading of the gospel; for as the feast of pentecost, so the general expectation of the Messiah in those days, had brought vast multitudes of Jews by birth, and by proselytism, (*ver.* 10.) to take up their residence for a longer or shorter time at Jerusalem, religious men that feared God, (*εὐλαβείς*) who came from all nations, where the Jews were scattered abroad, through the known parts of the world.

6 Accordingly as soon as this wonderful effusion of the Spirit, in its sensible tokens and effects upon the disciples, alarmed the neighbourhood by * its noise, and by the rumour that they heard of it, a great company of strangers from several countries crouded about the place, and, upon coming thither, were exceedingly surprized, and at a loss what to think; for every one of them heard some or other of the apostles speaking the various languages of their own respective countries, not by their ears being struck with different sounds of the same words, which would have been a miracle in the hearing, and not in the speaking; but by the same, or different persons speaking, first to some in one language, and then to others in another, according to Christ's promise, (*Mark* xvi. 17.) that *they should speak with new tongues*, as they now did. (*ver.* 4.)

7 And all these foreigners, that understood one or other of the several languages they heard, (*ἑταίροι*) were excessively astonished, wondering how this could be, whence it was, and what might be its tendency, design, and issue; and said one to another, What an amazing thing is this! Are not all these speakers illiterate and unpolished

N O T E.

* *Τροπήν τῆς φωνῆς τῆς αὐτοῦ, this voice, or noise being made*, may possibly refer to the noise that was made by the rushing of the mighty wind, (*ver.* 2.); and so may relate

to the alarm which was given by that, as well as to the reports which were immediately spread abroad.

these which speak Galileans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue wherein we were born?

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13 Others mocking,

unpolished Galileans, who never learned any other than their own mother tongue?

8 How surprizing is it then, that every one of us hears them talking with all readiness, and propriety of words and accent, in the various languages, and dialects of our own countries, (*ἑκάστη διαλέκτῳ*) as if they themselves had been born and bred there!

9, 10, 11 Here are amongst us, persons of no less than fifteen different languages that are spoke, some in Europe, others in Asia, and others in Africa, viz. Parthians, Medes, and Persians or Elamites, and inhabitants (*κατοικοῦντες*) of Mesopotamia, and of Judæa, who spake a different dialect from the Galileans, and of Cappadocia, as also of Pontus, and of a particular district * belonging to Asia the less; of Phrygia, and Pamphylia, of Egypt, and of those quarters of Lybia, that lye near Cyrene; and together with these, here are sojourning with us (*παρουσίου*) both native Jews, and religious proselytes, that ordinarily reside at Rome; as likewise persons of the island of Crete, and the country of Arabia; and tho' our languages are so very different one from another, we all, in our turns, hear these illiterate Galileans speaking them severally, as intelligibly, and distinctly, as if they were thorough masters of them all, and uttering in them the praises of God, and the stupendiously † great and glorious things which he has done. (*μεγαλύνει τὸ θεῖον*.)

12 And considering all these circumstances together, the generality of them were in the utmost astonishment, as apprehending that the hand of God must be in this event; and that some very extraordinary state of things was ushering in among them: And as their notions were all confused, and they could not imagine what it should be, they talked one to another in a way of inquiry and surprize, saying, What is God about to do amongst us? Is he introducing the Messiah's kingdom, which we have been looking for, by these wonderful men? and if so, What sort of kingdom is it likely to be?

13 At the same time there were others, ‡ who were natives

N O T E S.

* As several of these places were in the lesser Asia, it must be that part of it which was called the Proconsular, or proper Asia, that is here distinguished from them.

† These wonderful things were probably what related to the miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, together with the effusion of the Spirit, as a fulfilment of his promises, and the glorious dispensations of gospel-grace; and we may well suppose that the apostles discoursed of these things with abundance of joy and praise.

‡ These appear to have been some of the natives of Judæa and inhabitants of Jerusalem, who understood only the dialect of that country by the apostle's directing his speech immediately to them in the next verse; and it is highly probable, that the scribes and Pharisees, who had maliciously charged our Lord, as casting out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils, (*Matth. xii. 24.*) stirred up the people to charge this wonderful operation of the Spirit, as the babbling and raving of drunken men.

ing said, These men are full of new wine.

natives of *Judea*, that turned this solemn appearance into ridicule and banter; they themselves being enemies to Jesus and his followers, and not understanding any of these languages besides their own, gave out to the people, more maliciously than ignorantly, that these were only a parcel of drunken sots, who fancied themselves to be inspired, and so talked an unintelligible, nonsensical gibberish, without any meaning, they having intoxicated themselves with the sweet wine, (*παινους μεμεσημενοι*) which they had drank too freely, at that festival time.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lift up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of *Judea*, and all ye that dwell at *Jerusalem*, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

14 But as this was such an invidious reproach on the apostles, and on the Spirit of God in them, *Peter* got up, to shew that he was not drunk, as did the other eleven apostles for the same purpose, as also to testify their concurrence with him, and in their turns to confute this calumny*; and he, as their mouth, spake aloud, and with great earnestness, especially to those scoffers, saying, (*αδελφαι ιουδαιαι*) Ye *Jewish* men, and all ye inhabitants of *Jerusalem*, I am going to declare a matter of the utmost consequence to you, and beg that you would carefully observe my words of truth and soberness:

15 For he saith not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

15 For neither I nor any of these my companions and brethren are overcome, or any way disordered with liquor, according to the injurious construction that ye have scoffingly put upon our conduct? and it is extremely rational, as well as uncharitable and prophane, to suggest or imagine any such thing concerning us; for it is now but nine o' clock, the hour appointed for the morning sacrifice, till which time ye very well know that the *Jews* do not use to eat or drink any thing, especially on sabbaths and solemn festivals†; and therefore it cannot be thought that such a great number of us should, with one consent, debauch ourselves so early, and come in so shameful a manner to the worship of God.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet *Joel*.

16 But what ye have seen and heard is far from being the frolics and senseless jargon of drunkards, as all these strangers can testify, who heard and understood us as speaking with propriety and good connection, the wonderful things of God, in their own languages, (*ver. 11.*) is, on the contrary, (to tell you the plain truth of the case) is a direct and glorious specimen of the accomplishment of *Joel's* prophecy. (*Chap. ii. 28,—32.*)

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,

17, 18 Where God says in a way of absolute promise, to engage our faith and expectation of a performance: In the last dispensation of grace, in the *Messiah's* days which

N O T E S.

* See *Lightfoot* on the place.

† See *Whitby* and *Lightfoot* on the place.

God,) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants, and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke.

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come.

which will be a little before the final dissolution of the Jewish state, temple, and nation, I will assuredly pour out the gifts and graces of my Spirit; in a more plentiful and extraordinary manner than ever before; not merely upon people of superior character, nor only in the land of *Israel*, but with extensive and abundant light and influence upon persons* of all ranks, ages, and sexes, and of all nations, for the advancement of his kingdom and glory in the salvation of many souls; insomuch, that without distinction of sex, your sons and daughters shall, under immediate inspiration, foretell things to come, and speak unto men for edification, and exhortation and comfort, (1 Cor. xiv. 3.) Without distinction of ages, your young men shall have visions, and your old men dreams, one as well as the other receiving divine revelations, as immediately and evidently from God, as he formerly used to convey them in those ways: And without distinction of outward circumstances and stations in the world, I will shed forth this abundance of the Spirit, in these happy days, on such of my people as are male and female, servants of the lowest rank, as well as on men and women of higher degree and station; and they shall, under a divine afflatus, predict some things, and explain others.

19, 20 And for the utter confusion of my obstinate enemies, that will not be convinced by the plainest manifestations of the Spirit to attest the Messiah's authority and glory, I will cause the most astonishing prodigies in the air above, and terrible presages on the earth below, such as a vast effusion of blood by the slaughter that shall be made upon the Jews in domestick and foreign wars, and conflagrations of towns and cities, set on fire by invading enemies; and such thick clouds of smoke ascending from thence, as will obscure the light of the sun, and give a dusky red cast to the moon, like the colour of blood†. With all these, and many other frightful

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* It is manifest that *all flesh* must be here taken in a very limited sense, as signifying only some of mankind in all nations; or, more directly and immediately, some of all sorts and degrees of persons, as they are specified in this and the following verse, and were, in fact, partakers of this remarkable effusion of the Spirit, as a pledge of further communications to persons of all the same characters under the gospel-state, in opposition to the Jewish notion, which restrained the spirit of prophecy to the *Israelites*, to them that dwell in *Judea*, and to the wise, valiant, and rich, &c. (See *Poock* on *Jes*

ii. 28.) But whatsoever view it had to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, it is plain, from *Acts* x. xi. chap. that *Peter* did not understand it in that sense till many years afterwards; and he speaks of what was now done, as an accomplishment of this prophecy, tho' there were no *Gentiles* among them on whom the Spirit was poured down.

† These expressions may be considered in a metaphorical sense, to signify not only the destruction of cities and towns, but also of rulers and people, and of the civil and ecclesiastical state of the *Jews*: But besides the account that *Josephus* gives of the dreadful

frightful appearances, will I introduce that great and signal day of the Messiah's glory, (*επιφανεια*) and of his terrible vengeance on the unbelieving Jews, which shall compleat the destruction of their city, temple, and nation, and entirely dissolve their civil and ecclesiastical government, and will be the most awful type and emblem that ever was known of that day of the Lord Jesus; which will be still more terrible to all the wicked and ungodly, at his final appearing to judge the world.

21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

21 But amidst all these terrors and dangers, whoever, despairing of help elsewhere, shall religiously own and cleave to the Lord Jesus, as the only Saviour, and with faith, humility, and servour, shall pray to him*, and to the Father through him, for all needful guidance, protection, and favour, shall be delivered from the dreadful calamities that will fall on all the impenitent and unbelieving, at the destruction of Jerusalem here, and at the day of judgment hereafter; and shall be partakers of that salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles,

22 And now, O ye *Israelites*, to whom pertain the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, (*Rom. ix. 4.*) I beseech you attend seriously to the surprizing and important things that I have further to say to you under the inspiration of this Spirit, which is now so visibly and remarkably shed down upon us: Ye have heard much of that famous man, whom, though commonly called by way of reproach Jesus of Nazareth, we glory in; and who was signalized among you, and evidently

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N O T E S.

Babcock made upon the Jews by fire and sword, he tells us of many other stupendous prodigies in the air, and on the earth: In the air, he says, a star hung over the city like a sword, and a comet appeared for the space of a year; and when the people were assembled together at the passover, a light shone for half an hour round about the altar and the temple, at the ninth hour of the night, as if it had been noon-day; and soon after that festival, chariots of war appeared aloft in the air, and armed troops made swift marches along the clouds all over the country, and seemed to draw lines of circumvallation round about cities. On the earth, he says, at the fore-mentioned passover a cow, as a priest was leading it to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple; and the eastern gate of the inner temple, which was of brass, and of so immense a weight, that twenty men could hardly shut it, seemed of its own accord to open about the sixth hour; and at the feast of Pentecost, when the priests, according to custom, went to minister in the temple, they first heard a motion and noise,

and then a voice, as it were of a great multitude, saying, *Let us go hence.* And one Jesus, the son of Ananias, a mean countryman, went about all the city, night and day, crying, *Wo to Jerusalem, and wo to the temple, &c.* and could not be restrained by scourging, and other cruel usage: but finished his warning at last, saying, *Wo to me also; at which he was smote by a stone from a sling, and immediately died.* *Vid. Hadr. Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5. p. 118, &c.*

* *Calling upon the name of the Lord*, is often used with a reference to Christ, and is characteristic of true Christians; see *chap. ix. 14, 21. and xxiii. 16. Rom. x. 13. and 1 Cor. i. 2. and 28.* in the preceding verse, the great and notable day of the Lord is plainly meant of the day of Christ's appearing for the most glorious and awful purposes, the connection leads us to understand this verse, as directing us to call upon his name, and so shews that he is the great Jehovah spoken of in the prophecy which is here applied to him.

rackes, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know :

shewn to be from God, (*καὶ τὸ οὖν ἀποδείκνυσθαι*) and in high favour with him *, by the mighty works, wonders, and signs, all contrary to the course, and above the power of nature, which God the Father, concurring with him, performed by him, in the midst of yourselves, in your own cities, towns, and public assemblies, and before your own eyes, as ye all very well know to be matter of fact, and cannot justly deny.

23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain :

23 This great and glorious Person being by the eternal decree, or settled counsel, and unerring foreknowledge of the infinitely wise and holy God, judiciously devoted to death, and providentially put into your hands, that he might fall a sacrifice to the honour and satisfaction of divine justice, and make way for mercy and grace to be extended to the sinful sons of men ; so perverse were your hearts, which God foreknew they would be, and determined to leave to themselves without restraint, that ye with horrible malice, rage, and envy, and with stupid blindness and fool-hardiness, seized, and cried out as with one voice against him ; and condemned and bound him like a criminal, by a national act in your general council ; and, by a monstrously wicked management, procured his being crucified, and put to the most painful and ignominious death, by the hands of *Gentile sinners* (*τῶν ἑθνῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν*).

24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the prison of death : because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

24 This very Person, for promoting the most glorious purposes, contrary to all your expectations and designs, God has still further owned, and honoured, by raising him from the dead ; he having judicially released him from all the pains and sorrows of death that were penally inflicted upon him, and thereby taken away its sting from all that believe in him : He has thus *taken him from prison and from judgment*, (*Isa. liii. 8.*) ; because it was utterly inconsistent with the infinite dignity of his person, the perfection of his atonement, the justice of God, and the truth of ancient prophecies, and absolutely impossible, in the nature of things, that he should remain, either by right or force, under the power and penalty of death ; or should be held in prison, and not rise a triumphant conqueror over that last enemy, and over him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, (*Heb. ii. 14.*)

25 For David speaketh

25 For the royal and inspired *Psalmist*, personating Christ,

N O T E.

* Miracles, wonders, and signs, are terms of like import, and are heaped together to signify the greatness of Christ's miracles, and to raise our admiration at them, and carry our thoughts beyond them, as they were signs

of the divine power and goodness, and of Christ's being approved of God as the very person he professed to be in his working them. (See the note on *Mark. xii. 28.*)

speakeſt concerning him, I foreſaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I ſhould not be moved.

Chriſt, who foreſaw he would deſcend from him, according to the fleſh, and would be exalted on a ſpiritual and heavenly throne, which was prefigured by his own temporal throne in *Iſrael*, expreſſed himſelf in the following manner, (*Pſalm* xvi. 8, 11.) I have ever had the Lord in my view, thinking and acting as in his ſight and preſence, and having his glory at heart as my higheſt end; for he is ever near me, and my utmoſt confidence is in his wiſdom, power, faithfulneſs, and goodneſs, that he will ſtand by me, and never ſuffer me to be confounded, (*Iſa.* l. 7, 8.); and that I ſhall never be diſcouraged in, or beat off from my great undertaking for his praiſe, and the ſalvation of his people.

26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad: moreover alſo, my fleſh ſhall reſt in hope:

27 Becauſe thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thine Holy One to ſee corruption.

26, 27 Therefore I rejoiced in ſpirit, and my tongue, which is the glory of a man, eſpecially when employed in the praiſes of the Lord, could not forbear expreſſing the gladneſs of my heart: (*Luke* x. 21.) Yea, in the day of my greateſt diſtreſs, and in the very article of death itſelf, I ſhall ſtill maintain an entire ſatisfaction, that my body (*κατακλινοίμι*) ſhould be houſed in the grave with ſafety and peace; and that I ſhall lay it down with ſweet compoſure, as being fully aſſured, that (or) thou, O my heavenly Father, wilt not leave my * ſoul, like other men's, to continue (*ικαίω*) in the inviſible ſtate of ſeparation from the body; nor wilt thou permit the body itſelf of thy Son, whoſe nature is holy, and who is ſet apart, and conſecrated by his own blood, to the work of redemption, to be ſo long deprived of life, and of its dear companion the ſoul, as to begin to turn to rottenneſs and corruption; but that as thoſe parts of any ſacrifice, which were to be eaten, were not to be kept till the third day, leſt they ſhould begin to putriſy †, *Lev.* vii. 15,—17. ſo I ſhall riſe again on the third day, as one that offered himſelf a ſacrifice of a ſweet-smelling ſavour to God. (*Eph.* v. 2.)

28 Thou haſt made known to me the ways of life; thou ſhalt make

28 I have an abſolute dependance upon thee for this; for thou haſt thoroughly acquainted me, as the Head of the Church, with the way in which I, and they in their order, through faith in me, ſhall arrive at a glorious immortality, and in which thou wilt bring me and them to it, even by raiſing me from the dead, as the *fiſt-fruits of them that ſleep* in their graves: (*1 Cor.* xv. 20.) And as thou wilt ſmile upon the whole of my undertaking and performances; ſo, when I am riſen, thou wilt give

N O T E.

* If, as ſome critics contend, the words *ζωὴς* and *αἰῶν* were here to be rendered *life*, and the *grave*, the beauty of the antitheliſ between Chriſt's ſoul and his *ſleſh* or body would be loſt; and to me it is ſcarce good

ſenſe to ſay, *Thou wilt not leave my life in the grave.*

† To ſee corruption, is an Hebraiſm for corrupting. See *Anſw.* on *Lev.* vii. 17.

make me full of joy with thy countenance.

29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day ;

30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne ;

31 He, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

32 This Jesus

me glory, that their faith and hope may be in thee, (1 Pet. i. 21.) ; and wilt receive me, and them after me, to all unutterable delights in thy immediate presence, where is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand, where are pleasures for evermore.

29 Now, ye men of *Israel*, my countrymen and kinsmen after the flesh, permit me to discourse a little, with openness and freedom, upon this prophetic passage of scripture ; consider it calmly as reasonable creatures ; and do not be prejudiced against what I am going to say about it, with all the good-will and friendship of a brother to you : Ye all know that the renowned and pious *David*, who may well be called a *patriarch*, as he was the head of the royal family, died and was buried above a thousand years ago ; and, by consequence, his soul has been all this time in a separate state, and his body has long since corrupted and turned to dust in the tomb, which, in honour to his memory, has been kept up, and continues amongst us, to this very day.

30 The fact therefore shews that he could not say these things concerning himself ; but being an inspired prophet, and knowing that God had given him a gracious promise, and confirmed it irrevocably with an oath, that, when he himself should sleep with his fathers in the dust, he would set up his seed after him, which should proceed out of his bowels, (see the note on *John* i. 14.) and would establish the throne of his kingdom for ever, (2 *Sam.* vii. 12, 13. and *Psal.* cxxxii. 11.) and knowing, by the spirit of prophecy, that this related to, and would have its full accomplishment in the *Messiah*, who should descend from him in his human nature, and in a high and glorious sense should inherit his throne in *Israel*.

31 *David*, I say, foreseeing this, spake, in the place but now mentioned, concerning the resurrection of the *Messiah* after he should be put to death ; and personating him said, that his soul was not left for any length of time in a separate state, nor did his flesh continue so long in the grave, as to be in any degree putrified ; God taking care, by his special providence, to preserve it from corrupting, that it might the more evidently appear to be the same body which was crucified, and that nothing like the common corruption which came upon the human body, by means of the fall, might be found in him.

32 Accordingly this *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, whom ye lately crucified, is the very person of whom *David* spoke, as of his royal descendant ; and whom God, in accom-

plishment

hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

plishment of that prophecy, has raised again from the dead on the third day, before his embalmed body had time to be corrupted: And of this resurrection every one of us, on whom the Spirit has now so visibly descended to confirm our testimony, were eye-witnesses; we all having been well acquainted with him before his death, and having seen him and conversed with him, and several of us having eat and drank with him at various times, for forty days together after his resurrection, till in our sight he ascended up to heaven. (*Chap. i. 3,—9. and x. 41.*)

32 Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.

33 So that this very Person is now exalted to his throne, by a glorious operation and display of the divine power, and to a state of the highest dignity and authority in the Father's immediate presence, as head over all things to the church; and he having now, as Mediator, received a full commission from his Father to communicate the Holy Ghost, which there were promises of before-hand by the Father, as well as by himself, (see the Paraphrase on *chap. i. 4.*) He has now, in performance of this grand comprehensive promise of the New Testament, shed down the Spirit abundantly upon us, for producing those wonderful effects which ye at this very time are eye and ear-witnesses of, and are so much surprized at, and at a loss about. (*ver. 7, 8.*)

34 For David is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

34, 35 And even this was likewise foretold by *David*, under the spirit of prophecy, in words that could not personally relate to himself: For that great and excellent prince, how eminent and holy soever he were, is not corporally ascended or gone up to heaven; his body being still in the grave, as has been observed, (*ver. 29.*) But he himself, in a prophecy of the Messiah, brought in God the Father as speaking in this manner to his Son, (*Psal. cx. 1.*) The Lord Jehovah said unto the Messiah, who in his divine nature and office-capacity is my Lord and King, Be thou exalted in the highest majesty and dominion in heaven, for the administration of all the affairs of the kingdom of providence and grace; and continue reigning in all thy power and glory there, till I shall have given thee, as my King, whom I have set on my holy hill of Zion, a compleat triumph over sin and Satan, the world and death, and shall have brought all thine enemies into an absolute subjection to thee; that those of them, who are not made willing in the day of thy power, (*Psal. cx. 3.*) may be broken to pieces, as with a rod of iron, (*Psal. ii. 9.*) and trampled under thy

thy feet* : Such an absolute and universal dominion and conquest as this, is no way applicable to *David* himself; but is, in the fullest sense, true of the *Messiah*, whom here he called his Lord.

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

36 Therefore, to conclude the whole with an application to yourselves, Since Jesus has wrought such wonderful works, has rose again from the dead, is ascended up to heaven, and has poured down the promised Spirit, and all this in accomplishment of so many antient prophecies; every *Israelite* among you, upon this concurring evidence, may, and ought to be thoroughly convinced of this important and concerning truth, and we have now full authority to declare it, viz. that God the Father has actually glorified that very Jesus of *Nazareth* whom ye shamefully crucified a few weeks ago, and has vested him with all power in heaven and earth, as *Messiah the Prince*, (*Dan. ix. 25.*) or as the Lord and King, and anointed Saviour of the church.

37 Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

37 Upon *Peter's* delivering this scriptural, close, and moving discourse, the Holy Spirit set it home with such power upon the hearts of many of the *Jews*, who heard it, and had been concerned in crucifying the Lord of glory, that they were exceedingly struck, pierced, and wounded in their consciences, under an affecting sense of the greatness of their sin, and of the danger they had exposed themselves to thereby; and cried out with much earnestness and distress of soul, some to *Peter*, and others to the rest of the apostles; Since you have been pleased to call us men and brethren, we beseech you, by all the humanity and kindness of such friendly appellations, tell us what is to be done in our deplorable case; what will become of us? Is there any hope of mercy for such provoking wretches, and horrid murderers as we are? If so, what course must we take for the remission of our sins, and escaping their dreadful and deserved consequences?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of

38 *Peter*, being the most forward speaker of all the apostles, replied, Your case is far from being desperate, tho' very dangerous: As our great Lord commanded you to repent, upon the encouragements of gospel-grace, (see the note on *Matth. iii. 2.*) so our commission is to preach repentance and remission of sins, even to you at *Jerusalem*, in his name: (*Luke xxiv. 47.*) Let every

one

N O T E.

* Here are two allusions to ancient customs: one to the highest honour that used to be shewn to persons, by placing them on the right hand, as *Solomon* did his mother *Bathsheba*, when sitting on his throne, (*1 King ii. 19.*); and the other, to the custom

of conquerors, who used to tread on the necks of their vanquished enemies, as a token of their entire victory and triumph over them. See *Job. x. 24, 25.* 2 *Sam. xxii. 39.—43.* *Isa. xviii. 37.—42.* and *Ezek. xxi. 29.*

of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

one of you therefore be deeply humbled for, and heartily renounce this, and all your other iniquities, with the utmost abhorrence of yourselves; and as a token thereof, and of your sincere and professed subjection to Christ's authority and grace, and of your accepting him in all his offices, as the only true Messiah, be ye baptized * in his name, that ye may receive the pardon of all your sins, through faith in his atoning blood, which ye so lately shed; and ye, together with that blessing, shall be partakers of the saving influences; and, many of you, of some miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost †.

39 In this way, ye may warrantably hope for this blessing, and ought to put in for it, as ever ye would be concerned for your own, and your dear offspring's happiness: For the promise of God's covenant, (*Gen. xvii. 7.*) of which baptism is now to be the sign and seal, as circumcision has been heretofore, and particularly the promise of the Spirit, *Isa. xlv. 3.* and *lix. 21.* runs to you and your children: And as the blessing of Abraham is, under this new dispensation, not to be confined as formerly, to the Jews, but is to come on the Gentiles also, who are at present far from God, and from his covenant, (*Eph. ii. 12, 13.*) even on as many of them as the Lord our covenant-God shall graciously call to the faith and fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ,

N O T E S.

* As the Jews already believed in God the Father, and in the Holy Ghost, as speaking in and by the prophets, some suppose that they were to be baptized in the name of Jesus, in testimony of their believing him to be a Divine Person, and the true Messiah, which was the grand point to be gained upon them; but that, as the great question among the Gentiles was about the true God, they were to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as the one true God, in opposition to all idols, according to Christ's commission, *Matth. xxviii. 19.* But as this ordinance was administered by the authority and command of Christ, and on the foot of faith in him, and obedience to him, as a Divine Person, and the only true Messiah; it is usually expressed by baptizing Gentiles as well as Jews, in the name of Christ, and into him; and this supposes that it was administered according to his express institution, which was, that it should be not in his own name only, but in the name of the Father, and the Holy Ghost, together with his own: And therefore I take baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus, to be expressive, not of the form of baptism, but of the special regard that was had to Christ in it: and, as *Irenæus* observes, in the name of Christ is understood, the Father, who appointed him, and the Son, who was anointed,

by and the Spirit, who was the unction with which he was anointed. *Iren. advers. Hæres. lib. iii. cap. 20.* The Scholasts on this passage also tell us, that *Ambrose* (*de Spir. sanct. lib. 4. cap. 3.*) says the same thing, almost in the same words.

† It does not appear to me, that, as some have contended, all that believed and were baptized, had one or other of the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, or any thing farther than what was necessary to their own salvation or edification, or than Christians now-a-days may warrantably hope for. And therefore I take the meaning of this passage to be, not that every individual of them should receive miraculous gifts; but that many of them should, and that all of them should have the Spirit, at least in his ordinary operations; for there is no notice taken of any visible descent, or miraculous effect of the Spirit, on the five thousand that were at this time converted: And though probably many of these were present at a following assembly when they were all filled with the Holy Ghost in an extraordinary manner, (*chap. iv. 31.*) yet as the apostles afterwards spoke to the church, (*chap. vi. 3.*) of chusing such men for deacons from among themselves, as were full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, they thereby intimated that all the disciples were not so.

by the gospel *; the same promise is to them and their children, to be fulfilled in its proper season; they being thereby to be made the children of *Abraham*, and to be blessed with him, and so become the children of promise, even as *Isaac* was. (*Gal. iii. 7, 9, 16, 17, 27, 28, 29.* and *iv. 28.*)

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

40 The apostle enlarged upon these things, adding many other particulars of like tendency, by which he bore witness to Christ's resurrection and exaltation, and exhorted them to embrace him as the true Messiah, saying, Let such considerations as these move you to renounce the obstinacy and infidelity of this perverse generation of men, especially of the scribes and Pharisees, those inveterate enemies to our blessed Lord, and to come out from among them, that ye be neither partakers of their sins, nor of their plagues, in the dreadful vengeance that is coming upon this city and nation, and in the more terrible wrath that shall be poured out upon all the impenitent and unbelieving at the last day.

41 Then they that gladly received

41 Then, the Spirit of God working with this discourse †, those among them, whose hearts were opened

N O T E S.

* It seems too narrow to confine the promise here mentioned, to that in *Isa. ii.* which *Peter* had referred to, *ver. 16, 17, 18.* For he there speaks of that promise as then accomplished in the effusion of the Spirit only on *Jews*: and though he there leads our thoughts to the tenour of God's covenant, relating to his people's seed, together with themselves, as his spirit should be poured out on their *sons and daughters*, under the gospel-dispensation, in which there is neither male nor female, but they are all one in Christ Jesus; (*Gal. iii. 28.*) yet the promise here seems to look still further, to the grand promise that God made to *Abraham*, and his seed in their several generations, and afterwards renewed, through the Old Testament dispensations to *Israel* and their seed; and so intimates, that the gospel-dispensation would be so far from repealing this promise, that it should be established, and take effect, even among believing *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*: And it is most natural to understand this promise, as belonging in both its branches to believing *Gentiles*: For the same promise is said to be to them, as was to the *Jews*; and it can scarcely be thought, that, when the *Gentiles* came to be converted and incorporated into the same Christian body and particular churches, as many of them were with the *Jews*, the *Jewish* members should have a right to the promise for their children, and the *Gentile* members should have none for theirs; nor can it easily be reconciled to that community of privileges between them, which the apostle speaks of, *Rom. xi. 16, 17.* I therefore take the sense given in the Paraphrase, to be delign-

ed by the Holy Ghost, under whose inspiration *Peter* spoke, though *Peter* himself, like some of the ancient prophets, (*1 Pet. i. 10, 11.*) did not understand the full meaning of what he himself delivered, since he, as yet, had no distinct notion of the calling of the *Gentiles*, as is observed in the note on *ver. 71.*

† It is evident by this happy effect, that the effusion of the Spirit, on this memorable day, was so gracious, as well as miraculous operations: For it wrought in this great, and before hardened multitude, unto their conviction of sin, and receiving the word with faith, repentance, and joy; thus the gospel coming to the *Thessalonians* in power, and in the Holy Ghost, wrought in them, (*2 Thess. i. 5, -- 10.*) and the apostle *Paul* speaks of regeneration, or the renewing of the Holy Ghost, as the effect of the effusion of the Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: (*Tit. iii. 5, 6.*) And to suppose that the pouring out of the Spirit, in this and other places, is to be restrained to his miraculous gifts and operations, is to represent all those passages as of very little use to succeeding generations, any further than as they are attestations to the truth of the gospel; and is to take off all the encouragement we have from them to expect such influences of the Spirit as are necessary to vital religion, or to conversion and edification in the settled state of the church: But surely it is still as true as ever, that if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, &c. *Rom. viii. 9, 10, 11.* And as to his enlightening, sanctifying, comforting, and saving fruits

ved his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

to attend to, and joyfully embrace the glad tidings of mercy, through a crucified and risen Saviour, were, upon their profession of faith and repentance, baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, under those considerations of him: And so great was the number of them, that, notwithstanding the strong prejudices which before had filled their hearts, about three thousand of them were that very day wrought upon, and added to the church of Christ then erected at *Jerusalem*.

41 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

42 And so effectual was the grace of God in them, that they, from that time forward, not only attended with all diligence and constancy on the apostles preaching, but stedfastly persevered in the faith and profession of the doctrine of Christ, which they preached, and in Christian comunion with the church, in all offices of brotherly love; and they often joined together * in celebrating the Lord's supper, as the memorial of his death, and in solemn supplication and prayer for further effusions of the Spirit upon themselves and others, that the word of the Lord might run and be glorified.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

43 And so much of God appeared among them, that people of every rank, who had opportunities of observing it, were struck with a solemn awe; so that none, as yet, dared to oppose them: And their souls were the more impressed with a reverence for them, and with fear of what might be the sad consequence of their having crucified Christ, when they saw many other amazing miracles wrought by the apostles, to confirm their testimony, besides that of their so readily speaking various languages, which they had never learned by education or art. (See the note on *ver. 22*.)

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

44 And such a sincere, disinterested spirit of love and beneficence; such holy contempt of this world, and lively hopes of a better; and such a zealous concern for supporting the interest of Christ, in its infant and exposed state, prevailed amongst all these believers, that they met together as much, and as many of them, as possible, in various companies with one design, for Christian conversation, and acts of social worship, (see the

N O T E S.

and affluences, that these are equally necessary in all ages. See among other places, *Rom. viii. 13,—16, 26, Gal. v. 22, &c. Eph. i. 17,—20. and ii. 18. and iii. 16.*

* Though *breaking of bread* was used to express a common, or a miraculous meal, as well as the Lord's supper; yet as it is here brought in between other exercises of devotion, it seems to be meant of the *Lord's supper*, and to be a different thing from their

breaking of bread from house to house, mentioned *ver. 46*. which I think may be best understood of their brotherly familiarity and friendship at their common meals; for it would otherwise appear too much like a needless tautology, in such a short and general account of their Christian temper and behaviour; and it is brought in, after the historian had spoke of their having all things common among them, *ver. 44. 45.*

the note on *ver. 1.*); and, the urgent circumstances of things called for it, they made a common stock of their worldly possessions, that the poor might be comfortably provided for, as well as the rich.

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

45 And the more effectually to answer this charitable end, many of the more wealthy of them cheerfully sold their real and personal estates, and distributed the produce of the whole, as occasions required, to all that were necessitous among them *.

46 And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart;

46 They likewise continued, as with one heart and soul, to resort to the temple at the hours of prayer every day, to join with others in public worship; and they tabled together as opportunities and conveniencies offered, sometimes at one house, and sometimes at another †; and all this was attended with such a joyful sense of God's love, and such consciousness of undissembled sincerity, and hearty glowing affection one to another, as sanctified and sweetened every meal.

47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

47 So they went on admiring, adoring, and blessing God for Jesus Christ, and for the riches of his grace manifested to them through him, in the forgiveness of their great and aggravated sins, in the renewings and consolations of the Holy Ghost, in the holy communion they had with God, and with one another, and in their assured hopes of glory. And so many tokens of the divine favour and image appeared upon them, that they were in high esteem with the generality of the people: Yea, the Lord Jesus so eminently owned and blessed their gospel-ministrations, together with their exemplary temper and behaviour, that by these means he continually made still many more converts, and added them to this first New Testament-church, even such as were brought into a saved state, (*την σωτηριαν*) and should be effectually secured, and carried on to eternal salvation, as well as delivered from the destruction that was coming on *Jerusalem*, and on the body of the obstinate, unbelieving *Jews*.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How impossible was it that the divine Saviour, who had satisfied the law and justice, should be detained as a prisoner in the grave! And how glorious are the fruits of his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation at the Father's right hand,

N O T E S.

* *All men and every man* here must be restrained to such members of this Christian society, as believed, and had need of relief. Their *having all things common*, mentioned in the foregoing verse, must likewise be restrained to the particular effects which had belonged to some of them; and this gives us a lively view of the Christian spirit, that ought to govern every true believer, though

this manner and degree of its exercise was peculiar to the circumstances of those days, and was not designed for the imitation of all after ages.

† Or *from house to house* (*καὶ οἰκῶν*) may signify *at the house*, meaning where they had met in an upper room, *chap. i. 13.* But see the note on *ver. 42.* of this chapter.

hand, in the miraculous effusions of his Spirit on his first disciples, and in his gracious and effectual operations for the conversion of three thousand souls on that day! All this was done to demonstrate that Jesus, whom the Jews had crucified, is the true Messiah; to fulfil ancient prophecies in him; and to confirm and propagate the gospel, that the *magnalia Dei*, the great things of God, might be spoken and understood in every language: And as these vast importances were to be dependent upon, and in consequence of, Christ's being put to death by wicked hands. What adoring thoughts should we have of the infinite wisdom and holiness of God, in permitting and over-ruling the wickedness of men, according to his eternal purpose, and leaving the sinner utterly inexcusable, who freely commits the most abominable iniquity of his own accord, and from the malignity of his own heart, without any knowledge of, or design to fulfil, a divine decree! And how concerned should we be to forsake the company and practices of men of corrupt minds, that we may not be involved in their sin and ruin! But, alas! how perverse and obstinate are our hearts in opposing, ridiculing, and reviling, even the plainest, and most glorious manifestations of God's power and goodness, till his Spirit begin to work upon them! Then some are struck with awe and wonder, and laid under restraint; and others are deeply convinced and humbled, like persons pricked at their hearts; are put upon earnest inquiries after salvation; and are brought to repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, and to a professed subjection to Christ and his gospel, by being baptized in his name, joining in church-fellowship, and observing all his commands: And, O how wonderful is the grace that pardons the greatest of sins; and the change that is made upon the worst, even upon *Jerusalem-sinners*! What blessing and praising of God, zeal for his glory, and communion with him and his people; what steadfast adherence to the apostles doctrine; what solemnity in religious acts of worship, heavenly-mindedness, contempt of this world, and benevolence to men; and what Christian compassion, and affection to the brethren, does this change produce!—Blessed be God, that our children are brought into the pale of the covenant with ourselves under the gospel-dispensation; and that he will ever own his people, will give them favour in the eyes of others, that behold their good conversation in Christ, and will be continually adding to his church saved ones. O may the blessed Spirit come upon us as a mighty rushing wind, and a penetrating, purifying fire, to fill our assemblies and our souls with light and power, and efficacious influence! And may we be found among them that call upon the name of the Lord, and shall be saved!

C H A P. III.

Peter and John cure a cripple that lay at the gate of the temple, 1,—17. Peter declares to the people, that this was done not by their own power or holiness; but by faith in the name of Christ, whom they had crucified, 12,—18. And exhorts them to repentance, and to believe in him for the remission of sin, 19,—26.

TEXT.
NOW Peter and John went up together into the temple

PARAPHRASE.

NOW, to instance in one single miracle wrought by the apostles hands, when vast multitudes were gathered together, (*ver. 9,—11. and chap. iv. 4.*) * Peter, 26 And

N O T E.

* Whether this were on the same day of Pentecost, mentioned in the foregoing chapter, or some following day of that solemn feast, at some time afterwards, is uncertain:

But it seems to have been at one of the Jewish festivals; because, most commonly at other times, few used to attend the temple-worship besides the priests and the stationary men, who

temple at the hour of prayer, being the sixth hour.

the great apostle of the circumcision, and *John*, the beloved disciple of our Lord, went up together to the temple to worship, and to take an opportunity of preaching Christ unto the people, at three o'clock in the afternoon, which was one of the *Jews* stated hours of prayer.

2 And a certain man, lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple.

2 And a certain poor man, who was forty years old, (*chap.* iv. 22.) and had been a cripple from his very birth, and, being unable to walk, was wont to be carried by others, and laid, day after day, as a miserable object of charity, at the east-gate of the temple, which, for its extraordinary splendor, and fine architecture, bore the name † of the beautiful gate: Thither he was brought, that, being incapable of getting his livelihood by labour, he might ask relief of the religious and well disposed, as they went to and from the worship of God at that sacred house.

3 Who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked an alms.

3 This indigent, lame man seeing the apostles, *Peter* and *John*, as they were entering into the temple, begged of them to give him some small matter for his sustenance.

4 And Peter fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said Look on us.

4 Upon which, both of these compassionate and holy men, instead of turning their eyes another way, as mercilefs people do from the miserable, looked wistly at him, and designing something better for him than a common alms, said, attend to us, and observe what we have to say and do to you.

5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

5 He, encouraged by this their kind way of accosting him, looked earnestly at them, and listened to their words, in full expectation that their eyes being fixed on him, and his on them, would move their hearts, and that they would generously bestow something upon him, to relieve his necessities.

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but

6 Then *Peter*, as the most forward spokesman, said to him, you, no doubt, expect money of us; and, were we able, our compassion is so great for you, that we could willingly give you both silver and gold; but alas! we ourselves are poor men, that have none of that sort of treasure to spare; however, such benefit as my great Lord

N O T E 9.

who represented the whole congregation of *Israel*; and as the apostles did not yet understand the abolition of the ceremonial part of temple-service, they, as opportunities offered, attended these, together with the moral parts of worship there; but they especially took the advantage of public seasons to go thither, that they might preach to the people. And as there were three stated times, or hours of daily prayer among the *Jews*, one at nine a clock in the morning, the second at noon, and the last at three in the afternoon, all which were observed by *David* and *Daniel*, (*Psal.* lv. 17. and *Dan.* vi. 10, 13,) the first and last were at the time of the morning and evening

sacrifices, (*Exod.* xxix. 38, 39. and *Numb.* xxviii. 3, 4.); the second is taken notice of as the time when *Peter* was at prayer on the house-top, *Acts* x. 9. and the last is referred to *Pf.* cxli. 2. *Dan.* ix. 21. and *Acts* x. 3.

† *Dr. Lightfoot* tells us from *Josephus*, that this was the east gate at the front of the wall that encompassed the court, which went by the name of the inner temple, in opposition to the space without the wall, which was called the outward temple; and as this gate was of *Corinthian* brass, it was called the *Corinthian* gate, and far exceeded in glory those of gold or silver. See *Temple Service*, ch. xviii. p. 1021. Vol. list of his works.

box such as I have given thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up, and walk.

6 And he took him by the right hand, and lift him up: and immediately his feet and ankles - were received strength.

8 And he leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God.

10 And they knew that it was he which sat for alms

Lord has freely enabled, and ordered me to communicate, and is much more valuable than the most liberal alms that you look for, I freely bestow upon you; and that you may know by whose warrant I do it, and may believe in him for this; and for still much better blessings, I say unto you in the name *, or by the sole authority and power of that very person who has been commonly known and despised under the character of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up immediately, and walk before all this company, that they may be witnesses of his power in healing you.

7 At speaking these words, the apostle Peter, laying hold on the cripple's right hand, raised him up; and the once crucified but now exalted Saviour, so wonderfully owned faith's telling on him for the cure, that the poor man's feet and ankles, which had been enfeebled and lamed from his very infancy, were instantly restored to their full strength and soundness.

8 So that he nimbly sprang up, and had such a perfect use of his legs, that he stood firmly upon them, and then readily walked about (*περιπατει*) before all the company; and went into the inner court of the temple with the apostles, walking and leaping there, with all agility and vigour, like a hart, as was prophesied, (*Isa. xxxv. 6.*) in an ecstacy of admiration and joy, and publicly blessing God, in adorations, thanksgivings and praises, for so great and unexpected a mercy, which nothing short of the divine power and goodness could have conferred upon him.

9 This was not done in a corner; but the whole multitude saw him walking and leaping about, all in rapture, and heard him ascribing glory to God, and publishing his praise.

10 And being fully satisfied that this was the very man whom they knew to have been born a cripple, and had

N O T E.

How different was the behaviour of the apostles from that of our blessed Lord in working miracles! Though on proper occasions, for asserting and vindicating his office-character as the Messiah, in human nature, he spoke of himself as coming and doing his works, in his Father's name; *John v. 43.* and *x. 25.* yet even at those very times, he, to secure the honour of his superior character as God, spoke of himself as the Son, who acts in full concurrence with the Father, in all that the Father himself doth; and has life in himself, and quickens whom he will; and said I and my Father are one, *John v. 19.*—*26.* and *x. 30.* And his usual way of performing his miracles themselves, was with the sovereignty and authority of a God, without taking any manner of notice of his Father therein. (See the note on *John xi. 41.* But the apostles

commonly wrought their miracles in *Christ's name*, and with an express reference to him as their principal, and as the fount of all the power by which they were wrought; and absolutely disclaimed every thing in themselves as contributing toward them, any further than as their faith was the appointed means of his conveying the virtue that produced them; (*ver. 12, 16.*) and so these works were wrought by his power when he was corporally absent from our world, as well as when he was present in it; and shew it to be such as can be found in none but the omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent God; And that the apostles believed him to be so, is apparent from their taking no notice of his Father, but only of Christ himself, as the divine Author of these cures. See Mr. *Hughes's* essay toward some further evidence of our Saviour's divinity, part ii. p. 10, &c.

almost at the beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

had for a considerable time past seen daily sitting to ask the charity of the people, as they went in and out at the beautiful gate of the temple, they were exceedingly struck with awful astonishment, and joyful ecstasy, (*ἐκστασι καὶ θαύματι*) at such a remarkable manifestation of power and goodness, and at such a sudden, miraculous, and happy change, that was wrought upon both the body and mind of the man, who had been lame, and used to spend his time and voice in begging.

11 And, as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

11 And whilst he, in transports of love and joy, of praise to God, and gratitude to the instruments of his great deliverance, was clinging about the two apostles *Peter* and *John*, as unwilling to let them go, and desirous of hearing them preach still more of Christ to him, vast numbers of people crowded together about them in the spacious porch, which stood in the court of the *Gentiles*, on the same spot of ground where *Solomon* had erected one of great magnificence in the first temple, being full of amazement at what the apostles had done, and at the behaviour of this man, who seemed to idolize them.

12 And when Peter saw it answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?

12 Then *Peter*, observing the consternation and crowding of the people, and being afraid of robbing Christ of his glory, or taking any honour to himself, said to them, O ye *Israelites*, to whom pertain the covenants, and the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises, (*Rom. ix. 4.*) and who are acquainted with the sacred oracles, and have seen many miracles performed of late among you, by our great Lord and Master; why should you be so astonished at this, which has now been wrought, as if it were entirely a new thing? or why should you be so stupid, as to fix your eyes with such earnestness upon us his disciples, or once to imagine, that by any human art, or religious excellencies, or by any sort of ability or worthiness in ourselves, we had restored this man, all on a sudden, to the perfect use of his limbs? (See the note on *ver. 6.*)

13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.

13 No, no, it was not from any virtue in us, or in our words; but the true state of the case is this; God, who entered into covenant with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and their seed, even the God of those eminent patriarchs, who were our Fathers; he, according to ancient predictions and promises, has not only brought his own Son into this world, even *Jesus*, to be our Saviour; but has now exalted him in human nature, as the great Messiah, on his throne of glory in the highest heavens, to exercise all power there and on earth, which he has given him under that character: This great and glorious

glorious Person is he, whom ye lately, like so many traitors, delivered up, as by a common suffrage, first to the great council, and afterwards, by them, as your representatives, to the *Roman* governor; and when he was arraigned at *Pilate's* bar, ye, with one consent and voice, disowned him for your king, and cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him*; and that, in opposition to the arguments and intreaties of the governor, who, apprehensive of your envy, and of Christ's innocence, was desirous, and had resolved in himself, if possible, to remove your compassion toward him by scourging him, and then prevail with you to let him be discharged.

24 But ye denied the Holy One, and the just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;

14 But, instead of being melted and softened by these methods, ye grew more and more enraged; and persisted in refusing and rejecting him, and in denying yourselves to have any interest in, regard, or value for him, whose nature and works, cause and conduct, were in reality, and evidently appeared to be, all pure and spotless, righteous and unblamable: and so desperately malignant were ye against him, that when *Barabbas* and he were proposed to your choice, for the release of one of them, ye preferred that infamous robber, (*John* xviii. 40.) and murderer; and insisted on that favour's being shewn to him, rather than to the blessed Jesus, whom ye spoke of with the utmost contempt.

25 And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

15 And in this manner ye persecuted this Captain of salvation, till ye procured his death, who has life in himself, and cannot die for ever; and who is so far from being a murderer, that he is the author, revealer, purchaser, and giver of spiritual life to sinners that believe in him, and is their great leader (*ἀρχηγός*) in the way, and to the possession of eternal life, to which he will raise them at the last day: But God, his Father, whom he had glorified in his life and death, put a glory upon him, by raising him again, and receiving him up to heaven, and thereby confirming what he had said concerning himself, and taking away the reproach of his sufferings; of all which we were eye-witnesses: And we are now authorized to declare it, having ourselves seen and conversed with him several times after his resurrection, and been present when he ascended up to glory.

26 And his name, thro' faith in his name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see

16 Now it is by his authority and command, power and merit, through faith in him, as thus exalted after his crucifixion, that this man is all at once healed, whom, though a stranger to us, (*ἀπεγνωστός καὶ αἰδανός*) ye now see to be so strong as to leap and walk about, and whom ye have

see and know :
yea, the faith
which is by him
hath given him
this perfect found-
ness, in the pre-
sence of you all.

have formerly known to have been lame from his birth ; I say, the faith, (*στ' αὐτοῦ*) which is wrought in us by him, and for his sake, has not of itself, but by his power, on whom we believe, miraculously and perfectly recovered this poor creature from all weakness and pain ; and that not in a clandestine method, or by way of charm, but in an open and religious manner, in the presence of you all, that Christ might be glorified among you, and that ye might examine the miracle, and be convinced of it, and might be brought to believe in him for deliverance from all spiritual, as well as temporal maladies, the fruit of sin.

17 And now,
brethren, I wot
that through ig-
norance ye did it,
as did also your ru-
lers.

17 And though ye have been exceeding criminal in murdering this great and glorious Person, and there is no cloak for your sin, (*John xv. 22.*) ; yet, that ye may not despair of finding mercy, let me tell you, brethren, that the endearing Saviour himself pleaded for you in the greatness of his compassion, even whilst he hung upon the cross, saying, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do:* (*Luke xxiii. 34.*) And I am well satisfied, that, through the strength of sinful passions and prejudices against him, on account of the meanness of his parentage and appearance, and the greatness of his sufferings, which were directly contrary to your carnal expectations of a triumphant and reigning Messiah, the generality of you were so blinded, that neither ye of the common people, nor your chief priests and elders of the great council, did really know him to be the true Messiah ; otherwise ye would not have dared to crucify the Lord of glory. (*1 Cor. ii. 8.*)

18 But those
things which God
before had shew-
ed by the mouth
of all his prophets,
that Christ should
suffer, he hath so
fulfilled.

18 But, still further to encourage your hopes of obtaining the forgiveness of this great sin, let me add *, that tho' ye were ignorant of, and had no thought about fulfilling God's design in what we did, which leaves you without excuse ; yet he has wisely and graciously over-ruled it, for accomplishing the great work of redemption by the Messiah's sufferings unto death, which he had not only determined in his own mind, but had likewise plainly foretold by many of the inspired prophets, as our Saviour himself in person assured some of us, who are his witnesses. (*Luke xxiv. 25, 26, 44.—48.*)

19 Repent ye
there-

19 Since therefore there is room for mercy, and provision is made for the remission of sins, by that very crucifixion of Jesus which ye were so ignorantly, tho' wickedly, concerned in ; see to it, that now at length,
under

N O T E.

* Ye did it through ignorance, may relate both to their ignorance of Christ, and of God's fulfilling the scripture in their crucifying him : and therefore I have taken both senses into the Paraphrase.

therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

under the present dispensation of the Spirit, by his assistance, and under a sense of the rich mercy and grace of God in Christ, ye be convinced of, and deeply humbled for, your horrible iniquity, particularly in murdering him; and that ye turn from prejudices and opposition against him; to faith in him, and from all your transgressions, to God thro' him, that your multiplied and aggravated sins, which separate between you and your God, (*Isa. lix. 2.*) may be *blotted out*, or chased away as *a thick cloud*, by the beams of the Sun of righteousness, (*Isa. xlv. 22.*) and so may be removed as far from you, *as the east is from the west*, which can never meet together, (*Psal. ciii. 12.*); and that, as they are recorded and written as *with a pen of iron* in God's book, (*Jer. xvii. 1.*) they may be as effectually remitted, as a debt is when the book is crossed, or the bond is cancelled; and so when *they shall be sought for*, to be brought in judgment against you, *they may not be found*, (*Jer. 1. 20.*) but * may be publicly manifested and declared to be forgiven in open court, before angels and men; and all the blessed fruits and effects of that forgiveness may be compleatly enjoyed, at the final judgment, when Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, (*2 Thes. i. 10.*) and when they shall have days and years of perfect rest and consolation without end, from his person and immediate presence, (*πρᾶξιν*) which shall be like a cooling breeze and refreshing shade to them, that have borne the heat and burthen of the day; and like the most delightful and reviving cordial to them, that have been sorely exercised with sins and sorrows, doubts and fears, pains and labours, temptations and troubles of every kind.

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

20 And for this purpose, God the Father will send his Son Jesus Christ the second time for your salvation, who by faith, desire, and hope, look and long for him, (*Heb. ix. 28.*) even that very Jesus, who was fore-appointed

N O T E.

* *The times of refreshing*, are thought by some to relate to the times of the gospel; and by others to the time of Jerusalem's destruction; both of which were indeed refreshing times to real Christians: But as the time here referred to, is explained in the two next verses, of the time when Christ shall be sent from heaven, where he is to continue till the restitution of all things; I think it must principally, at least, be referred to the time of Christ's coming to judgment; and as the Paraphrase on this verse is already full long, I have given it only in that light. And

though God speaks of his having already blotted out the sins of his people, (*Isa. xlv. 22.*) and every true believer is already forgiven all trespasses, and justified from all things: so that *there is now no condemnation to him*, nor *shall he come into condemnation*, (*Col. ii. 13. Acts xiii. 39. Rom. viii. 1. and John viii. 36.*) yet as at the day of judgment all this will be publicly owned, and pronounced in a judicial form, by the Lord Jesus, and all its blessed effects will be perfectly known and enjoyed then, and not before, the sins of believers may be properly enough said to be blotted out then.

pointed to it,* and has been preached in the writings of the antient prophets, and by his own personal ministry, and the ministry of his disciples before his death, and by us, his apostles, since he rose again and ascended to heaven.

21 Whom the heaven must receive, until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

21 There he is already received in his human nature †; and there he must abide in possession of heaven, and enthroned in all his glory and dominion, till the consummation of all things that belong to the gospel-kingdom, which shall issue in a glorious restoration of its subjects, under his influence and government, as Head and King of the church, to a state of perfect holiness and happiness, and in such remarkable alterations of the frame of nature, as may be called *new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*, (2 Pet. iii. 10,—13.) ; which things, relating to his kingdom, will be an accomplishment of what God foretold by all the inspired prophets that spake concerning him, from times as antient as *Enoch* the first prophet, and so onwards since the foundation of the world, (*Jude*, ver. 14, 15.)

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

22 For, to instance in the most famous of them all, *Moses*, that celebrated law-giver of *Israel*, and typical mediator between God and his people, plainly prophesied of Christ, when he said to our ancestors, (*Deut.* xviii. 15, 18, 19.) *Jehovah*, your covenant-God, will, in his time, set up the greatest of all prophets in the church, who, according to the flesh, shall be a descendant from yourselves, and be sent in the first place unto you of the *Israelitish* nation, and whom he will raise up, (*ὡς ἐγώ*) as he has me, and like unto me in every distinguished character of my office, though infinitely my superior in all things, as particularly in his intimate acquaintance with God and his counsels, familiar converse with him, and peculiar interest in his love and favour; in his immediate mission from God; in the clearness and divine authority of that new dispensation which he will introduce and establish; in the redeeming of his people from worse than *Egyptian* bondage; in the destruction of his and their implacable enemies; in his leading and conducting them, as their

NOTES.

* I have here taken, in the sense of ἀποκαταστασις before preached, as we have it in our copies, and of ἀποκαταστασις for appointed, as it is in *Stevens's* Vul. Mill. in Loc.

† The Paraphrase on this verse is formed to include two constructions of the phrase (*ὡς ἐγώ* ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς) which may be ren-

dered either *whom the brethren must receive, or who must receive heaven*; and to include several senses of the word (*ἀποκαταστασις*) which may signify the consummation, or finishing, and the accomplishment, as well as the restoration or restitution, of all things. See *Lightf.* and *Whitby*.

their Prince and Ruler, through the wilderness of this world; in his effectually mediating between God and them; in his building a spiritual and living tabernacle for God to dwell in; in his faithfulness, not merely as a servant, but as a son and lord in his own house; and in his confirming all this by such surprizing miracles of power and goodness, as none could work, unless God were with him, to own and honour him *. This is by way of eminence, the great Prophet, in whom all your obedience is to center;—whom ye are to attend and submit to, with all reverence, faith, and love; and whose instructions and commands ye ought heartily and chearfully to embrace, without exception or reserve, in every thing that he shall deliver to you with his own mouth, or by his servants, whether it be agreeable to your own natural notions and inclination, and secular interests, or not; and some of you shall be brought into a willing subjection to him.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people.

23 And the obligation to this is so indispensable, solemn, and awful, that every one who slights and neglects this most eminent prophet, and will not receive him and his doctrine, nor yield obedience to the voice of his word, shall be called to a severe account for it, and shall be excluded from all the blessings of his church on earth, and from the eternal salvation which every true believer shall enjoy in heaven.

24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

24 Yea, not only *Moses*, but several other prophets that succeeded *Samuel*, who was the first of them that arose with eminent dignity, and that wrote after *Moses*, and in whose days the spirit of prophecy revived, (1 Sam. iii. 1.) † and the schools of the prophets were erected, (1 Sam. xix. 20. 2 Kings ii. 2. and vi. 1.); as many as after his time wrote concerning the Messiah, have likewise foretold the things that are now come to pass, and are still hereafter to be fulfilled in his kingdom.

25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of

25 It therefore nearly concerns you, and ye have the highest encouragement to receive the Lord Jesus, in hope of finding mercy through him, notwithstanding your heinous provocations: For ye are the disciples of these prophets, that were your spiritual fathers and your own ancestors, and spoke of him, and were sent of God to deliver promises and prophecies for your benefit,

N O T E S.

* Vid. *Hatr. Demonstr. Evangel. prop. 7. p. 279.* and *Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, Part I p. 30, 31.* for a vindication of this prophecy, as relating to the Messiah; and for a resemblance between *Moses* and *Christ*.

† See for an account of the schools of the prophets, *Universal History, from the earliest account of time to the present, Vol. I. Part ii. p. 731.*

of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed,

next, among whom their writings are read in the synagogues every sabbath-day, (*chap. xiii. xxvii.*); and ye, as the children of promise, are heirs of the gracious covenant which God made with our fathers and their seed, in their several generations, when he said to Abraham, (*Gen. xxii. 18. and xxvi. 4.*) In one great person, who shall descend from thy loins, according to the flesh, shall many, both of thy natural offspring, and of all other nations of the world, be blessed with all spiritual and heavenly blessings, by their becoming thy spiritual seed, through faith in him. (*Gal. iii. 7, 8, 9, 26,—29.*)

26 **Unto you** first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

26 Accordingly, that God may fulfil his covenant, he having owned his Son Jesus to be the Messiah, by raising him from the dead, who was also Abraham's seed according to the flesh, has sent him in the ministry of his inspired apostles, who come by his commission, and in his name, that he might make the first overtures of mercy and salvation to you *Jews*; and might render the gospel of his grace effectual in delivering every one of you, that shall believe in him, from the guilt and power of your sins, how great or many forever they be; and so might bless you with all the blessings of eternal life.

C H A P.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

Though, under the gospel-state, we are not tied to any particular hour, or place for prayer, yet who can think himself discharged from obligations to observe stated seasons for it, in the morning and evening of every day! And when God draws near to us, in intimations of his mercy, we may expect better blessings than silver or gold, which many, that are rich in faith may be destitute of. O how glorious is our exalted Saviour; and how securely may we depend on him, and on the divine authority of the apostles doctrine concerning him; which was preached and was confirmed by miracles, after he was gone to heaven! In him ancient prophecies are fulfilled; through faith in his name, and by the ministrations of his servants, wonderful works have been wrought; and he can as easily give strength to them that were spiritually, as to them that were corporally impotent from their birth, and enable them to walk with vigour and joy in his ways: To him belongs the glory of all that is done by his servants; and they, that receive the benefit, should shew forth the praises of the Lord: O how wonderful is the wisdom and goodness of God, in over-ruling the ignorance and the wickedness of men, for bringing about the designs of his own glory, and the salvation of his people! How extensive are the pardons, brought in by the great Redeemer, to the vilest of sinners, even to those that betrayed and denied him, and preferred a murderer before him! And what an encouragement is this to the greatest offenders, especially to the children of the covenant, to repent of every sin, and turn to God in hopes of forgiveness, through faith in the Lord Jesus, who is the holy and just One, and the Prince of life; and who, though he was put to death, rose again, and is enthroned in heaven, to exercise all dominion and power, till the whole scheme of his mediatorial kingdom shall be finished at the last day! As ever we hope to share in his blessings, let us look to him, to turn us from all our iniquities, according to the gracious design of God, in sending him into the world, to save his people from their sins, and from the wrath to come.

C H A P. IV.

Peter and John are imprisoned by the Jewish rulers, and five thousand are converted, 1,—4. The apostles are brought before the Sanhedrim, 5,—7. Peter makes his defence, and preaches Christ to them, 8,—12. They dismiss him and John, commanding them to preach no more in Christ's name, 13,—22. The apostles and their company betake themselves to prayer, 23,—30. And God honouring them with a fresh effusion of his Spirit, they were knit together in love, and Christ was glorified, 31,—37.

TEXT.

AND, as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,

3 Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and

PARAPHRASE.

THE apostles having wrought the forementioned miracle on the lame man, and preached the gospel to a vastly numerous auditory with great success; while they were going on with their discourse to the people, for their further instruction and establishment, the priests, who were mostly *Pharisees*, and bitter enemies to Christ and his apostles; and the * chief captain, who had the charge of the temple, and was under their influence; and the *Sadducees*, who denied the resurrection, (see the note on chap. v. 17. and *Mat. iii. 7.*) were enraged at them, and came with violence to seize them.

2 For the priests were vexed at their assuming an authority of preaching so publicly and boldly, and at their doing it so acceptably to the people; and particularly at their declaring, that the great article of their own faith about the resurrection, was verified in Jesus, (*οτι ζων*) whom they had crucified; and that by his power and efficacy all mankind should be raised from the dead at the last day, some to everlasting life, and others to shame and everlasting contempt: And the *Sadducees* were disturbed at their propagating the doctrine of the resurrection itself, with such strong evidence, directly contrary to all the notions of their sect about it.

3 Accordingly, instead of rejoicing and glorifying God on account of the illustrious miracle of power and

N O T E.

* It has been most commonly thought, that this captain of the temple was the commander of the *Roman* soldiers that kept guard in the tower of *Antonia*, to preserve the peace, especially in times of general concourse: and that his fear of a riot was the cause of his uneasiness on this occasion. But as nothing of this appears from the reasons mentioned, ver. 2, 3 for apprehending the apostles, and as this officer is here called (*ο αρχηγος*)

the captain of the temple, and the *Roman* commander is usually styled (*χρηματιστης*) the chief captain over a thousand soldiers; I rather incline to think, that this might be the chief captain of the several watches which the priests kept in the temple, whom they could easily influence to serve their turn. (See the note on *Luke xxii. 52.* and *Dr. Lightfoot, vol. II. p. 471.*)

and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now even-tide.

4 Howbeit, many of them which heard the word believed: and the number of the men was about five thousand.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes,

6 And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And, when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name have ye done this?

and goodness, that had been wrought by the apostles hands, they caused them to be apprehended and clapped into prison, and so to be disgraced, and secured till the morrow; it being too late to examine them, and proceed further against them just then; for it was already evening.

4 But, notwithstanding all this contempt and outrage, the Spirit of God wrought so effectually on great multitudes of the hearers, to the number of about five thousand * men, that they believed the apostles doctrine, and received Christ by faith for the remission of their sins.

5, 6 When the next day came on, the great council of the nation was, without loss of time, called together at *Jerusalem*, to take this matter into consideration; there were the *Jewish* rulers, consisting of the chief priests, who were the heads of the twenty-four courses; and the elders of the people, who were the heads of the other tribes; and the doctors of the law, who were mostly of the tribe of *Levi*; and at their head were *Annas*, the president of the sanhedrim, who had likewise bore the high priest's office †, and *Caiaphas*, his son-in-law, the present high priest, both of which were concerned in putting Christ to death, (*Luke* iii. 2.); and together with these were many other noted persons, one named ‡ *John*, and the other *Alexander*, and several men of figure, that were a-kin to the high-priest.

7 And when the council, who used to sit in a semicircular form, had ordered the apostles to be placed in the middle before them, they, with a threatening and magisterial air, designing to intimidate, insnare, and confound the apostles, demanded of them, saying, Since we only have a right of authorizing public preachers, and ye have had no authority from us; By whose power and commission do ye pretend to preach, and to have

N O T E S.

* The men only that believed are said to be about 5000; and besides these, many women were also probably converted at this time: And I take this 5000 not to be inclusive of the 3000 mentioned *chap.* ii. 41. but to be entirely new converts; for all along in the third chapter, and in this verse, the people that saw the miracle on the cripple, and heard the apostles discourse on that occasion, are the only persons mentioned; and their believing is spoken of as brought about by divine means. So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed, when the Spirit was poured from on high!

† See the note on *Luke* iii. 2. In a good agreement with which, we may add Mr

Bishop's thought, who says, and backs it with very probable evidence from *J. Josephus*, "The truth of the case is this; *Caiaphas* had the name of high-priest, but *Annas* had the authority: *Caiaphas* was named by the *Roman* governor, and was the person then in office; but he was wholly under the influence of his father-in-law *Annas*, who had the chief power and credit with the people." See his sermons at *Bible's* lecture, vol. ii. p. 650, &c.

‡ This *John* is generally supposed to have been the son of *Annas*; and *Alexander*, a man of considerable rank in those days, the same that *J. Josephus* speaks of.

have cured a cripple, to gain credit to your doctrine?

* And whose name did ye make mention of, for obtaining virtue to do it?

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel,

9 If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;

10 Be it known unto you all, and all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you

8 Then *Peter*, being under the immediate guidance and extraordinary influence of the Spirit, according to Christ's promise, (*Mark* xiii. 11.) said to them, (*John* also concurring) with a respectful freedom and undaunted courage, Being called upon to answer for ourselves by your august and venerable body, O ye chief priests and elders of God's people *Israel*, we are cheerfully willing to give you all desirable satisfaction.

9 Since we are now brought before you to be examined, as though we were criminals, about the cure of the poor cripple, the nature of the case speaks for itself, that it was so far from being culpable, as to be really an act of the greatest mercy and goodness: And since ye farther inquire, by what power he is now healed;

10 We readily declare, and solemnly avow to this whole assembly, and make no scruple of publishing it to all the *Jews*, earnestly desiring both you and them to take particular notice of it, as a matter of the utmost consequence, in which every one, from the highest to the lowest, is nearly concerned; and God will make it known, whether ye believe it or not, that, as we before declared to the people, (*chap.* iii. 16.) it is by the authority and power of the great anointed Saviour, whom ye, by way of contempt, called *Jesus of Nazareth*; and whom ye, not long since, crucified; but whom God owned as his righteous and dear Son, and as the King of *Israel*, by raising him from the dead; it is, we roundly aver and stand to it, by him, and him only, not by using his name as a charm, but by faith in him, and by virtue derived from him, that this before-impotent man is now restored to the full strength and use of his limbs, and is here standing in your presence, that ye may behold the cure which is wrought upon him, and may ask him what questions ye please, to satisfy yourselves about it.

11 This *Jesus*, as he himself also intimated, (*Matth.* xxi. 42.) is he who was spoken of in a prophecy of the Messiah, (*Psal.* cxviii. 23.) under the figure of the stone which was despised and rejected by you the chief priests

N O T E.

* Some have thought that they herein referred to the custom of Jewish exorcists, some of which invoked or mentioned *Sabaoth*, as others afterward did the name *Jesus*, (*chap.* xix. 13.) for working miraculous

cures; and that the meaning of their question was, By mentioning of what name have ye cured this man? as if they had done it by a sort of charm.

you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

11 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.

priests and rulers, who, by station and office, ought to be, and who profess to be, the builders of God's living temple, the church; and he is now, by his resurrection from the dead, placed as its foundation, and chief corner-stone, for knitting and supporting all the parts of the spiritual house, which rests entirely upon him.

12 Nor is the spiritual and * eternal salvation, to which his being the head of the corner principally refers, to be found in any one whatsoever besides himself: For there is no other person of sufficient dignity, merit, and power, whose name can be pleaded, or depended upon, for salvation; or whom God has graciously appointed and granted to the men of this lower world, by whom (*ἐν*) it is fit, or meet, and worthy of God, that any of us should be saved; or by whom we ought to expect, or ever can have, deliverance from sin and misery, from the curse of the law, and the wrath to come.

13 Now when the council observed (*ὁρῶντες*) the liberty of spirit, and undaunted courage, and the freedom and fluency of expression with which the two apostles, *Peter* and *John*, spoke to the supreme court of the Jewish nation, before which they were arraigned as malefactors, that could expect no favour from them; and when they understood that they were persons of no polite education in the schools, or at the feet of any of their doctors, but were private obscure fishermen, even idiots,

N O T E.

* *Peter's* mentioning Christ as the head of the corner, naturally led to the thought of a spiritual and eternal salvation, which it was Christ's principal design to bring in, and with a relation to which alone this, and its kindred phrase, the chief corner-stone, is always used by our Lord and his apostles: (*See Luke xii. 17. Eph. ii. 20, 22. and 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7.*) And this spiritual benefit is called *salvation* about forty times in the New Testament; whereas I do not find, that it once uses the noun (*σωτηρία*) *salvation* for miraculous cures, nor nor for merely any temporal deliverance at all, unless in *Acts vii. 25.* where *Stephen* says, that *Moses supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them*; or, as it is in the Greek, (*ἐξέσωσεν αὐτοὺς ἑαυτὸς*) *would give salvation to them*: And even that deliverance might be called by this name, because it was typical of the more glorious one by Jesus Christ; and the apostle *Peter* here speaks of a salvation which every one needs, including himself and all *Israel*: But surely it could not be said of himself and the whole council, and of all the people of *Israel*, (*ver. 10.*) that they needed miraculous cures in the name of Christ, by which,

in that respect, they must be saved: (*ὅτι οὐκ ἔστι σωτηρία ἄλλῃ*;) I therefore can by no means think that this strong and lively passage is to be sunk and restrained, as some contend that it should, to the case of working miracles: On the other hand, there seems to me to be a great beauty in the occasion that the apostle took, and in the gradation that he made, from the temporal deliverance which had been wrought in healing the poor cripple by the power of Christ, to that of a much nobler and more important kind, which is brought in by Christ to impotent and sinful souls; he therein following the admirable custom of his great Lord and Master, who often took occasion from earthly to speak of spiritual things; as particularly when, upon his having mentioned the miracle of the loaves, he discoursed at large concerning himself as the bread of life, (*John vi. 26, — 58.*) But if miraculous cures were likewise included in the apostle's design, it plainly shews, as *Dr Hbithy* observes, that no true miracles have been ever done since Christ's ascension, by an invocation of the names of saints, as is pretended by the church of *Rome*: For there is no other name, by which they can be wrought.

marvelled ; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.

14 And beholding the man which was healed, standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

15 But, when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves.

16 Saying, What shall we do to these men ? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem ; and we cannot deny it.

17 But, that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name.

18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered

idiots, (*idiotai*) as to human science, compared with themselves ; they were exceedingly amazed, and knew not how to account for the wisdom, spirit, and firmness of mind that appeared in them, till they recollected that they had been formerly seen in company with Jesus, as his followers and disciples, and had been brought up under him, in whose name they had preached, and wrought the cure.

14 And the council, at the same time, seeing the man stand before them perfectly sound and whole, who till then had continued so lame, for forty years together, as not to be able to do any thing like it before ; they could say nothing against the miracle, either to depreciate, or confute it.

15, 16 However, being stung in their consciences, and filled with envy, they, instead of seeking after salvation by Jesus Christ, according to the apostles doctrine, resolved to put what stop they could to their preaching ; and, ordering them to withdraw from the court, they entered into a close consultation about them, saying, What course shall we take with these men ? or, what can we do to them, who are like to give us as much trouble as ever we met with from Jesus himself ? For that they really have performed a very famous miracle, in the name of Jesus, is publicly known to all the inhabitants of this great metropolis, so that we cannot hush it up ; and the fact is so plain and evident in all the circumstances of it, that it is to no manner of purpose for us to go about to deny it, and to punish them for it ; it would be only exposing our own character, and enraging the people against us, to attempt any thing of this kind.

17 But that they may not propagate the story, and their own notions with it, to gain profelytes, and make people think highly of Jesus, and with indignation of us, as though we had murdered the best of men, if not one that was more than a man ; let us send for them in, and severely charge them, upon pain of our utmost displeasure, never to publish their doctrine concerning him again ; no, nor so much as speak of it in private to any man whatsoever ; nor to pretend that they have his commission for it, or have power from him to work miracles.

18 Accordingly, they ordered them to be called into court, and then strictly enjoined them, at their peril, never to open their lips again, or preach any more, either publicly or privately, about Jesus, under pretence of authority from him to spread the glory of his name.

19 But both *Peter* and *John*, in reply, said to them, with

19 and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

with a noble and undaunted fortitude of spirit, and with the most pointed reasoning, Though we would pay you all becoming deference, yet whether we can acquit ourselves to our own consciences, and do justice to truth and to mankind, or whether it be lawful and right, in the sight of the infinitely wise and holy Creator and Governor, and impartial Judge of the whole world, to whom we must be accountable; whether, we say, it be any ways justifiable for us to comply with your orders, rather than pay obedience to his express commands, whose authority is undoubtedly superior to all human injunctions whatsoever, and who we are absolutely sure has charged us to preach the very doctrine which ye forbid us to mention; we appeal to your own consciences to determine, and leave it with yourselves to judge, as ever ye will answer it at the great day of account.

20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

20 For, as to ourselves, we think this point admits of no debate; and we neither dare, nor can submit to a decree, so utterly inconsistent with our allegiance unto God himself; nor refrain publishing the great and important things, pertaining to the salvation of lost sinners, which we ourselves have been eye-witnesses of, and have heard from the mouth of our Lord Jesus, and have experienced the power and goodness of in our own souls.

21 So, when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all men glorified God for that which was done.

21 The sanhedrim finding that there was no dealing with these men in a way of argument, Christ having given them a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay or resist, according to his promise, (*Luke xxi. 15.*) they repeated their former threatnings, and so dismissed them, as not knowing what to do more, than endeavouring to fright them as much as they could; because they were afraid of incensing the people, and raising a tumult, if they should proceed to any farther punishment: For the multitude in general were so affected with the miracle which had been wrought, that they could not but admire it as an act of wonderful power and mercy, and express their praises of God for it.

22 For the man was above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was shewed.

22 And that which magnified this miraculous cure, in their account, was, that the man on whom it was wrought, was about forty years old, and so was able to give them such a relation of his lameness from his childhood up to the day of his healing, as shewed his disease to have been an inveterate one, and no way likely to be ever removed by any human remedies whatsoever.

23 And, being let go, they went to

23 The apostles being thus set at liberty, by the gracious over-ruling providence of God, which appeared in

in their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

in their favour; they immediately returned * to their own beloved company, on whom the Holy Ghost had fallen, together with themselves, and to whom they were related, as brethren in Christ, of the same church and family, spirit and temper, partakers of the same gospel-privileges and fellowship, faith and joy, and whom they chose for their companions on earth, and hoped to live with for ever in heaven; and they gave them a full account of all the severe and unrighteous things that the council had said to them, and of the reply which they were enabled to make, by the Spirit of Christ that was in them, and of the manner of their discharge.

24 And when they heard that, they lift up their voice to God, with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that in them is :

24 And as soon as their fellow-christians had heard the affecting narrative, they all, in raptures of wonder and joy, made their solemn and fervent addresses to the throne of grace, as with one mouth and one soul, (*ομαθυμαδον*) saying, Lord, thou art the only living and true God, who, by thine almighty power, gavest being to heaven and earth, and the sea, and to all ranks, orders, and individuals of creatures that are in them, and hast all hearts and all events under thy government and controul.

25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things ?

25 Who also, knowing the end from the beginning, hast plainly foretold what has lately come to pass, by the words of an inspired prophet, even of thy servant *David* †, saying, (*Psal. ii. 1, 2.*) Upon what principles, reasons, or motives, or to what manner of purpose, have the *Gentiles* (*εθνη*) inwardly fretted, and then foamed out their rage, and the people of *Israel* (*ισραηλ*) industriously meditated, contrived, and attempted empty, foolish, and fruitless things ?

26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.

26 The princes of this world, whom Providence had laid the highest obligations upon, by exalting them to regal dignity in the land of *Israel*, raised themselves up in a way of unworthy opposition; and the *Jewish* rulers, scribes, Pharisees, and elders, men of the greatest note for learning and authority in ecclesiastical affairs, who ought to have espoused the cause of religion and righteousness, assembled in their grand council, to concert injurious measures against God himself, and against the only true Messiah, whom he anointed.

27 For

N O T E S.

* By their own company seems to have been meant the 120, who were said to have communed with the apostles, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, and were afterwards filled with the Holy Ghost, (*chap. i. 21* and *ii. 24.*) and they were probably met together at this time, to join in prayer for the two apostles in their pious circumstances,

as the church afterwards did for *Peter*, when he was in prison, *chap. xii. 5, 12.*

† This as several commentators have observed, intimates not only that *David* was inspired by the Spirit of God, in writing his *Psalms*; but as this, so all other *Psalms*, in the title of which no notice is taken of the penman, are to be reckoned to him.

27 For, of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together,

27 For it is an unquestionable matter of fact, that both *Herod* the king of *Galilee*, and *Pontius Pilate* the governor of *Judea*, together with the *Roman* officers and soldiers, and all ranks and orders of the *Jewish* nation, (*Luke* xiii. 1,—25.) assembled themselves, and became joint conspirators against the life of thy holy Son Jesus, who was (*Psalm* vi.) born thy immaculate child in flesh, (*Luke* i. 35. and ii. 27,—43.) and came to be thy righteous servant, (*Isa.* xlii. 1. and xlii. 6. and liii. 11.); and whom thou hadst appointed, set apart and authorized, called and furnished, by an unmeasurable unction of the Spirit, to execute his great office in his incarnate state upon earth.

28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

28 In all this, how vile and malicious soever their designs and management were, thou didst over-rule the event, for the accomplishing of those things against him, (*chap.* ii. 23.) and by him, through his violent and atoning death, which in the eternal settlement* and disposals of thy will and wisdom, in the counsels of peace, thou hadst foreordained should come to pass, for thine own glory, the Redeemer's exaltation, and the salvation of thy chosen people.

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,

29 And now, Lord †, we humbly beseech thee, that as thou hast thus far shewn thy infinite wisdom and Almighty power, thou wouldst take notice of their unrighteous threatenings, to restrain and defeat them, or to turn them to thy praise; and that, notwithstanding these and all other terrors, thou wouldst graciously assist and enable every one of us, thy servants, to publish thy gospel with all freedom and holy confidence, presence of mind, and liberty of speech.

30 By stretching forth thine hand

30 That we may be emboldened, confirmed, and owned herein; by still further displays of thy glorious power, in a supernatural way, for curing all manner of spiritual, as well as corporal maladies; and by granting

N O T E S.

* The hand of God seems sometimes in scripture to signify his all-governing and disposing will (see *Neh.* ii. 8, 18. *Job.* ii. 10. *Psal.* xcv. 4. and *Eccl.* ii. 24. and ix. 1.) and this I take to be its meaning here, because it relates to what God did in ancient counsels beforehand, rather than in his execution of them afterwards.

† Though I have given the Paraphrase on this and the following verse, according to the usual sense of commentators; yet it is humbly submitted to the reader's judgment, whether, as some have apprehended, the Lord, to whom this prayer was most immediately directed, were not the person of the Holy Ghost, because all the things here ascribed to God, were performed immediately by him, he was

the immediate divine agent in the creation of the world, (*Gen.* i. 2.) he spoke immediately by the mouth of David, (*1 Pet.* i. 2.) and immediately formed the human nature of the child Jesus, who, on that account, was said to be that holy thing, which was born of the virgin, and was called the Son of God, (*Luke* i. 35.); and it was he that immediately anointed Jesus as God's servant in human nature, (*Luke* iv. 18.) it was likewise by his hand, or his power and conduct, that Christ offered himself to God, (*Heb.* ix. 14.); and it was by him that the apostles preached the gospel with all boldness, and wrought miracles, (*ver.* 31. and *1 Cor.* xii. 3,—11.) See *The True Script. Diff. of the Holy Trin.* Appendix, No. I. p. 97, 99.

hand to heal: and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

31 And, when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart, and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were

ing, that wonderful miracles may be wrought of every kind, as there may be occasion, (see the note on chap. ii. 22. by authority and virtue derived from, and to the glory of thy Holy One, even Jesus, who is not only thy eternal Son in his original nature; but also, (*τὸ αἰνῶν τὸ δαξόν*) thy holy Child, by fleshly birth, and thy consecrated servant in office, by thine own appointment.

31 And while they were yet speaking, God heard them; (*I/sa. lxx. 24.*) for no sooner had they finished this religious exercise, than the room, in which they were met together, was miraculously shaken, as by a rushing mighty wind, like what they had felt in a former assembly, (*chap. ii. 2.*) as a signal of his extraordinary presence with them: And, in immediate answer to their prayers, this whole company were again under a fresh effusion of the Holy Ghost, (see the note on *chap. ii. 3.*) who filled their souls with holy joy and courage; so that they, from that time forward, preached the gospel with a noble liberty of spirit, and without fear of the faces of the greatest men whatsoever.

32 As to the whole body of believers, which by this time were a great company, the last mentioned five thousand converts, (*ver. 4.*) after the example of the first three thousand, (*chap. ii. 41,—46.*) were so united in faith and love, that how various soever their natural tempers were, and how much soever they had been strangers to one another, and different sects and parties before, they were now as entirely harmonious, and heartily affectionate to their fellow-Christians without distinction, as if they had all been animated with one soul: And as an effect and evidence of this, and as a means of further promoting it, none of them, no not of the richest among them, reserved any of his worldly goods; for his own private and peculiar use, but freely gave up all for the service of the Christian community.

33 The twelve apostles also went on bravely with their work, insisting on the great doctrines of the gospel, and particularly on the resurrection of Christ from the dead, with abundance of fervor, strength, and clearness, and with attending miracles, and efficacious influences of the Spirit; and at the same time, such rich measures of divine grace were diffused among all the disciples, as were an evident token of their being highly in favour with God, and produced the greatest contempt of this world, and benevolence toward men.

34, 35 Nor was there any one of this household of faith, though ever so poor, that was in want of the necessities of life: For as many of this New Testament-church,

were possessors of lands or houses sold them; and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

35 And laid them down at the apostles feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles feet.

church, as had any estate in lands or houses, whether in *Palestine*, or other countries, sold them; and, bringing the money raised by the sale, they laid it at the apostles feet, in token of their great indifference to riches, and of their freely surrendering them up to their management, for the honour of Christ, and the benefit of the church: And the apostles, likewise, and faithful stewards, ordered proper distributions to be made with the utmost prudence, frugality, and impartiality, to every one, in proportion to his exigence.

36, 37 Particularly, among the rest, there was one *Joses*, whom for his great liberality and excellent talents, whereby he became eminently useful, both in temporal and spiritual concerns, the apostles surnamed *Barnabas*, which in the Syriac language, properly signifies the *son of a prophet*, and by just construction, the *son* (*υιος παρακλιτικος*) of *comfort*, or of *exhortation*: This man was by descent of the tribe of *Levi*, and by country a native of the fertile island called *Cyprus*; and, being possessed of an estate in land there, * he readily sold it; and, like one that had done with this world, committed the price, which he received for it, to the care of the apostles, to dispose of it in a way of religious charity, for the support of the poor members of Christ.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How often do the greatest enemies one to another unite, like the *scribes* and *Sadducees*, in their unreasonable and violent opposition to Christ and his gospel, in the most indefensible persecutions of his servants for his sake! And yet how wonderfully will the word of the Lord, attended with the power of his Spirit, prevail in the face of all opposition, to the conversion of thousands, that were before most inveterately set against him! And what a noble spirit of wisdom, resolution, and courage, can he inspire his once most cowardly servants with, to assert his cause, and make a brave and free confession of a crucified and risen Saviour, and to withstand and confound the most potent and learned of their adversaries, and carry conviction to their consciences, that there is a surprizing advantage in having been with Jesus! He can easily restrain the wrath of man, and make the remainder of it praise him; and how much soever he may be set at nought, by men of figure and authority, he is nevertheless the chief cornerstone of the church, that can never be shaken; neither is there salvation in any other. And O what incontestible evidence is there in that eternal truth, that, even in times of the greatest danger, it is better to obey God than man! He is the Lord God Almighty, the maker and governor of all things; nothing can come to pass without his permission, or order; and all is but a fulfilling of the scriptures, and of his own ancient decrees, which are entirely hid from us, till unfold-

N O T E.

* It being said of *Joses*, when his land was spoken of, that he was of the country of *Cyprus*, intimates that it lay there; and this being a foreign country, he, though a *Levite*, might undoubtedly have land there, in full confidence with the original law, about dividing the land of *Canaan*, (*Nam. xviii. 10.* and

Deut. x. 9.); for notwithstanding that law, *priests* and *Levites* sometimes had land even in *Judea* itself, by purchase, gift, or inheritance, as appears from *Phineas*, (*Jos. xxiv. 33.* and from *Zeph.* (*1 Sam. i. and ix. 5.* compared with *1 Chron. vi. 35, 43, 51.*) much more might he have land in a foreign country.

unfolded in events, that, whatever be the means of producing them, are over-ruled by a holy Providence, to the glory of God, and the good of his people. How worthy therefore is he to be prayed to; and how eminently does he honour his distinguishing character, as a God hearing prayer, in that, he sometimes answers while we are yet speaking! And as he has promised his Spirit to them that ask him; so when he herein performs his good word to us, What a heavenly commotion will there be in our souls! what holy confidence and joy shall we have in him; and how shall we despise the outrage and the threatnings of his and our enemies! What a glory does he put upon his ministers, some of whom he makes to be sons of consolation indeed; and upon his church and people, whom he knits together by the sweetest bands of love, fills with all goodness to others, and with such experiences of his grace and favour to themselves, as give them a holy contempt of this world, and engage them to sequester themselves from it, in the best manner, and according to the calls of his Providence.

C H A P. V.

The sin and punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, 1,—11. The apostles work many miracles, to the increase of the church, 12,—16. They are again imprisoned, and an angel delivers them, ordering them to go on in preaching, which they did, to the great vexation of their enemies, 17,—25. They are brought again before the sanhedrim and examined, and make their defence, 26,—33. Gamaliel's prudent advice, upon which they are dismissed with scourging, 34,—40. They depart rejoicing, and proceed in their work, 41,—42.

TEXT.

BUT a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

PARAPHRASE.

BUT as the best churches upon earth have their imperfections, so there were two notorious hypocrites even in this, which tarnished its glory; and awful judgments were executed in righteousness on them, which damped its joy. A certain man and his wife, *Ananias* and *Sapphira* by name, made a profession of Christianity; and being ambitious of the reputation of having as much zeal and charity as *Barnabas* himself, they sold an estate, pretending to devote the price of it to God.

1 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles feet.

2 And when they had got the money, they being only almost Christians, still under the prevalence of unbelief and covetousness, their hearts failed them; and so they contrived together to make a private reserve of one part of it for their own use, and to deliver up the rest to the apostles, in such a manner as might impose upon them, and induce them to believe that it was the whole; and might entitle themselves to a maintenance out of the common fund, as if they had nothing left of their own.

3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath

3 But *Peter*, having the gift of discerning spirits, well knew, and soon detected the vile fraud, saying to the husband, who came alone to bring a part of the money, under pretence of its being the whole, *Ananias*,

what

hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

5 And Ananias, hearing these words, fell down, and gave up the ghost; and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

what a horrible and shocking impiety is this? How durst you thus yield yourself up to Satan's power, and act under his influence to do his work, in belying the Spirit, that Holy One, who abhors all iniquity, (*ψευδοῦναι οὐ το πνεῦμα το ἅγιον*) by falsely pretending to act as generous and zealous a part as any other, by his suggestion to, and influence upon you; or in attempting to deceive him, as residing and acting in us, the apostles of the Lord Jesus, by hypocritically professing to offer to us the whole price of the land you have sold, and at the same time deliberately and consultedly withholding a part of it for your own private use?

4 While you had the estate in your own possession, was it not a property that you might have kept, if you would? And after you had thought fit to sell it, was not the money at your own disposal? You was under no necessity either of selling it at all; or afterwards, if you were minded to add any thing to the common stock, for the use of the church, you was at full liberty to put in either a part, or the whole of the price, just as you pleased: Why then have you thus freely consented to Satan's temptation, who could not have forced you to it, by using and contriving this fraudulent management in your own wicked heart, as being drawn away, and enticed to it, by your own lusts of covetousness and ambition? You have herein been guilty of a most abominable and aggravated lie, not to man only, but to the Holy Spirit himself, who, you know, eminently dwells and works in us, and who is truly and properly the heart-searching God, and will not be mocked; but will severely avenge the affront, in jealousy for his own glory, and to deter others from any such further insults upon him, to the corrupting of the church.

5 And as God, at the beginning of the *Mosaic* dispensation, made fearful examples of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, for offering strange fire, and of *Corah* and his company, for rebelling against *Moses* and *Aaron*, by immediately striking them dead, (*Numb.* iii. 4. and xvi. 1,—35.) so, to vindicate the honour and authority of the gospel-dispensation, which was newly set up, as soon as *Ananias* heard *Peter's* awful rebuke, the Spirit of the Lord, to whom he had lied, struck him with such mighty vengeance, that he instantly fell down, and died upon the spot; and this tremendous judgment had its desirable good effect upon all that heard of it, so as to fill them with exceeding great awe and dread

of ever attempting to act such an impious, hypocritical part afterwards.

6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

6 And as soon as *Ananias* expired, several young men, there present, got up; and, according to the usual manner of burying, wrapped the corpse about with proper grave-clothes, and, carrying it out of the company, gave it a decent interment.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

7 About three hours after he was dead, *Sapphira* his wife, being ignorant (as Providence would have it) of what had befallen him, came into the room, where the apostles and the other disciples were, expecting her share of thanks and applause for consenting to the sale of the land, and to the surrender of the money for the use of the church.

8 And *Peter* answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yes, for so much.

8 And *Peter* said unto her, Tell me honestly and truly, whether your husband sold the estate only for so much money as he brought to the charitable fund: And she, thinking to conceal the fraud, as she supposed her husband had before, boldly answered, Yes, it was just for that sum, and no more.

9 Then *Peter* said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

9 Then *Peter*, knowing the utter falsehood of what she had said, replied, How monstrously wicked and surprizing is it, that both your husband and you, who professed to be sincere converts, should thus consult together to try whether the Spirit of God, who resides in us, could see through, and bring to light, your gross hypocrisy and lie! And how durst ye run the desperate risk of trying whether he knew it or not, and of provoking him at this rate? Behold his severe vengeance on such bold transgressors! As your husband has been struck dead for his heinous sin, the same persons that carried him to his burial, are just now returning, and are at the very door of this house; and they, in like manner, shall immediately be the bearers of your body to the grave.

10 Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

10 Whereupon she also, being suddenly struck as with a dart from heaven, fell down at the apostle's feet, where the whole of the money ought to have been laid, and instantly expired: And the young men coming in, and finding her dead, bore her corpse to the place of interment, and buried her close by her husband, where they both lay together as monuments of vindictive justice, for the notorious lie they had told, and the affront they had offered to the Holy Spirit.

11 And great fear came upon all the church, and upon

11 And this was such an evident and awful appearance of divine jealousy, holiness, and resentment, as filled the whole church with solemn reverence of the Spirit of Christ, as manifesting himself in and by the apostles,

upon as many as heard these things.

apostles, and with a religious fear of offending him; and the generality of others, that heard of these things, were in great consternation and dread, like the men of *Bethshemesb*, (* *Sam. vi. 16.*) as unable to stand before this Holy Lord God, who had so tremendously vindicated his own, and the apostles honour, in the new dispensation that was introduced among them.

11 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch :

12 And still further to confirm its divine authority, and, at the same time, to soften its terrors, and shew its gracious and direct tendency and design, abundance of other miracles were wrought, all of the merciful strain, as tokens of the presence of God's goodness, as well as power, with the apostles, who performed those wonderful works upon, and in the view of, great multitudes, (see the note on *chap. ii. 22.*) : And the members of the church were so far from murmuring against the apostles, for the judgment executed upon two of their number, that they unanimously, affectionately, and frequently assembled for public worship with them, in the grand passage to the temple, called *Solomon's porch*. (See the paraphrase on *chap. iii. 11.*

13 And of the rest durst no man join himself to them : but the people magnified them.

13 But (2^d) the rest of the people were so terrified at the sudden death of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, * that none of them durst join themselves to the church in a hypocritical manner, under pretence of being converted; while they were conscious to themselves that they really were not so : Nevertheless, the bulk of the common people had a high veneration, and spoke very respectfully of the apostles, and of the wonders of mercy and judgment that the Spirit of the Lord had wrought by them.

14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women ;

14 And real believers, who cordially embraced the gospel, were, by a divine influence attending and blessing all these means, more abundantly added to the visible church of Christ, to make a public solemn profession of his name, even vast numbers of both sexes, male and female, who are all one in Christ Jesus : (*Gal. iii. 28.*)

15 Inasmuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that, at the least, the shadow

15 And so famous were the miracles wrought by that divine power, which was so conspicuous in the apostles; and so high did *Peter* especially stand in the opinion of the people, that they brought their sick and weak friends out of their houses into the streets of *Jerusalem*, and there laid them on beds and couches, as helpless, miserable, and moving objects, that when this great apostle of the circumcision should go that way, he might have compassion

N O T E.

* I have here given what I take to be the most genuine sense of these words; he that would see other interpretations may consult Dr *Lightsfoot* on this verse.

shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

16 There came also a multitude of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

18 And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

19 But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison-doors, and brought them forth, and said,

20 Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people,

compassion upon them; or that, at least, the shadow of his body might pass over some of them, which they believed would be effectual for healing.

16 Great multitudes also, upon the report they had heard, came, with the like faith, out of the cities and country towns, all round about Jerusalem, bringing along with them some people that were sick of various distempers, and others that were possessed and tormented by evil spirits: And all these, according to expectation, were miraculously cured, as fast as they were brought, to the further increase of the reputation of Christ's servants.

17 On occasion of people's thus flocking to the apostles, and their doing such wonderful works, the high-priest was roused and alarmed, as were also all his party*, which were of the Sadducean sect; and they were exceedingly provoked with envy at them, and in zeal for their own principles, to think that the apostles gained so much ground upon the people, by preaching the doctrine of Christ's resurrection, and that they themselves had not taken more effectual measures to put a stop to them, who, in this way of going on, were like to overturn the power of the priesthood, and their own notions of a total and final death with the body.

18 And so they ordered all the apostles, (ver. 29.) to be apprehended, as Peter and John had been before, (chap. iv. 3.); and for the greater terror and disgrace, as well as confinement, to be clapped up in the common jail with the most infamous and notorious criminals.

19 But the Lord Christ, whose cause they espoused, and who will ever own them that appear for him, and trust in him, dispatched an angel from heaven the following night, who burst the locks, bars, and bolts; struck the keepers, that were set upon watch and ward, with a senseless stupor, and opened the prison-door; and then conducted the apostles safe out of the jail, giving them at the same time the following charge, saying,

20 Notwithstanding all the fury, prohibitions, and violence of your enemies, and without fearing any thing from them, go on with your Lord's work; repair to the temple, and there stand and speak resolutely and boldly in the face of your most inveterate and powerful ad-

versaries:

N O T E.

* Them that were with him, seems to signify persons of his party, and to intimate, that he himself was a Sadducee, and that a great part of the sanhedrim now consisted of persons of that sect, though there was also a mixture of Pharisees with them, as appears from chap. xiii. 6. And the Sadducees all

along in this history appear to have been the most furious adversaries to the apostles, whose chief business was to preach a risen Saviour, and the doctrines that depend upon, and stand connected with, that great article of the Christian faith.

ple, all the words of this life.

versaries : And as many of the common people, whose souls are as precious as any others, will be brought to hear and receive your testimony, preach to them every thing that relates to the doctrine of eternal life, through a risen Saviour, which the *Sadducees* deny, but which is, of all others, worthy to be called by the name of life.

21 And, when they heard *that*, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

21 And, upon hearing this from such a heavenly messenger, they took courage ; and, embracing the very first opportunity, went into the temple early on the next morning ; and, in the most public manner, preached salvation to eternal life, through the lately crucified and risen Jesus. In the mean while, the high-priest and his partisans, supposing that the apostles were still in safe custody, went and summoned together an extraordinary council, calling in, not only the members of the sanhedrim, but likewise (*ταῖς τοῦ πεπρωμένου*) all the eldership of *Israel*, that used to meet as judges * in other courts at *Jerusalem* ; and then sent some of their officers to the jail, ordering them to bring the prisoners before them.

22 But, when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned and told,

22, 23 But when the † officers went, in obedience to their commands, and found, to their great surprise, that all the apostles were got out of jail, they soon came back, and made their report saying, We have been at the prison to execute your orders ; and truly, at our arrival, we found all the doors, and every thing about it, fast, without the least signs of a breach, in any part whatsoever ; and we saw the guards in their proper posts, standing without side, and watching the doors with all imaginable care and diligence : But, to our own and their great astonishment, when we unlocked the doors, and went in, we could not find so much as one of the prisoners that we were sent to fetch.

23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety ; and the keepers standing without before the doors : but when we had opened, we found no man within.

24 Now when the high priest, and the captain of the temple, and the chief priests, heard these things, they doubted of them

24 When the high priest and the captain of the temple, and the heads of the twenty-four courses of the priests, (see the note on *Matt. ii. 4.*) heard this account, they were perfectly non-plust, being in the utmost doubt and perplexity of mind, to think how this could possibly be, what it was like to come to in further events, and what measures

N O T E S.

* There were, says Dr *Lightfoot* on this place, judges, or elders, of two other judicatories in *Jerusalem* : one in the outer court-gate, or in *Solomon's* porch ; and the other in the inner, or the beautiful gate of the temple, consisting of twenty-three men apiece ; and so this high-priest called together all the three courts, or benches of judges in *Jerusalem* ; one hundred and seventy in all, if there was a full appearance, (the Lord so disposing it) that all his apostles, and all his chief enemies might be together, &c.

† These seem to have been either ecclesiastical or civil officers ; for the word (*υπαρχος*) by which they are here expressed, properly signifies *ministers* ; and I do not find that it is ever used for military officers : As these therefore were under the command of the captain of the temple, (*ver. 26.*) we may rather conclude that this was the captain of the several watches which the priests kept in the temple, than of the Roman garrison, in the tower of *Antony*, according to the note on chap. iv. 1.

them whereunto this would grow.

23 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.

26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: (for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.)

27 And, when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them,

28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you, that you should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

measures they should take to prevent any bad consequences of it to themselves and their church.

25 And (24) what added to their consternation was, that in the midst of all their anxiety and confusion of thought, there came one into court, and brought them strange tidings, saying, How amazing is what I have to tell this venerable body! The very men whom ye yesterday threw into the common jail, and took so much care to secure there, are this instant standing openly and boldly in the temple, and preaching to the people, in contempt of your authority, just as they used to do before they were taken up for it.

26 Upon this information, the captain of the temple himself went with the officers, (ver. 22.) and got the apostles away, in as civil and respectful a manner as possible, without offering to seize them with violence, or to treat them with any rudeness; they taking this method, not from any fear of God, or real regard to those holy men, but for fear of exasperating, and being stoned by the common people, who had a great esteem and veneration for the apostles, and were now again brought to favour Christ's righteous cause, as formerly, though when he came upon his trial, they, under the influence of the priests, cried out, Crucify him, crucify him. (Luke xxiii. 21.)

27, 28 And as soon as the captain and his officers had taken them from the company, they brought them into court; and the high-priest, as president of this extraordinary council, severely reprimanded and upbraided the apostles, as though they had broke prison, as well as disobeyed orders; and imperiously demanded of them, saying, Do not ye remember that we not long since, (chap. iv. 18.) after having shewn much lenity and forbearance, strictly charged two of the chief among you in open court, on pain of our highest displeasure, never once to mention the name of Jesus more, or presume to preach up his resurrection, and other things, to his honour, by a pretended commission from him? and yet behold the insolence and contempt, the unpardonable affront, and abuse of our goodness! Ye, in defiance of all our kindness, authority, and power, have industriously, and in the most public manner, spread your new, detestable, and pernicious doctrine through all Jerusalem our great and holy city; and it plainly appears, by your behaviour, that ye design, if possible, to bring the greatest guilt and scandal upon us, and to incense the people against us, for having shed, what ye call the innocent blood of this man, whom we cannot think of, but with the utmost abhorrence

abhorrence and contempt; but of whom ye talk as highly, as if he were a non-such for worth, dignity, and power, and for sanctity, and being in favour with God.

29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered, and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

29 Then Peter and the rest of the apostles, who concurred with him, and spake in their turns for themselves, courageously replied, saying, Human laws are never to come into competition with the divine; and as those of us, that were thus interdicted by your august body before, have intimated, (*chap. iv. 19.*) so we all now stand to it, that it is our undoubted and indispensable duty to obey the commands of God, rather than any injunctions of the greatest men, or councils on earth, whenever they are inconsistent with, or contrary one to the other, which is the present case; and, whatsoever may be the consequence, we are neither afraid, nor ashamed to preach Christ, even to you yourselves, in hope that he may bless it to some of you.

30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree.

30 The sum of our doctrine is this: The God of our fathers whom ye, as well as we, own for your God, and who entered into a peculiar visible covenant-relation with them and their children, raised up Jesus first among you as the greatest of prophets, to whom ye ought to have hearkened, according to God's own prediction and command by Moses, (*Deut. xviii. 15.*); and afterwards to testify his highest approbation and acceptance, he, as the *God of peace*, reconciled to sinners, through the blood of his atoning sacrifice, which is *the blood of the everlasting covenant*, brought our Lord Jesus again from the dead, (*Heb. xiii. 20.*) whom ye really murdered, though under the form of a law-process; and that in the most ignominious manner, by hanging him on the accursed tree, as if he had been the vilest of malefactors.

31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

31 Even him has God not only raised to life, but likewise, by a glorious operation of his almighty power, has exalted to the greatest dignity, honour, and universal dominion in heaven and earth, that he may live and reign on high, with all authority and grace, as a Prince enthroned in all the glory, majesty, and power of his kingdom, and as the only all-sufficient Saviour, able and willing to give to the whole *Israel* of God, inclusive of those very Jews that crucified him, the most necessary and inestimable blessings, even repentance, by the effectual working of his Spirit upon the hearts of the most obdurate and impenitent; and the free and full pardon of all the trespasses of the very worst among them, thro' faith in his blood.

32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so

32 And these things we spake with the utmost assurance; being appointed by Christ himself to testify them, and

so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

and having been ourselves witnesses, particularly of his resurrection and ascension to glory, and of the wonderful and endearing fruits of his exaltation: Yea, the Holy Ghost himself likewise bears witness, in the highest manner, to these important doctrines, who, with convincing light, and powerful energy, works in and by us, and has made many others, together with ourselves, partakers of their sweet and happy influence; and whom God has given, and will still farther give, to all that are brought to yield themselves up to the obedience of faith, and chuse to obey him, rather than man; all these have the witness in themselves, and are a succession of witnesses, upon experience, of the same things: And there is virtue, grace, and merit enough in this Lord of glory, to melt even *your* hearts into repenting sorrows, and to extend free forgiveness to you, that had so deep a hand in his crucifixion.

33 When they heard *that*, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

33 When the council heard this plain and touching discourse, instead of submitting to its strength and evidence, or relenting with godly sorrow, like them that were pricked in their heart, (*chap. ii. 37.*); and instead of seeking forgiveness of sins from the exalted Saviour, they were cut through (*συνέριον*) with indignation, rage, and envy; and immediately were for consulting measures about putting all the apostles to death, and so getting rid of them at once, and effectually preventing the further progress of the gospel.

34 Then stood thereupon in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space,

34 But (*δὲ*) as soon as this unrighteous and barbarous design began to discover itself, a check was put upon it by a learned, grave, and venerable man of the assembly, viz. *Gamaliel*, who was of the sect of the *Pharisees*, a noted scribe, or teacher in their public schools, and a man of considerable influence, character, and esteem, among the people for wisdom, learning, and piety, the * same person that was tutor to *Saul of Tarsus*, who afterwards became the great apostle of the *Gentiles*, (*chap. xxii. 3.*) this famous *rabbi* got up, and ordered all the apostles to be taken for a little while out of court, that there might be the greater freedom of debate.

35 And said unto

35 And upon their withdrawing, he being an enemy to the corrupt notions of the *Sadducees*, and having favourable thoughts of the apostles, and a regard to the common principles of humanity and justice, and to the public

N O T E.

* It is likewise probably supposed from what is found in Talmudical writings, that this *Gamaliel* was the son of good old *Simeon*, who took Christ up in his arms, when he was presented in the temple, (*Luke*

il. 25, 28.) and was the grandson of the famous *Hillel*, one of the most eminent among the Jewish doctors. See *Prid. Consect.* vol. II. b. viii. p. 528, 529.

unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do, as touching these men.

36 For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be some body, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain, and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.

37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished, and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed.

38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought;

public peace, made the following prudent and pacific speech, Ye rulers of God's people *Israel*, who ought to be governed by reason and religion, it greatly behoves you to be very cautious, and to take heed of doing any thing rashly in a passion, and to consider matters thoroughly and calmly, as in the sight and presence of God, before ye determine any thing against these men.

36 For ye all well know, that some time since, one * *Theudas* set himself up as the head of a party, pretending to be a man of great authority and power, and that he would do wonderful feats; and he so far imposed upon the people, that about four hundred men joined him, in hopes of great preferment under him; and yet he was soon cut off, and his cause died with him: For all his party, that had followed him, immediately dispersed and came to nothing, without any more ado; and so saved us, and the civil government, all further trouble about them.

37 After that impostor, there rose up another, viz. one *Judas of Galilee*, who appeared in the reign of *Cæsar Augustus*, when the decree was issued out for a general enrollment, (*Luke ii. 1.*); this man also, setting up with high pretences for liberty, deluded the people to such a degree, that abundance of them ran after him, and had great expectations from him: But he, in like manner, soon came to an untimely death, and all his adherents were thereupon discomfited; and we heard no more of them.

38 And now, my brethren, let us learn wisdom and temper in the present crisis, from these examples, and not go into any hasty and violent measures, to punish or restrain these men by force, that have been brought before us: For if the surprising story they tell about the resurrection of Jesus, the head of their sect, who we are sure was actually crucified, and their celebrated miracles, in his name, be all the whim and work of silly, weak enthusiasts; nay, if the whole of this affair be the artful contrivance and juggling management of cunning impostors, who, under a pretence of religion, are carrying on secular views, we may reasonably conclude from what has been in the forementioned instances, that their cause will soon die with their Master; Divine Providence, and

N O T E.

* How far the persons and facts referred to in this and the following verſe agree, or diſagree, to *Josephus's* account of *Theudas*, and of *Judas of Galilee*, whom he alſo calls *Judas Gaulanites*, the curious reader may inquire himſelf, by conſulting *Dr Lightfoot* on this place, and *Dr Lardner's* *Cred. of the*

Gosp. Hiſt. vol. II. p. 355, &c. and *Mir Biscoe's* ſermons at *Boyle's Lectures*, p. 602. By all which it appears, that the *Theudas* ſpoken of by *Josephus*, was another of that name, who roſe before the *Theudas* mentioned by our ſacred hiſtorian.

and the course of things, will undoubtedly in a little time discover their designs, and sufficiently expose the men to universal contempt; and so we need not risk our present reputation with the people, by using desperate methods to destroy what will fall of itself.

39 But, if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.

39 But if what they say and do, with plausible appearances of truth, should prove to be the effect of God's own counsel and operation; it would be vain, impious, and dangerous for you to exert human authority or force to suppress it; for *his counsel will stand, and he will do all his pleasure*, (Is. xlv. 10.) till therefore we see the event, we ought to be very careful, that we attempt nothing of that kind, lest we should happen to contract the dreadful guilt of waging war against the great God himself: *Wo to him that strive with his Maker*, (Isa. xlv. 9.) for my part, I tremble at the consequence of so doing.

40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

40 And this speech was so rational and touching, that the generality of the council were so far softened in their tempers, and influenced to fall in with the prudent advice of this learned senator, as to drop the design of putting the apostles to death: And yet so great was their rage against them, that when they had ordered them back into court, and to be ignominiously, openly, and severely scourged for a pretended contempt of authority, they, in a haughty and menacing manner, strictly charged them never to make use of the name of Christ any more in their preaching or performances; and so dismissed them for the present.

41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

41 They thereupon went away (*αὐτοὶ ἀποῦντες τὸ συνέδριον*) from the face of that august assembly, without reviling them; and so far were they from being discouraged, or ashamed, or intimidated by their commands, or by the indignity which had been so injuriously put upon them; that, on the contrary, they rejoiced, not only amidst their sufferings, but in the thought, that the Lord Jesus had so highly honoured them, as to give them an opportunity of bearing a public and becoming testimony to him, by undergoing the greatest reproach among men, for the sake of his glorious name and cause.

42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

42 And so far were they from giving heed to, or being restrained by, the haughty prohibitions and ill usage they had met with, that they went on with their work, as vigorously and constantly, or more so than ever, both publicly in the temple to all sorts of people, and more privately in every house, where they came, to their friends and fellow-christians; labouring night and day, both in sacred and in common time, to explain the gospel of sal-
vation,

vation, and particularly to preach up Jesus Christ as crucified, and risen again from the dead.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How easily do the corruptions of men's hearts, and the temptations of ambition and covetousness draw them into a lie ! But how abominable is this sin, especially, when it turns into hypocrisy towards God ; and most of all when it proceeds from atheistical conceits, as if the Divine Spirit, who is himself God, and manifestly acted as such in the apostles, does not know it, or cannot bring it to light ! And how should sinners tremble, and professors of Christianity be afraid, at the thought of prevaricating with that God, who can strike liars and hypocrites dead, and vindicate the honour of his last and brightest dispensation of grace, by terrible things in righteousness, on those that would bring his authority under contempt ! And yet with what blind and rash zeal have many, under a pretence of religion, set themselves against the most eminent ministers of Christ, and therein fought against God ! But his counsel and work shall stand, in defiance, and to the confusion of all that oppose them ; and he can raise up advocates for his righteous cause from amongst its most inveterate, learned, and potent enemies : And how remarkably has he owned and encouraged his faithful servants, opened prison-doors for them, wrought wonderful miracles of mercy and power by their hands, restrained and over-ruled the fury of rulers, awed the multitude, and increased the church, in the midst of all human attempts for suppressing it, to the confirmation of the gospel, and of our faith ! And how great soever the terrors and reproaches may be, that any of us endure for Christ's name-sake, we may despise them all, and count them our glory ; and chusing to obey God, rather than man, hold on our way to own and honour him, and publish the praises, of a once crucified, and now risen Redeemer, who is exalted as a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, to the most hardened and guilty criminals.

C H A P. VI.

The institution of the office of deacons for disposing of the church's stock, with the occasion of it, and an account of the seven that were chosen, 1,—7. Stephen, one of the seven, is disputed against, and accused to the sanhedrim, 8,—14. And appears before them with an angelic lustre on his countenance, 15.

TEXT.

AND in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER some time, when converts, chiefly from among the lower ranks of people, were so exceedingly multiplied and added to the church, that there were scarcely benefactions enough for a comfortable supply of all their poor ; their beautiful harmony was so far broke in upon, that there arose heart-burnings and complaints among those Christians, who were *Jews* by birth, but used the *Greek* language in their synagogues, and common conversation, (see the note on *John* xii. 20.) against those that continued to read the Old Testament, and to speak in the *Hebrew* tongue ; because, in the distribution of the public charity, which, to prevent profuseness and ill husbandry in the poor, was made day by day, as occasions required, they suspected at least, that due care was not taken of the *Grecian* widows,

dows, and others of *their* poor, while the greatest regard was shewn to those of the *Hebrew* denomination, as tho' these were to be deemed the most worthy, and to have the most liberal allowances from the fund, which had indeed been principally raised by contributions from their *Hebrew* friends.

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

2 Hereupon the twelve apostles, though they had taken all possible care to make impartial distributions to every necessitous object, and had attended this service as far as their other more important affairs admitted, prudently summoned the church together, who had a joint-interest, right, and concern in settling things to their own satisfaction: And, as *Jethro* advised *Moses* to call in assistance for judging small causes, because the whole of his former work was too heavy for him, (*Exod. xviii. 21, &c.*) so they spoke to the whole community, saying, As the managment of the church's stock now takes up a great deal of our time, and occasions jealousies, that may prejudice honest souls against us and our ministry, it is by no means fit or proper, that we should be diverted from our great work of preaching the gospel, and spend our time in daily ordering out of the common fund such supplies as are needful for supporting the expence of sacred ordinances, and relieving all that are to be maintained by it *.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom,

3 Therefore, brethren, (for so we now, and from henceforth esteem and call you, with the utmost affection, as members of Christ, and heirs of the heavenly inheritance together with us) carefully consider this matter, and fix upon seven men out of your own number of believers, which may be sufficient for the present; men that have an established reputation for integrity, (*μαρτυρικὴν*) and are plentifully endued with the extraordinary gifts and special graces of the Holy Spirit, to guide

N O T E.

* As all necessary expences for carrying on the worship of God; and as the apostles themselves, as well as the poor, were doubtless to be supported out of the common stock, I have given such a paraphrase, as may take in the Lord's table, and the tables of the apostles, and of the poor members of the church; though the direct and immediate design of the office was to take care of the poor. And it is natural to think, that though *Stephen* and *Philip*, and, perhaps, some others of these first deacons, afterwards preached the gospel: yet, that they did this, not by virtue of their deaconship, but of some other commission given to them as evangelists; which, I apprehend, they received not before, but after they had been chosen to that office: For though it

was fit that they should be capable of administering spiritual counsel on all proper occasions, and have a spirit of discerning in those days, as may be intimated in their being full of the Holy Ghost; it is not likely that they, who were already evangelists, should be so far diverted from their main superior work, as to serve tables: And therefore it does not appear to me that, as some have thought, these were part of the seventy disciples which were chosen and ordained by our Lord himself, (*Luke x. 1.*) though they were probably some of the hundred and twenty mentioned *chap. i. 15.*; and possibly when any of these commenced evangelists, others were chosen into the deacon's office in their room.

wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch :

6 Whom they set before the apostles : and, when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.

guide and assist them in the wise and faithful discharge of their duty, (see the note on chap. ii. 3.) ; and that are of approved prudence to order things to the best advantage, whom we, pursuant to your choice, and with your consent, may set apart for this very use, (*ἵνα τὴν διακονήν*) namely, for performing the office of deacons in disposing of the church-stock. (*ver. 2.*)

4 But as for us, the apostles of our Lord, we, according to the original design of our office, will give ourselves up entirely and uninterruptedly to the great duties of solemn prayer for all assistance and success in the work to which we are called, and of ministering the word of God's grace ; and so labour in the service of Christ and souls, with all diligence and perseverance, and look up to him for a blessing.

5 And the whole Christian society were extremely taken with this proposal, as a happy expedient for reserving full liberty to the apostles to go on with their testimony to the Lord Jesus ; and, at the same time, for taking due care of the temporal affairs of the church : Accordingly, upon serious deliberation, they, with great harmony and joint-concurrence, made choice of the following persons for the deacon's office, *viz.* Stephen, a man eminent for faith and faithfulness, and abundantly enriched with the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost ; and Philip, who afterwards went about preaching Christ, (*chap. viii.*) ; to these two eminent men they joined Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and * Nicolas, who, before his conversion to the faith of Christ, had been a proselyte of righteousness ; and so by religion a Jew, though a native of Antioch in Syria, and so a Gentile by birth.

6 These, the brethren, (*ver. 3.*) presented to the apostles as the persons whom they had chosen to this office ; and the apostles thereupon recommended them to the blessing of God by prayer, and laid their hands upon them, as a visible token that God would bless them, and bestow still further gifts and qualifications upon them, for a wise, faithful, and useful discharge of the trust which was then committed to them.

7 And

N O T E.

* All these deacons having Greek names, seem to have been of the Grecian or Hellenistical part of the church, that their poor might have no room for further complaints of being neglected in the distributions of the public money. Stephen and Philip are spoken of at large in this and the two following chapters ; but the scripture never mentions any of the rest again, unless this Ni-

colas were the man from whom the abominable sect of the Nicolaites, spoken of *Rev. ii. 6, 15.* took their name. If he advanced the impure notions which antiquity says they held, he must be sadly degenerated from his first faith : But it seems from Eusebius, (*Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 29.*) that by injurious misconstructions of his words, they fathered their filthy doctrines upon him.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.

9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia, and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

7 And as the peace of the church was now again restored, and the apostles were disincumbered from its secular concerns, and more at liberty than before to pursue their main work, they spread the doctrines of Christ in their ministrations with growing success; so that even in *Jerusalem* itself, where Christ had been rejected and crucified, it took root in many hearts, and converts daily increased more and more among them; yea, a great number of the *Jewish* priests, that used to be some of the most inveterate of our Lord's enemies, were effectually wrought upon by his Spirit, and brought over to believe on him, according to the divine command, and to yield all holy obedience to God by faith, (*υπακούω τῷ κυρίῳ*) as its genuine fruit and effect.

8 And, for the still greater propagation of the gospel, *Stephen*, being a man of abundance of faith, zeal, and holy courage, was spirited, authorized, and enabled to preach it, and to confirm it by wonderful miracles, which were (*σημεῖα*) signs, publicly exhibited, of God's owning it, in the sight of all the people.

9 But as there were various synagogues for hellenist *Jews*, and for proselytes of different nations, to assemble for prayer, and reading of the law, and other religious exercises; and they were generally the greatest zealots for *Judaism*, for the sake of which they, of all others, were most exposed to contempt and sufferings in their respective countries: So there were some that belonged to the synagogues of such freed-men of *Rome*, or their descendents, as had obtained this privilege by gift, or purchase, the first of which were called *Liberti*, and the second *Libertini*, in distinction from original *Native Freemen*; and there were others that belonged to the several synagogues of *Cyrene* and *Alexandria*, and of *Cilicia* and *Asia*, who, thinking themselves a match for *Stephen*, whatsoever they might be for the apostles, openly opposed him, and challenged him to a dispute* about the grand points of Christianity.

10 And he, readily embracing that opportunity to vindicate the great doctrines of a risen Saviour, spoke with such judgment and courage, clearness of evidence, and force of reasoning, by the immediate assistance of the Holy Spirit, according to Christ's promise (*Luke xxi. 15.*) that they were fairly confuted, and perfectly

NOTE.

* The disputants against *Stephen* were, probably, either the tutors, or some other of the most learned and acute men of the schools, belonging to the synagogues where the foreign youth were educated in *Jewish* learning; and as *Saul of Tarsus* was a great

scholar, of smart parts, and furious zeal against Christianity, it is very likely that he was concerned in these debates, as well as in the stoning of *Stephen* to death, *cānp. vi. 57.* and *viii. 2.*

perfectly confounded; being incapable of maintaining their own arguments, or of making any tolerable reply to his.

11 Then they suborned men which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God.

11 But, instead of submitting to evidence, and rejoicing in the tidings of a Saviour, they were the more enraged to find themselves thus publicly baffled and exposed; and therefore, when they could not support their cause by reasoning, they, as is too common in such cases, betook themselves to violence and falsehood, underhandedly instructing, persuading, and bribing certain men, that had no conscience, to give out a charge of this import, We have heard this doughty disputant vent blasphemies in dishonourable and reproachful reflections on our famous law-giver *Moses*; yea, and on the great God himself.

12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council.

12 And by this, and such like means, they raised the prejudices, and inflamed the passions of the people, and of the *Jewish* elders and rabbies, men of chief authority, learning, and influence, against him; and thereupon they, in a tumultuous manner, rushed upon him; and seizing him with violence, immediately carried him before the sanhedrim †, for them to take cognizance of the matter.

13 And

N O T E.

† Of all the ways that I have met with, for settling the power of the *Jews* in criminal cases, none pleases me better than what the elaborate compilers of the *Universal History* have given us, (vol. iv. p. 256, 257.) where they fix the final departure of the *Jewish* sceptre, or power, at the conversion of *Cornelius*, the *Roman* centurion, the first fruits of that of the *Gentile* world. In support of which they observe, that, according to the just rendering of *Isaac's* prophecy, *Gen. xlix. 10.* which ought to be read, *The sceptre shall not depart, &c. till Shiloh come; and to him the nations be gathered;* it could not be totally removed, till this promised conversion of the *Gentiles* was in some measure accomplished. It had indeed began to dwindle long before, but there were still some remains left; they were governed by their own laws, their sanhedrim had still a great power, even of life and death: But from this time it was so curtailed and reduced, that no footstep was to be seen of it. And those gentlemen argue from the different procedure of the sanhedrim, who tried, condemned, and executed *Stephen*, by their own authority, about a year after Christ; but, twenty-six years after, they endeavoured to do the same by *Paul*, and were prevented by *Lysias*, the *Roman* captain, (*Acts* xxi. 27, &c.) from doing it by their own authority. They afterwards endeavoured to

prevail first upon the old, next upon the new governor, to consent to his being put to death, and were refused by both, unless after a fair trial and conviction at the *Roman* tribunal. And when, at length, they persuaded the new governor to recede in some measure from his prerogative, and let them try the pretended criminal themselves, the apostle protested against it and appealed to *Cæsar*, as the only tribunal where he could be lawfully tried. This point is further argued from the judgment which *Festus*, *Agrippa*, and others made of him, that he had done nothing worthy of death, or of bonds, (*chap. xxvi. 31.*) as also from the reason which *Festus* gave for not delivering him into their hands, that it was not the manner of the *Romans* to deliver any man to die, before, &c. (*chap. xxv. 15.*) and from the *Jews* lying in wait to kill him by stratagem, since they could not get it done in a judicial way. From all these, and such like considerations, those learned writers conclude, that between the death of *St Stephen* and the trial of *St Paul*, the *Jews* had lost all their power of trying criminal causes; and since this instance of the latter is the first we meet with of their being divested of that power, about twenty years after the conversion of *Cornelius*, it seems to follow, that the *Jewish* sceptre was not totally departed, till after the *Gentiles* had been gathered to *Shiloh*.—But the

13 And set up false witnesses which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law:

14 For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.

15 And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

13 And having false witnesses ready prepared before-hand fit for their turn, they produced them in court, who, looking at the prisoner, and maliciously putting a strained construction on some of his words, and misrepresenting others, deposed against him in the following manner, This man, who is justly brought as a criminal to your bar, has had the impudence to utter, and to persist in propagating, wherever he came, such scandalous doctrines, as amount to downright blasphemy against this sacred temple, in an apartment of which ye are now sitting, and against our divine law, and consequently against *Moses*, our great lawgiver, and against God himself.

14 For we with our own ears have heard him roundly assert, that this Jesus, the contemptible *Nazarene*, who we all know was crucified, but whom he preaches up to the people, as his risen Lord and Saviour, will utterly destroy this magnificent temple, which is consecrated to God, and will abolish the religious rites and ceremonies, which, by divine appointment, *Moses* delivered in the law, to be observed by us.

15 But as all this, supposing it to be true, was far from any thing like blasphemy, and as in fact it afterwards came to pass*, whether *Stephen* at that time was so far inspired, as fully to apprehend it, or not; so God visibly owned and honoured him in like manner, as he did *Moses*, when he had been conversing with him, and receiving the law from him the second time in the mount: (*Exod. xxxiv. 29. 30.*) And whilst he stood under this heavy charge before the council, all that were sitting there looked intently and earnestly at him; as tho' they would observe whether there were no tokens of guilt in his aspect; but so far were they from discovering any thing like it, that, on the contrary, they saw a most amiable innocence and cheerfulness, and even an extraordinary miraculous splendor and majesty in his countenance,

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the curious and inquisitive reader, that would thoroughly examine this intricate argument, and see how far the Jews continued to have the power of life and death, in matters relating to their own law, may consult the learned and laboured discourses of Dr *Lardner*, to restrain it, in his *Credibility of the Gospel History*, and of Mr *Bispe*, to establish its full extent, in his sermons at *Boyle's* Lecture.

* Though from our Lord's own predictions, (*Luke xxi. 5, 6.* and *John iv. 23, 24.*) which, probably, *Stephen* had referred to, he might know that the temple should be

destroyed, and a more spiritual sort of worship introduced: yet, since the apostles themselves did not for some time after this know that the ceremonial law should be utterly abolished, it may be a question whether *Stephen* ever spoke in such strong terms as were alleged by these witnesses against him, about the change of the customs delivered by *Moses's* law; or if, by divine suggestion, he spoke words that admitted of such a construction, whether he himself clearly understood their whole meaning, any more than some of the ancient prophets did their own prophecies, (*1 Pet. i. 10. 11.*)

countenance, as if it had been the face of an illustrious angel appearing in human form. (See *Matth.* xxviii. 3.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How unhappy is it that money-matters should occasion murmurings and discord in churches, which, on other accounts, are of one heart and soul! How prudent is it to prevent such occasions, by an impartial application of their liberal contributions to the religious and charitable uses for which they were made! And how needful is the office of deacons for this purpose; and that men of reputable established characters, for good oeconomy and fidelity, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, be appointed to it! But how tender should we be of the rights of churches for choosing their own officers, relating to their secular, as well as spiritual concerns! The apostles themselves would not invade these rights; and yet their directions ought to be followed in the exercise of them. While deacons are to serve tables, the great business of gospel-ministers is to give themselves entirely to the preaching of the word and prayer, that they may labour for the service of souls, in hope that God may make it effectual; and when he is with them, ye may well hope that numbers of converts, and even some from among the most unlikely, such as the bigotted priests of old, will be brought in to the Lord and to his church. But, O how desperately are carnal hearts set against the gospel of Christ; and how perversely apt to charge his glorious and peculiar doctrines with blasphemy! Yea, false professors of religion are its greatest enemies, though they cannot gaul the spirit of wisdom and power that appears in his servants, and though miracles themselves were to be wrought by them, and God himself were to make their faces shine like an angel's. But wo unto those, who, instead of scripture, reason, and argument, fly to calumny and violence; and either suborn, or suffer themselves to be made, false witnesses against them whom God owns and honours!

C H A P. VII.

Stephen's defence of himself before the sanhedrim against the blasphemy laid to his charge, on account of what he had said about the change of ceremonial rites, and acceptably worshipping God in one place as well as another, 1,—19. About Moses and his law, 20,—43. And about the destruction of the temple, 44,—50. He applies the discourse to the council and his prosecutors, 51,—53. and is stoned to death, while he was under an extraordinary manifestation of Christ to him, and was praying for his enemies, 54,—60.

TEXT.

THEN said the high priest, Are these things so?

PARAPHRASE.

THE high-priest having heard the charge of blasphemous words, that had been laid against Stephen, and not being sufficiently awed by the wonderful lustre that appeared in his countenance, (*chap.* vi. 13, 14, 15.) went on, as president of the council, to put him upon his trial, saying, Is there any truth in the things deposed against you? What have you to say for yourself? Are you guilty, or not guilty?

2 And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hear-

2 And Stephen made a noble defence in the following strong and touching manner: Men, brethren, and fathers, by whom I ought to be treated with humanity,

ken : The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,

kindness, and tenderness, and whom I would address with sober reasoning and scripture-arguments, with affectionate concern for your happiness, and with all becoming respect, I beg your patience to hear what I have to offer, with serious attention, and without giving me any interruption: As to the charge of blasphemy exhibited against me, (*chap. vi. 14.*) on account of what I have said about the change of ceremonial rites, and acceptably worshipping God in every place, provided it be in spirit and truth, (*John iv. 21, 23, 24.*) suffer me to lay before you a short history of Abraham and the patriarchs, our worthy progenitors: To begin with Abraham, from whom we are all descended, and under whom we hold our covenant-privileges, when he lived in an idolatrous country, viz. in Ur of the Chaldees, (*Gen. xi. 31. Josh. xxiv. 2, 3. and Neh. ix. 7.*) which lay in Mesopotamia, even then, and there it was, that the great and blessed God, whom I adore, but who is exalted above all blessing and praise, and has no need of the homage of any of his creatures, first manifested himself to him in a cloud of glory*, before he came to dwell in Charran.

3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee.

4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran :

3 And there it was, that this only living and true God opened a door of hope to us, saying to him, (*Gen. xii. 1.*) Arise, and remove your habitation from your native country, and from among your idolatrous relations, and go to settle in another land, to which I shall direct you.

4 Hereupon he immediately, without consulting his secular interest, or his affection to his native land, and the relations that might be left there, believed in God, and obeyed his command, by removing with his father Terah, and his nephew Lot, together with his own wife Sarah, out of Chaldaea, going he knew not whither, (*Heb. xi. 8.*); and he resided with them for some time in

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* It is generally thought, with great probability, that this title, *The God of glory*, here refers to the glorious appearance which he made in the *Shachinah*, and from which he spoke to Abraham; and it must be supposed, that God now called him to go out from his country and kindred, &c. For we are expressly told, that he brought him out of Ur of the Chaldees, (*Gen. xv. 7. and Neh. ix. 7.*) And it is here said, that this was before he dwelt in Charran: And when he had been some time there, and, perhaps, thought of settling in that country, which, as well as Ur of the Chaldees, is placed by the ancient geography in Mesopotamia, when taken in a larger sense, than in its

strictest acceptation, as including only the parts that are situated between Euphrates and Tigris, God then probably repeated his order to him to go still further, (*Gen. xii. 1, 5.*) which is called his removing to Canaan, (*ver. 4.*) And as this was still reckoned the land of Mesopotamia, and his brother Nahor came afterwards with his family, and settled there, as appears from *Gen. xxv. 10, 15.* compared with *chap. xxviii. 2, 10*; so Abraham's leaving that place, and those of his relations that were come thither, he would go no further, might very properly be still called his leaving his country and kindred. See *Bedford's Script. Chronol.* p. 312.

ran : and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell.

5 And he gave him none inheritance in it, not so much as to set his foot on : yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child.

6 And God spake on this wise, that his seed should sojourn in a strange land, and that they should bring them into bondage, and increase them evil four hundred years.

7 And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God : and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place.

in Charran : And after his father died there, (*Gen. xi. 31, 32. and xii. 1, 5.*) God, by another call, (see the note on *ver. 2.*) transplanted him (*μετεκίνησεν αὐτόν*) from thence to the land of Canaan, of which ye are the inhabitants at this day.

5 And at his first bringing him into this country, he gave him no present possession here, by way of inheritance, no, not so much as (*ὅσον πῶλον*) a man's stride, or a foot's breadth ; so that he was afterwards obliged to contract with the sons of *Heth* for the property of a burying ground when his wife died : (*Gen. xxiii. 2,—16.*) Nevertheless, God then made over the whole land to him by way of free promise, as a possession that should be actually enjoyed by his offspring in after generations, and that at a time when he had no child.

6 But (*δὲ*) God giving him the promise of a son, meaning *Isaac*, and of a numerous issue from him, (*Gen. xv. 4, 5.*) foretold, (*ver. 13, 14.*) that his posterity should be in an unsettled and afflicted state, and should be transplanted into, and live as strangers in, a foreign country, meaning *Egypt*, whose inhabitants should tyrannize over them, and subject them to extreme hardship, like bondslaves, and should treat them cruelly ; and that their afflicted circumstances, which should begin first in *Canaan*, (*ver. 11.*) and afterwards be completed in *Egypt*, should continue for the space of about four hundred years, reckoning from *Isaac's* birth *, or more precisely from the time of his weaning at five years old, when *Ismael* the son of *Hagar* mocked him. (*Gen. xxi. 8, 9.*)

7 And at the expiration of that term, I, said God, will bring severe and heavy judgments upon that very people who had long oppressed them ; and thereupon your seed shall be delivered out of their house of bondage, and shall worship me, with freedom and delight, in this promised land. Now all this is an humbling admonition to us of the meanness of our original ; and should be a caution to us, that we do not provoke God to cast us off, and turn us out of possession of this land again : And it is a plain evidence, that there was originally no distinction of places, to which God confined his favour, but that he freely manifested himself to our great father Abraham, and accepted his and his offsprings faith, worship, and obedience, while they sojourned in a strange land ; and that his regard to Canaan itself, and his giving it to them

N O T E.

* See *Wbist.* on the place, and *Boissac's Script. Critic.* p. 294. for computation to support the sense given in the Paraphrase.

them and us, had a principal reference to the heavenly inheritance, of which that was a type, and which we ought to be most of all concerned about.

8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and to Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob: and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.

8 And as to the change of rites and ceremonies, (*chap. vi. 14.*) he pleased to observe, that God having made his covenant of free favour with Abraham and his seed, he afterwards, for the confirmation of his faith, annexed to it the famous rite of circumcision, (*Gen. xvii. 7,—10.*) as an external badge, sign, and seal of his covenant, and of the peculiar relation into which they were thereby taken to God, as their God: Accordingly when, after all this, Isaac, the son of the promise, was born to Abraham, he circumcised him on the eighth day in obedience to God's command: (*Gen. xxi. 2,—4.*) And as this was a seal of the righteousness of faith, which he had being yet uncircumcised, (*Rom. iv. 10, 11.*) it shews that he was as much accepted of God before, as after this religious ceremony was instituted, and that there is no intrinsic worth in this, or any positive rite, which God may alter at pleasure: And henceforth the promised seed began to multiply under the entail of the covenant; so that Isaac begat Jacob, who was the father of the twelve heads of our tribes.

9 And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him,

9 And this leads me to take notice of the state of things, with regard to these twelve patriarchs, how they served God, and were owned of him, in a strange land, and how he accomplished his word concerning them, Ye all know that Joseph was one of them; and God having revealed to him in dreams, that he should be raised to dignity and honour above all the rest of his family, his brethren, being envious at him on this account, took an opportunity of selling him to the *Midianites*, to prevent his exaltation; and they carrying him to Egypt, sold him into slavery there, (*Gen. xxxvii. 5,—36.*); but whilst he was in that foreign and idolatrous country, God was remarkably with him, by his Spirit, favour, and blessing: (*Gen. xxxix. 2, 31.*)

10 And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt, and all his house.

10 And, by surprising turns of providence, he set him at liberty from imprisonment, and every other calamity that at first beset him there; and endued him with such extraordinary knowledge and prudence, as highly recommended him to the esteem of Pharaoh, the king of that land; insomuch that he made him prime minister of state, committing the government of all Egypt, and the affairs of his own household, entirely to his management, (*Gen. xli. 38,—44. and xlv. 8.*); God over-ruling all this, to form an eminent type of the exaltation

altation of Christ in his mediatorial office, after he had been abused and crucified by those who have acted an invidious part against our great Lord, as *Joseph's* brethren did against him.

11 Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction; and our fathers found no sustenance.

11 Now after *Joseph* was thus advanced, and had laid up great stores of corn, out of the increase of seven years of plenty, there was, according to his prediction, an universal famine through all Egypt, and the countries round about, including the land of Canaan; so that it was a time of extreme distress, and the rest of the heads of our tribes, from whom a numerous seed, and among them the Messiah himself was to descend, were in danger of perishing for want of food to sustain them, (*Gen. xli. 46,—57.*); and so residing in this land is no security against the forest calamities.

12 But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

12 But their father *Jacob* being then living, and having heard that there was abundance of corn to be sold in Egypt, he first sent all his sons, even our ancestors, that were with him (except his beloved young *Benjamin*) to buy and bring home provisions for himself and family. (*Gen. xlii. 1,—4.*)

13 And at the second time *Joseph* was made known to his brethren; and *Joseph's* kindred was made known unto Pharaoh.

13 And upon their returning all loaded with corn, except *Simeon*, who was detained as an hostage in Egypt, for *Benjamin's* going back with them, (*Gen. xlii. 19, 20, 24.*) *Jacob* sent them, with him, a second time on the same errand: And *Joseph*, having then got all his brethren with him, discovered himself in the most moving manner to them; and it was presently known to *Pharaoh*, and all his court, that they were his brethren, and of what family they were. (*Gen. xli. 3,—16.*)

14 Then sent *Joseph*, and called his father *Jacob* to him, and all his kindred, three-score and fifteen souls.

14 Then *Joseph*, with the entire approbation, and by the order of *Pharaoh*, (*Gen. xli. 16,—24.*) sent for his father *Jacob*, that he and all the rest of his relations might come to him, amounting, in the whole, to the number * of seventy-five persons, exclusive of *Jacob*, but inclusive of wives and children.

15 So

N O T E.

* It is to be observed that *Stephen*, following the version of the *Septuagint*, speaks of *Joseph's* kindred at large, (*μαζαὶ τοὺς συγγενεῖς αὐτοῦ*) whereas *Moses* speaks strictly of them only that came out of *Jacob's* loins, which, besides his four wives, were sixty-six, (*Gen. xli. 26.*) and then adding *Jacob* and *Joseph* with his two sons that were born in Egypt, he calls them seventy souls which came into Egypt, (*ver. 27.*) But if we leave out these four, and if, *Jacob's* wife being dead, (*Gen. xxxviii. 12.*) and young *Benjamin* being supposed to be as yet unmarried, we add the two wives of *Joseph's* brethren, which were sent for, and went into Egypt, (*Gen. xli. 19.* and *xlii. 5.*) the whole number of his kin-

dred, besides his father *Jacob*, who is here reckoned a part, were seventy-five, which *Stephen* says *Joseph* called to him. This seems to be a more easy and obvious way of reconciling the difference between these accounts, than any I have met with: Others may be consulted in *Whitty* on this text, and *Bedford's Script. Chronology*, p. 357, 358. and *Universal Hist.* vol. i. p. 458. But whether any of them entirely clear the text from all difficulty or not, it does not affect any important article of the Christian faith or practice, or the defence which *Stephen* made of himself, in a citation of some approved record then extant.

15 So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he and our fathers;

16 And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of Emmer, the father of Sychem.

17 But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew,

15 So Jacob hearing with wonder and joy, and being fully convinced that his son Joseph was alive, and was governor over all the land of Egypt, (Gen. xlv. 26, 27, 28.) took his journey with his whole family thither; and both he and all the patriarchs, our fathers, continued there till their death.

16 And as they all died with faith in the promises of the land of Canaan, and of a resurrection to the heavenly country, of which that land was a type; they desired to be, and accordingly were, buried in Canaan: For as Jacob, according to his own express order, was buried in the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham bought of Ephron the Hittite, (Gen. xlix. 29, 30, 31. and i. 13.) so * our fathers, from whom the twelve tribes of Israel respectively sprung, were carried over to Sychem and buried in the sepulchre, which † Jacob, one of Abraham's famous descendents, purchased, together with a parcel of ground, of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for an hundred pieces of silver, and which became the inheritance of the children of Joseph, (Josh. xxiv. 32.) whose bones were buried there, in consequence of the oath he had taken from the children of Israel for that purpose, (Gen. i. 24, 25.) And so, tho' they lived and died in a foreign country, and never got possession of Palestine, they were nevertheless accepted of God, and their faith was carried out to the heavenly inheritance, which Jesus has brought to light, and has obtained for all that believe in him.

17 But as God is ever mindful of his covenant; so when the four hundred years, (ver. 6.) were drawing toward their period, and the time was coming on which he had prefixed for fulfilling the gracious promise he had made, and confirmed by oath to Abraham, (Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18.) the children of Israel were so wonderfully owned and blessed there, that they were fruitful

NOTES.

* Stephen may be supposed to have passed over the burial of Jacob, (though to make the history more complete, I have put it into the Paraphrase) and seems to have spoke only of the interment of the twelve patriarchs, who were mentioned under the title of their fathers, and who, dying in the same faith with Jacob and Joseph, were probably carried to Sychem, and buried by Moses there with the bones of Joseph, (Exod. xiii. 19.) And Jerome speaks of Paula's having passed through Sychem, and seen, in her way from thence, the sepulchre of the twelve patriarchs. Vid. Eusebii. Palestine. c. 27.

† As *ellipses* are very frequent both in the language of the Old and New Testament,

(see several instances alledged by Whitty on this place) and *father* or *son* were often to be supplied, an example of which we have in this very verse, where (Εμμορ το Συχημ) Emmer of Sychem, signifies Emmer, the father of Shechem; and as Rachel's descendents were called Rachel, (Mat. ii. 19.) so, in the like elliptical way, Abraham might here be put for, and by them that familiarly knew the history, might easily be understood to signify Jacob, who was one of the posterity of Abraham, and purchased this burying-place as a pledge of the inheritance of all this land which was promised to Abraham, and in faith that God would, in due time, perform his promise to him.

grew, and multiplied in Egypt,

18 Till another king arose which knew not Joseph.

19 The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil intreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.

20 In which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house three months:

ful and increased abundantly, multiplied and waxen exceeding mighty, and the land of *Egypt* was filled with them, (*Exod.* i. 7.)

18 Till, in process of time, * the government being transferred to another family, and this generation worn out, (*Exod.* i. 6, 8.) a tyrannical prince came to the throne, who ungenerously and ungratefully forgot all the good offices that *Joseph* had done to raise the honour and riches of the kingdom, and save it from perishing by famine; and who paid no regard to the memory of this great benefactor, or to his countrymen for his sake.

19 This *Egyptian* king, fearing least our nation and family (*το γένος σου*) should grow too numerous, rich, and powerful, laid artful schemes, both to oppress and extirpate them, (*Exod.* i. 9, 10.); according to which he dealt cruelly with our ancestors, not only by making their lives bitter with hard bondage and rigorous exactions and services, (*Exod.* i. 11, 14.) but even by ordering their helpless male infants to be exposed to the utmost danger, or to be stifled in the birth, to the end that none of them might be preserved alive, to keep up a succession in after-ages, (*Exod.* i. 15, 16.); he therein acting against our infant nation, as ye have done against *Jesus*, and the infant-state of his church, by your endeavours to suppress them, though all in this case, as it was in that, will prove to be in vain.

20 But, to go on to another part of the charge against me, for having spoken against *Moses* and the law, (*chap.* vi. 11, 13, 14.) As to *Moses*, I adore the infinitely wise, holy, and over-ruling providence of God, in raising up that great deliverer to *Israel*, who was an eminent type of *Jesus*, our still more glorious Saviour; and of *Moses*, I with pleasure observe, that it was in the forementioned perilous days of our father's oppression in *Egypt*, that he was born, who was indeed an exceeding beautiful child, amiable in the sight of God, (*αρεστος τω θεω*) as well as comely in the eyes of men; and as God had designed him for eminent services, he was wonderfully preserved, his parents having concealed, and brought him up for three months in their own house,

not

N O T E.

* *Josephus* tells us, that when the *Israelites* increased in number, riches, and strength, and when the kingdom was transferred to another family, the *Egyptians* treated the *Israelites* inhumanly, and contrived to oppress them with various fatiguing labours, such as cutting dikes, casting up banks, building walls round about their cities, and building pyramids, *Antiq.* lib. ii. cap. 9.

See *1.* And we are told, that the king, which knew not *Joseph*, was a foreigner, who with a numerous army, some say of *Abyssinians*, others of *Phenicians*, others of *Arabs*, and others of the *Libyans*, whom the children of *Isaac* drove out of their land, (*Deut.* ii. 12, 13.) invaded and conquered *Egypt*, and called themselves *pastors* or *shepherds*. See *Blackford's* *2d* vol. ii. p. 206, — 210.

not fearing the commandment of the king. (*Exod. ii. 2.* and *Heb. xi. 23.*)

21 And, when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son.

21 And when they began to think that it might be dangerous to keep him any longer at home, and his mother thereupon committing him to divine protection, exposed him in a basket of bulrushes, reeds, or wicker, on the bank of the river Nile; Pharaoh's daughter, by a special kind providence, came that way, and seeing the pretty babe, her compassion was moved towards him; and she took care of him, and put him, though unknowingly, to his own mother to nurse; and provided for him, as if he had been her own son. (*Exod. ii. 5,—10.*)

22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

22 And as Moses grew up, she gave him all the advantages of a polite education; so that he was well versed in all the learning of the Egyptians*, who were some of the most famous people of that age, for astronomy and other parts of literature: And he was so great a genius, and so endued with the Spirit of God, that though he humbly owned, that he had not a fluency of expression, (*Exod. iv. 10.*) yet he all along was remarkably eminent for a judicious, close, and nervous way of speaking, and for managing all affairs with prudence, and courage, and great success, that came before him, whether human or divine; and when he was called to be a prophet and law-giver, such was the extraordinary inspiration and influence which he had from God, and such his immediate converse with him, that his laws and administration were divinely wise and authoritative, and were confirmed by abundance of undoubted miracles: So that I esteem Moses to have been the most eminent figure of Christ that ever was, in the danger that attended his infancy, in the special care that God took of him in his excellent qualifications, in the divine authority of his office and laws, in his miraculous way of confirming them, and in the intimacy of his acquaintance with God.

23 And, when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel.

23 As an introduction to what providence had further designed him for, when he arrived to the full age of forty years†, and was at the highest pitch of grandeur in Pharaoh's court, his own affection, and a divine impulse, inclined his heart to go and acquaint himself with the persons and hardships of the children of Israel, his kinsmen,

N O T E S.

† That the Egyptians were in a great repute for human knowledge, in after-ages, appears from the high encomium given of Solomon's wisdom, that it excelled all the wisdom of Egypt, 1 Kings iv. 30.

* Moses, is spoken of by Jewish writers, as adopted by Ithraëlis, Pharaoh's daugh-

ter, for her son, as a man of great eminence among the Egyptians, as general of their armies, and as designed by Pharaoh himself for their king. See Bedford's *Chronol.* p. 373.—375, and Shuchford's *Hist.* vol. II. p. 330.

kinsmen, according to the flesh, and heirs, together with him, of God's promise to *Abraham* and his seed; and to try what might be done for their relief.

24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian:

24 And as a specimen of the authority which God had begun to give, and would more evidently and fully confer upon him; he observing one of them (*ἀδικούμενον*) to be unrighteously and barbarously abused, and beaten by an *Egyptian*, was so moved with compassion and holy indignation, as to interpose for his assistance and rescue: And to vindicate the life and liberty of his innocent and oppressed brother, and do him justice against his cruel adversary, he gave the *Egyptian* a mortal wound, (*Exod. ii. 11, 12.*) without the least apprehension of any *Israelite's* being offended at it.

25 For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.

25 For knowing in himself, that he had a divine suggestion for what he had done, and supposing that they must needs know something of the extraordinary providences, which had appeared for his preservation and advancement, of the reputation he had obtained for wisdom and conduct, and of the time's drawing nigh, at which God had promised to judge the nation that oppressed them, (*ver. 6, 7.*) he reasonably thought, that by performing this public and heroic act of kindness to them, and justice against their oppressors, they, who were his own countrymen and brethren in the faith, would have been led to conclude, that God intended to make use of him, as a means and instrument of delivering them out of their grievous bondage: But so great was their stupidity, that they did not take these plain hints, or understand or reflect upon their meaning.

26 And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?

26 And that he might act the part of a judge, as well as of a deliverer, and thereby give them an earnest of what might be further expected from him, he on the following day appeared among them again, and going up to two of them, that were quarrelling and fighting, (*μαχόμενός*) one with another, he attempted to put an end to the fray, and make peace between them, saying, with an air of authority, affection, and respect, Sirs, do ye not consider that ye are kindred by birth and religion, who should love as brethren, and, being surrounded with malicious and potent enemies, should be the more united among yourselves? Why then do ye act so much out of character, and so contrary to your own interest, safety, and comfort, as to fall out with, and injure and beat one another? (*Exod. ii. 13.*) Pray let me neither see, nor hear any more of such uncharitable and mischievous contentions and outrages among you.

27 But he that did

27 But he that had been most to blame in the skirmish

did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?

28 Wilt thou kill me as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?

29 Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons.

30 And, when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sinai an angel of the Lord, in a flame of fire, in a bush.

31 When Moses saw it he wondered at the sight: and, as he drew near to behold it, the voice of the Lord

spoke with his neighbour, being impatient of reproof, turned short upon this kind and impartial peace-maker, and rejecting his motion with indignation, reproaches, and scorn, said to him with a taunt, Pray who are you, that you take so much upon you? What business have you to trouble yourself with us, and to assume the authority of a governor over us, or of a judge in our cause?

28 What! have you a mind to murder me at your own arbitrary will and pleasure, just as you did the poor Egyptian, no longer ago than yesterday? (*Exod. ii. 14.*) He therein acting with the same malignant spirit against our famous deliverer and law-giver, as the *scribes* and *Pharisees* have against Jesus, the Saviour and the Prince of peace, and his followers.

29 Then Moses being alarmed and frightened, through the present weakness of his faith, at this clamorous speech, and finding that his killing the Egyptian was known, and had reached Pharaoh's ears, who thereupon resolved to put him to death, (*Exod. ii. 14, 15.*) he immediately hastened out of Egypt into the land of Midian, where he married Zipporah, the daughter of Jethro, who was also called Reuel, and was a great man, no less than the priest or prince of that country; and there Moses sojourned as a stranger, till he had two sons viz. Gershom and Eliezer, by his wife. *Ex. ii. 16,—22. and iii. 1. and xviii. 2, 3, 4.*)

30 But when he had spent forty years in retirement to these parts, the set time was come for God to put the highest honour upon him, though he was then in a strange land: For as he was one day looking after his father-in-law Jethro's flock, on the backside of the wilderness of Sinai, near the mount which bore that name, and was likewise called mount Horeb, (*Exod. iii. 1.*) the angel or messenger of the covenant, (*Mal. iii. 1.* see the note on *ver. 38.*) who was expressly styled the Lord, and said of himself, I am the God of your fathers. (*ver. 31, 32.*) and was no other than Jesus the Son of God; this increased angel appeared to him in a cloud of glory, like a flame of fire, which was a token of the divine presence, and of its majesty, power, and purity, and was seen in the midst of a certain bush without consuming it, as an emblem of the preservation of the church, while God is present with it, though it then was, as it now is, in the midst of fiery trials.

31 Upon Moses's seeing this, he wondered greatly in himself at such an extraordinary and unaccountable appearance; and as he was advancing towards it, to take a more curious and critical survey, the voice of the Lord,

Lord came unto him,

32 Saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and art I the God of Jacob. Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold.

33 Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.

34 I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt.

Lord, who then so visibly dwelt in the bush, directed itself to him,

32 Saying, I, who make this luminous representation of my glory, am the true Jehovah, the God that made my covenant with your fathers, and have taken them and their seed into special relation to myself; I am still the same as I was, the God of *Abraham*, with whom I first made my covenant, and confirmed it with an oath, (*Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18.*) and the God of *Isaac*, to whom I renewed it, (*chap. xxvi. 2, 3, 4.*) and the God of *Jacob*, with whom I established it, (*chap. xxviii. 13, 14, 15.*) and began, in a remarkable manner to fulfil it, by making him the father of the twelve heads of all the tribes of *Israel*, that are to inherit the land of *Canaan*; and I am now thy God to be with thee, and perform my promises by thee: At the hearing of this, *Moses*, though so great, so good, and holy a man, was struck with such an awful sense of the immediate presence of the Divine Majesty, that he veiled his face, and was afraid any longer to look at this illustrious representation of it. (*Exod. iii. 6.*)

33 Then the Lord said to him, Take your shoes from off your feet, in token of holy caution and circumspection, profound reverence and humility, in your approaches to me; of all submission to my authority, and readiness to do my will; and of cleansing and departure from all the defilements of your walk and conversation: For, by means of my visible and immediate presence here, the place where you now stand is, for the time being, relatively holy ground, (*Exod. iii. 5.*) tho' it be not within the confines of the promised land, to which I am now about to bring my people *Israel* by thine hand.

34 I have certainly, carefully, and compassionately observed the various distresses that my own covenant-people have suffered under *Egyptian* slavery; and mine ears have been open to all their mournful complaints and earnest prayers; and I am now come, in manifestations of my wisdom, power, goodness, and faithfulness, according to my appointed and promised time, to set them at liberty from their sore bondage. And as you have formerly shewn your concern for them, and been ready to take their part against their oppressors, (*ver. 24.*) Come now, and enter with all cheerfulness and authority from me, on the important work for which I design you; I'll send you now, without delay, into *Egypt*, and will be with you, to make you the great instrument of their deliverance, (*Exod. iii. 9, 10.*)

35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hands of the angel which appeared to him in the bush.

36 He brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

37 This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

35 So different were God's thoughts from theirs, that this famous *Moses*, whom they rejected with scorn, saying, *Who made thee a ruler and a judge?* when he was acting a most righteous and friendly part toward them, (*ver. 26, 27.*) This very man did God, in the greatness of his mercy, thus remarkably authorize, assist, and own, to make him their conductor, governor, and deliverer, by the immediate commission, and the attending guidance, power, and protection of the Angel of the covenant, who appeared to him as a divine person in the flaming bush, (*ver. 30, 31, 32.*) And just in this manner has God raised up his Son Jesus to be a spiritual Saviour to you of this age, to guide and govern you, and to bring in a more valuable deliverance from sin and wrath, though ye have treated him with contempt, and rejected his authority as the great prophet and king of the church.

36 *Moses* accordingly went with all cheerfulness to save our fathers, notwithstanding the former abuses he had met with from them; and, under the supernatural influence of this angel, brought them out of the house of bondage, after he had done a great many miracles, which were signs of his divine mission, in the land of *Egypt*; and he further-more wrought wonderful works in dividing the Red sea to compleat their deliverance, and in the destruction of *Pharaoh*, and all his host; and continued to perform many other miraculous deeds for forty years afterwards in the wilderness, to settle their church-state, and to shew that God was still with him. So great a man was he, so highly honoured of God, and so glorious an instrument in his hand, that his memory ought to be dear and sacred amongst us: But yet, according to his own acknowledgment, he is not to be equalled to Jesus the Son of God, who then appeared to him as coming down, under the character of the Angel of the Lord, to deliver his people from *Egyptian* bondage, and thereby prefigured his coming to dwell in flesh without consuming it, that he might save *Israel* from all their iniquities.

37 This *Moses* himself is he that delivered a memorable prediction of the Messiah, (see the paraphrase and note on *chap. iii. 22.*) saying to the children of *Israel*, The Lord, your covenant-God, will hereafter raise up to your nation, from the loins of your posterity, another eminent prophet, as he has me, (*sc. us*) who have the honour of being a signal type of his superior wisdom and authority, office and efficacy, as a Prince and Saviour, and the high favourite and privy councillor

of heaven: I turn you over to him, charging you, in the name of God, to listen to, and obey the voice of his word, whatsoever alterations he may see fit to make in my laws. *This shews that we are not to rest in Moses's laws, nor to imagine, that its ceremonial rites and customs are never to be changed; but that we really honour and obey this great lawgiver himself, by submitting to Christ's authority in setting them aside, and introducing a more spiritual dispensation.*

38 This is he that was, in the desert in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers; who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

38 This *Moses* furthermore is he, who was, as a prophet and ruler, captain and leader, in the *Israelitish* church, during its abode in the wilderness; and was with the Angel of the covenant, even the Son of God*, their *Jehovah*, (*Exod.* xix. 2, 9, 10, &c. and xx. 2.) who spake to him, and by him to our fathers at mount *Sinai*, in a familiar manner, face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend: (*Exod.* xxxiii. 11. and *Deut.* v. 2, 3, 4.) And he had the honour of receiving and communicating to them, to be handed down to us of this age, the authoritative and infallible doctrines, commands, and promises, which were given him immediately by the living God, to direct them in the way of life†, and which, being animated by his Spirit, were the means of conveying spiritual life to them.

39 To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt,

39 But though he was so great a man in his office and endowments, (*ver.* 36.) and had such plain tokens of God's being with him, yet our forefathers dealt with him in the like ungrateful and disobedient manner as ye have with the Messiah himself: So perverse were they, that they would not submit to his authority, but rejected him and his government with indignation and contempt; and their foolish and wicked hearts were inclined to return back to *Egypt*, and even to its idolatry and their former hardships there, rather than, under his conduct, to feed on manna in the wilderness, and go forward in the good ways of God to a land that flowed with milk and honey.

40 Accord-

N O T E S.

* He who spake to *Moses* at mount *Sinai*, expressly called himself, and is styled *Jehovah*; a name which cannot, without the highest preinspiration, be assumed by, or applied to, any created angel, on account of his personating God, since he whose name alone is *Jehovah*, is the most high over all the earth, (*Psal.* lxxxiii. 18.) And therefore it seems to me, that it was the Son of God, who delivered the law to *Moses* under the character of *Jehovah*, and is here spoken of as the Angel of the covenant, relative to his

mediatorial office. See the note on *John* v. 37.

† Though the law itself could not give life, as the apostle tells us, (*Gal.* iii. 12.) yet as the ceremonial law pointed to Christ, it was a means of life to *Israel*, and became effectual, under the light and influence of the Spirit of God, for their obtaining it through faith in the Messiah who was to come: And *Israel's* obedience to the Law was the means of their enjoying a happy life in *Canaan*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 47.

40 Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

41 And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.

42 Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts, and sacrifices, by the space of forty years in the wilderness?

43 Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

40 Accordingly, toward the close of the forty days of *Moses's* being, a second time, in the mount with God, (*Exod.* xxiv. 18. and xxxii. 1.) they, in a discontented, mutinous, and rebellious manner, said to *Aaron*, Make us a representation of God, like those that the *Egyptians* have of theirs, that we may have some visible sign of his presence to march before us, and conduct us to the promised land: For as to this man *Moses*, of whom we have had too high thoughts, and whom we followed out of *Egypt*, we cannot imagine what is become of him, nor do we expect ever to see him, or have his guidance more.

41 And as the *Egyptians* represented their God *Apis* by the image of an ox or calf: so our fathers, in those days of their stupidity and unbelief, prevailed with *Aaron*, by their furious clamours, which threw him into an unguarded confusion and surprize, to make one in the likeness of a calf, as a symbol of the divine presence; and immediately thereupon, in direct contradiction to the second commandment against image-worship, which they had so lately received, in the most tremendous manner from mount *Sinai*, (*Exod.* xx. 4, 5, 23.) they, thro' the strong propension which they had contracted to idolatry in *Egypt*, offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings, in a way of religious worship, to this idol of their own setting up; and expressed their joy in sealling, shouting, and dancing before it, (*Exod.* xxxii. 6, 17, 18, 19.) as if it had been really a God, which they themselves had so newly made, by their own artificers hands.

42, 43 Then God was so highly incensed, that he changed the method of his dealings with them; and, withdrawing the restraints of his Spirit and grace, gave them up in his righteous judgment, as a just punishment of their sin, to the wilful sottish corruptions of their own hearts, (*Psaln* lxxxi. 12.) so that they proceeded still further to acts of the grossest idolatry, in direct contradiction to the first commandment, (*Exod.* xi. 2.) by worshipping the luminaries of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars, (*Deut.* xvii. 3.) the very idol-gods that the *Egyptians* adored, as the Lord complained by one of the ancient prophets, saying, (*Amos* v. 25, 26, 27.) O ye *Israelites*, were all your national offerings of slain beasts and other sacrifices only to me? or shall I accept your services, wherein ye falsely pretended to honour me, during your journeyings forty years in the wilderness? Ye did not these things to me: Nay, so far were ye from glorifying me as God, that ye fell into heathen idolatry, and took upon your shoulders, and carried a-

bout with you, one little tabernacle, repository, or shrine, in which was inclosed the image of *Moloch*, the idol of the children of *Ammon*, (1 Kings xi. 7.)*. And, in another shrine, ye carried with you the figure of a *star*, representing your idol *Remphan*; and paid your religious adorations to these false gods, by the images which ye yourselves had made: And as ye are not yet clear of this abominable idolatry, I will certainly punish your iniquity by delivering you up into the hands of your enemies, who will carry you away from your own country into a strange and idolatrous land, even into *Affyria*, (2 Kings xvii. 5,—8.) which lies beyond *Damascus* and *Babylon*. Thus God righteously dealt with them for corrupting his worship, and despising his law: And shall be not deal as severely with you, the children of these your provoking ancestors, for the contempt ye have put upon his Christ, and for rejecting the counsel of God against yourselves in this new dispensation of grace, in which he, with divine authority, has made such alterations in worship as seemed best in his sight?

44 Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the vision that he had seen.

44 As to the remaining part of the charge brought against me, relating to the destruction of the temple, (chap. vi. 14.) be pleased to consider, that though our forefathers acceptably worshipped God for many ages before, as has been already suggested, (ver. 2,—16.) yet it was not till they came into the wilderness, which lay without the confines of *Judea*, that they were favoured with his holy tabernacle, in which were contained the ark with the two tables of the law, as a witness between God and them, and in which he gave other signal testimonies of his special presence and favour, and bore witness, in a figurative way, of good things that were to come, (*Heb.* ix. 9. and x. 1.) such as God's personally dwelling in flesh by the incarnation of Christ, (*John* i. 14.) and his spiritual and gracious residence in the

N O T E.

* As the sun and moon were worshipped by the eastern nations under the character of the king and queen of heaven, and were the *Osiris* and *Apis* of the Egyptians; the first of which they represented by a golden bull, and the second by a living ox; the learned generally agree, that by *Moloch* was meant the sun, which was at other times called *Baal*, *Bel*, and *Belus*; and, in the opinion of some, the star *Remphan*, which was also called *Cham*, and, by the seventy, *Rephan*, or *Remphan*, (*Amos* v. 26.) signified the moon; but others think it rather signified *Saturn*. The curious reader may meet with large collections of the sense of the antients about these idols in *Crotius*, *Bechart*, *Huet*, *Leclercq*, *Lightfoot*, and *Wetstein*. But Mr *Steu-*

ford has, with great probability, shewn, that the Egyptians at first worshipped these gods only as mediators, in whose names they worshipped the true God; and that the dispute between *Abraham* and their priests lay in this, Whether God should be worshipped in the names of these mediators, or in the name of that *Jehovah*, who appeared to him under this title, which was known to be the name of the supreme God in all nations, in early times; and that, accordingly, Calling upon the name of the Lord, should be rendered, Invoking in the name of the Lord, (*Gen.* xii. 7, 8. and xxvi. 24, 25.) See his *Comment. of sac. and prof. hist.* vol. ii. p. 132,—135. and 378—379.

the gospel-church, as his *temple*, (2 Cor. vi. 16.) And, with a view to heavenly things, (Heb. viii. 5.) that tabernacle was framed according to God's own appointment, who gave a strict charge to *Moses*, saying, *See that thou make all things after their pattern, or model, which was shewed thee in the mount.* (Exod. xxv. 40.)

45 Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David;

45 And afterwards, in the following generation, under the conduct of *Josua*, whose name in *Greek* is *Jesus*, and who, in fighting *Israel's* battles, and leading them to the promised land, and introducing the tabernacle among the *Gentiles*, was a type of *Jesus Christ*, the great and gospel-Saviour; our fathers brought that holy tabernacle into the land of *Canaan*, which was then, and had been for many ages, possessed by the idolatrous heathens, whom God devoted to destruction, and expelled before our ancestors: And this place of their solemn worship, and of God's peculiar residence and manifestation of himself, continued among them, without any hint or notion of a fixed temple, for above four hundred years, till the time of king *David*;

46 Who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.

46 Who was highly in favour with God, as a man after his own heart, in the main of his character, (chap. xiii. 22.) and was very desirous to shew his zeal for the honour of God, by building a magnificent temple, as a fixed habitation for the mighty God of Jacob*, in which all the worship of the tabernacle might be performed to him. (Psalm cxxii. 4, 5.)

47 But Solomon built him an house.

47 But tho' God graciously accepted this pious intention of his heart; yet, to shew that he was not in haste for such a house, and laid no stress upon it, as necessary to his service, he would not permit *David* to do any thing more towards it, than preparing materials for it, (1 Chron. xxix. 1, &c.) merely because he had spent most of his time in war; and so God deferred the building of that stately edifice to the more peaceful and settled days of king *Solomon* his son, (2 Sam. vii. 5,—13.) who began to erect it in the fourth year of his reign, four hundred and eighty years after the children of *Israel* came out of *Egypt*, (1 Kings vi. 1.) And so it evidently appears by all this, that the special presence and blessing of God may be enjoyed, and he may be acceptably worshipped, wherever he pleases; that if *Solomon* might change the moveable tabernacle into a fixed temple by God's appointment, he himself may make the church his spiritual temple, instead of continuing to dwell in one

NOTE.

* The temple seems to be here called a tabernacle, because it came in the room of the tabernacle; had the same sacred furni-

ture and emblems of the Divine Presence, served the same religious purposes, and had all tabernacle-service performed in it.

of earthly materials; and that if he refused David's building a house for him, because he had shed so much blood in war, it is much more to be expected that he should take it away from you, who have murdered the Messiah, David's son, whom he owned to be also his Lord. (*Psaln cx. 1.*)

48 Howbeit, the most high dwelling not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet,

48 And though the tabernacle first, and afterwards the temple, was built by God's own appointment, it must nevertheless be allowed, that the presence and favour of the great and glorious God, who is exalted, in his own nature and perfections, above all blessing and praise, are not to be confined to any material temple made with hands, as Solomon himself confessed, saying, with adoring wonder, (*1 Kings viii. 27.*) *Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?* and, as one of the ancient prophets has declared, with a view to God's dwelling in humble souls, and even among the Gentiles in New Testament-times, and his rejecting the oblations that were offered by wicked men, even at his own house, (*Isa. lxvi. 2,—13.*) saying, (*ver. 1, 2.*)

49 Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest?

49 Thus saith the Lord, Heaven is the throne of my majesty and dominion, where I have a most complacent rest in the brightest displays of my glory; and the earth is my footstool, where I am essentially present, and in lower degrees manifest my wisdom and power, goodness and government; and in all the parts of which I demand that its inhabitants worship me with the most profound humility and reverence: How then can I need, or be profited by, or confined to, any house that ye shall build for me? or where can any place be found that shall restrain my favour and delight, or the homage that is to be paid to me?

50 Hath not my hand made all these things?

50 For as I was infinitely blessed and glorious in myself, before the heavens, or the earth, or any thing in them, was formed; so am not I the Creator of all these things, and intimately present in the whole world, as my temple to receive solemn adorations, and to exert and manifest my free favour and almighty power, wherever, and in whatsoever manner seems good in my sight? It is therefore no dishonour to God, or disparagement to the temple, to say, that the time is at hand in which offerings shall be no longer made acceptable by being presented there; but that he will have a gracious regard to all that worship him in spirit and truth, wherever they be, (*John iv. 21, 23, 24.*) and that the Gentiles shall see the glory of the Lord, (*Isa. xxxv. 2.*)

and all the ends of the earth shall fear him, (*Psalms*, lxxvii. 7.)

51 Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

51 Many other thoughts might be added in vindication of any thing I have said, had ye patience to hear them; but, to bring all home to your own consciences, ye are a most perversely obstinate, hardened, and unyielding generation; who, through your desperate pride and prejudices, will not bow to the sceptre of divine authority and grace; and how much soever ye glory in the circumcision of your flesh, ye will not devote yourselves to God, or stand to your engagements to be his; but are under the dominion of such irregular, strong passions, as corrupt your hearts, and make you turn a deaf ear to the voice of God in his word and providence: Yea, ye fight against the conviction of your own consciences, and the evidence of miracles, and of the fulfilment of the plainest prophecies of the Messiah, which were wrote by the Holy Spirit, whom ye also oppose and reject, as speaking in, and by us, the inspired servants of Christ: Ye tread exactly in the steps of the wickedest of your forefathers, and are as stubborn and rebellious as any of them; nay, ye go beyond the very worst of them.

52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

52 Which of the former prophets of the Lord have not some of your ancestors, and your predecessors in power and authority, violently persecuted? They have gone so far, as to put them to death, that foretold the coming of the great Messiah, who, on account of the purity of his divine nature, and of his spotless conception, holy life, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness, in his human nature, may be styled, by way of eminence, *the just one*: And ye have so far exceeded them in guilt, that, when this Divine Person himself appeared among you, ye hired *Judas* to betray him, and then unjustly condemned him, and, with a traitorous intention, delivered him up to the *Roman* power, and maliciously insisted on his being crucified, tho' the sacred tabernacle and temple, and various ceremonial rites for purification, were typical of him, and ought to have been given up for him by you.

53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

53 Who have received God's holy law, which was delivered to our fathers with the most awful solemnity, (*ut diximus angelis*) amidst troops of attending angels, (*Psal* lxxviii. 17. and *Deut.* xxxiii. 2.) and by their ministration in forming the thunderings and lightnings, the sound of the trumpet, and the articulate voice at mount *Sinai*; and yet ye, like them, have neglected and disregarded this law, and the still more glorious gospel of
salvation,

salvation, which has been published to you, first by the Son of God himself, and afterwards by the Holy Ghost, with the noise of a mighty rushing wind, and by his miraculous gift of tongues, (*chap. ii. 2, 3, 4.*) How then can ye, without repentance, expect to escape God's righteous vengeance? (*Heb. ii. 2, 3.*)

54 When they
and the things,
they were cut to
his heart, and they
gnashed on him
with their teeth.

54 As Stephen was thus going on with his discourse, and applying it in so close and touching a manner to the council, they were so stung and pierced with it, that their hearts were cut through, as if they had been sawn asunder, (*διεσπαστο τὰς καρδίας αὐτῶν*) by tormenting indignation and envy, at what they could neither bear, nor refute; and, looking at him, they grinned and snarled, and gnashed their teeth, in token of their intolerable vexation, and of their bitterness and rage against him, instead of receiving an ingenuous conviction of their sin, and being melted into godly sorrow and repentance for it, as some others had been, under the influence of the Spirit. (*chap. ii. 37.*)

55 But he, be-
ing full of the Ho-
ly Ghost, looked
up stedfastly into
heaven, and saw
the glory of God,
and Jesus standing
on the right hand
of God,

55 But he, being under an immediate fresh effusion of the Holy Ghost, whereby the Spirit of glory and of God rested upon him, (*1 Pet. iv. 14.*) and knowing their desperate malignity against him looked above the terrors of men, and lifted up his eyes and heart to heaven, in a way of faith, and of appeal to God, for his vindication, support, and assistance; and with a fixedness of soul on the great realities of that blessed world, together with earnest desire and joyful hopes of going thither, he had a view of the *Shechinah*, or of an illustrious appearance of the divine glory, and of the Lord Jesus in his human nature, as exalted in all authority and dignity, majesty and dominion, in the presence of his Father, * like one standing at his right hand in a posture

N O T E.

* Christ's state of exaltation is often described in scripture by his *sitting* at the right hand of God, to denote his real dignity, and his glorious and abiding rest, after his trials and sufferings, and triumphant victory over all his enemies on earth: But I think this is the only place where it is expressed by his *standing* at God's right hand, which may be for such reasons as are suggested in the Paraphrase. God is indeed an immense invisible Spirit, in whom, literally speaking, there can be neither right nor left hand; and therefore Christ's *sitting*, or *standing* at his right hand, must be understood in a figurative sense: But as God was formerly seen on earth in the *Shechinah*, which was a true manifestation of his glory; so the glory of God the Father may probably be

displayed, in some inconceivably illustrious and visible appearance in heaven, on the right side of which, as most honourable, our Lord, in human nature, is placed. Accordingly, when Stephen saw this glory of God, he saw Jesus stand on his right hand, or side; which, in other representations, is called his *sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on high*, and on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, (*Heb. i. 3. and viii. 1.*) And some have thought, that, the heavens being opened, Stephen's sight was so miraculously strengthened, as to see the divine glory, and the man Jesus, in the third heavens, with his bodily eyes: But others suppose, that he had only a visionary representation of these things, like those which the prophets *Isaiah* and *Ezekiel* had, (*Isa. vi.*

posture ready to plead his righteous cause, to execute judgment on his enemies, to support his suffering servant, and to crown his martyrdom with immortal honour, by receiving him to glory.

56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

56 And Stephen, in holy ecstasy, and with a noble intrepidity, declared it to them all, saying, Observe and wonder, I, at this very time clearly see an opening thro' the clouds into the third heaven; and there I behold Jesus, the Messiah himself, in human form, of illustrious beauty and grandeur, standing, as the great Lord and Judge of all, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, like one ready to exert his authority, to your confusion, and my joy.

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,

57 Hereupon, taking it for granted without a cause, that he had now spoke blasphemy, and so confirmed their charge upon him, (*chap. vi. 11.*) they bitterly exclaimed against him in a noisy manner, to run him down and drown his voice, and stopped their ears with their fingers, as if they were shocked at his words, and could not bear to hear them; and the whole multitude, being by these means stirred up into a fury, violently rushed upon him with one consent.

58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

58 And as criminals were formerly ordered to be put to death without the camp, (*Lev. xxiv. 14, 23.*) and afterwards without the city, (*1 Kings xxi. 13.*) so they thrust him out of Jerusalem, as if he were an accursed wretch; and then, under pretence of executing the law against blasphemers, (*Lev. xxiv. 16.*) they stoned him, till he died, (see the note on *John xviii. 31.*); and as the witnesses were to begin the execution, (*Deut. xvii. 6, 7.*) so the persons that had deposed, as evidences against him, threw off their upper garments, that they might be the fitter for their laborious and tragical work, and committed them to the custody of a young man * named

Saul;

N O T E S.

1. and *Ezek. i. 1.*) and like that of the apostle John, when he saw the New Jerusalem come down from God out of heaven, (*Rev. xxi. 2.*) However, it was a divine discovery of the man Jesus, as really exalted in all his glory, after he had left this world, and was gone to the Father.

* Saul was his Hebrew name, which signifies *asked*, or *desired*; he was likewise called *Paul*, which was his Roman name, and signifies *little*; and if this was originally his Roman name, there is not much room for supposing, as some do, that it was given him with a reference to the *shortness* of his stature: However, after he became an apostle, he was chiefly known by this name, as the most acceptable to the Gentiles. He

was a native of Tarsus, the chief city of Cilicia; but was descended from Hebrew parents, of the tribe of Benjamin, and was a youth of pregnant parts, a warm Pharisee, and bigot to Judaism, and a good scholar, having been first educated in the Greek language, philosophy, and poetry, in a very polite and noted school of Tarsus, and afterwards studied divinity, according to the Jewish law, and the traditions of the elders, in a school at Jerusalem, under the famous Gamaliel as his tutor; and he continued a furious zealot against Christianity, till the Lord Jesus met him, and converted him, as he was going on a persecuting errand to Damascus, (*chap. xxi. 3, 4, 5.* and *Phil. iii. 5, 6.*) He was likewise brought up to the business

Saul; who was now a furious zealot against *Stephen* and his doctrine, but afterwards became a famous convert and apostle of Jesus Christ.

59 And they stoned *Stephen*, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

59 And all the while that they were battering *Stephen* with showers of stones, he behaved with a noble Christian fortitude and composure of spirit, invoking or calling upon the Lord Jesus in prayer, with faith in him, as a divine person, and saying, (*ΕΠΙΚΑΛΟΥΜΕΝ ΧΑΙ ΛΕΓΟΜΕΝ, ΚΥΡΙΣ ΙΗΣΟΥ*) O blessed Saviour, who art Lord of all, and for whose sake I am now suffering martyrdom, I humbly commit my departing soul to thy special care and love, begging that thou wouldst receive it into thine immediate presence in thy heavenly kingdom; and putting my trust and confidence in thee, that as soon as I am absent from the body, I shall be present with thee.

60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And, when he had said this, he fell asleep.

60 And, at length, in the midst of their cruelties and his own distress, he fell upon his knees; and in that reverent posture prayed, with great earnestness, piety, and charity, and with an audible voice, in imitation of his dying Saviour, saying, Lord, let not this great iniquity of my murderers be imputed to, and punished upon them; let them not be dealt with by thee as they are now dealing with me; but let the merit of thy blood plead for them, and bring them to saving repentance; and let them be brought to faith in thee for the remission of this, and of all their other sins. And as soon as he had poured out the desire of his heart in this charitable strain for them, which was afterwards remarkably answered in the conversion of *Saul*, (*chap. ix.*) he received his last mortal wound, and died with as much composure and satisfaction as if he had been only laying himself down to sleep in the arms of *Jesus*, who will raise his body, which rests in the grave from all its former saigues and sufferings, to a glorious immortality.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Do any call us to account concerning our faith and hope in Christ? Let the law and the testimony be our defence; they all along spoke of him, and by them we are assured that he, who, with relation to his office, bore the name of the Angel of the Lord, is in himself the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, who appeared to *Moses* in the flaming bush without consuming it, was with him in all his dangers, and wrought all the wonders of *Israel's* deliverances by his hands; and who was typified by that famous prophet, and by *Joshua*, their leader into the land of *Canaan*, and by the tabernacle and temple, and is now exalted, in our nature, to the highest dignity of his office in heaven, and is the proper object of faith and religious worship.—How true and faithful is God to his covenant;

N O T E.

business of a tent-maker; it being customary, among even the rich Jews, to breed their children, though students, to some handicraft trade, to prevent idleness and sin, and

make them capable of earning their livelihood, if, by any turn of Providence, they should have occasion for it. See *Dr Lightfoot*, vol. i. p. 295. and in *Gluc.* p. 782.

covenant : though we, alas ! are dull of understanding, and do not observe his way and time for fulfilling it ! But how sure are his performances of all his promises, in due season, to them that trust in him ; and how graciously does he accept them and their services, according to his own institution, of what nation, or in what place soever they are ! And, O how much better is it to have God dwelling in our hearts by faith, and in our religious assemblies by his Spirit, as his temple upon earth, till we get to the throne of his glory in heaven, than to imagine that his special presence is confined to any material temple ! But ah ! How prone are hypocritical professors to be more fond of rites and ceremonies, than of his law and gospel ! How sadly have many revolted from him, resisted his Spirit, persecuted his servants, and rejected him, and his salvation, to their own dreadful perdition ! But the Lord Jesus will stand by the true confessors of his name at the worst of times, will fill them with the Holy Ghost, and give them seasonable manifestations of his glory ; and when his enemies cast them out, and cruelly put them to death, he stands ready to support and comfort them, to take them into the arms of his love, and to receive them to heaven, that they may live with him for ever. And O ! with what holy liberty, zeal, and courage, will they speak for him, and suffer even to the worst of martyrdoms for his sake, when he calls them to it, and strengthens them for it ! With what humble confidence, and assuring satisfaction, may they invoke his name, and commit their departing souls to him ; and with what peace and pleasure may they die, with a forgiving spirit toward their enemies, and with joyful hope of their own souls going immediately to Jesus, and of their bodies sleeping in him, till they shall awake to everlasting life, and appear with him in glory !

C H A P. VIII.

The persecution of the church, 1,—3. Its enlargement chiefly by means of Philip's preaching the gospel at Samaria with great success, 4,—13. The apostles, Peter and John, confirm the disciples there, and severely reprove Simon Magus, 14,—25. And Philip, by order of an angel, preaches Christ to the eunuch, baptizes, and leaves him, 26,—40.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

AND Saul was persecuting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem : and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

NOW Saul, with others of his own kidney, *(concordance)* concurred in, and was highly pleased at Stephen's death, vainly imagining, that this first and vigorous execution of such a bold champion for Christianity, would strike terror into all its friends, and put a stop to its increase : And as the sanhedrim saw their authority sinking, and were exasperated to the last degree at Stephen's cutting discourse, a severe persecution was raised against the church at Jerusalem ; and all * its preachers, who were chiefly struck at, dispersed themselves through the countries of Judea and Samaria, to avoid the heat of the storm, and to preach the gospel in those

N O T E.

* They were all scattered abroad, must be taken with some limitation ; the apostles themselves continued at Jerusalem, and there being still devout Christians, who were probably converts from among the Jewish proselytes that buried Stephen, with great lamentations over him at his grave ; and there being, besides these, many other men and women, whom Saul persecuted,

parts, and who are distinguished from them that were scattered abroad, *(ver. 1,—4.)* They therefore seem to be the remainder of the hundred and twenty that were called the apostles own company, *(chap. iv. 23.)* and perhaps included several other later converts, that had received the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and went about as evangelists, to preach the gospel.

parts, according to Christ's directions, (*Mat. x. 23.* and *Acts i. 8.*) Only the apostles, by special intimations from the Spirit, kept together; and commuting themselves, amidst all danger, to the divine protection, stayed in that city, to support the persecuted interest there, to observe the openings of Providence, and to be ready to go wherever it should call them.

2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

2 In the mean time, some of Stephen's religious friends, to shew their respect to him, and their zeal for the cause of Christ, ventured, in the face of all danger, to carry off his mangled corpse, and give it a decent funeral, greatly bewailing the loss, and the barbarous execution of such an useful worthy person.

3 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and, haling men and women, committed them to prison.

3 But to return, *Saul*, who was a furious bigot to *Judaism*, and a bitter enemy to Christianity, (see the note on *chap. vii. 58.*) and was mentioned but now, (*ver. 1.*) as abetting and taking pleasure in the inhuman murder of *Stephen*, This hot-headed youth, was one of the forwardest to carry on the persecution; and, having received authority from the sanhedrim, (*chap. xxii. 5.*) he laid himself out, with all his might, to distress the church, and made dreadful waste upon it, breaking open the doors of their places of worship, and of private houses where Christians dwelt, or were harboured; and dragging away women, as well as men, without shewing the least compassion to the tender sex, and throwing them into jail, without distinction, in order to their being tried and condemned to death. (*Chap. xxii. 4.*)

4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

4 As therefore, thro' the violence of the times, there was no opportunity for public ministrations at *Jerusalem*, the preachers, that by this means were forced away from thence, and dispersed into other parts, went on severally with their work of publishing the glad tidings of the gospel, (*εὐαγγελίζουσαι*) in different places wherever they came; and so the attempts, that were made to suppress the doctrine of Christ, were over-ruled by Providence for the greater and wider propagation of it.

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

5 Among the rest, *Philip* the evangelist, who was also one of the seven deacons lately chosen, (*chap. vi. 5.* and *xxi. 8.*) went * to one of the chief cities of *Samaria*, where our Lord himself had been about three or four years before, (*John iv.*); and there he proclaimed Jesus Christ to the people, (*κηρύσσας αὐτοῖς*) as the Son of God and the true Messiah, who had been crucified, but was risen again, and exalted at the Father's right hand;

N O T E.

* This was probably *Shechem*, which the Jews, by way of reproach, called *Sycor.* (See the note on *John iv. 5.*)

hand; and shewed them the way of salvation through him.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

6 And as many of the *Samaritans* had believed in Christ, upon his own personal preaching to them, tho' he had wrought no miracles among them, (*John* iv. 39, 41. see the note there) so great multitudes of them (*οὗτοι*) now, with one consent, attended to, and received with faith and love, the gospel concerning him, which *Philip* taught them, while they not only heard him preach, but saw the miracles that he wrought to confirm his doctrine; and heard the words by which he performed them in the name of Jesus, whom he proclaimed to them; and were witnesses of the confessions that were thereupon made of the Saviour, to his glory.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

7 For evil infernal spirits, whose temper, work, and design were vile and sinful, finding themselves unable to resist the mighty power of Christ, which attended *Philip's* words, cried out with hideous rage, and thereupon instantly, though against their wills, departed from abundance of persons whom they had corporally possessed, (see the note on *Matth.* iv. 24.) And many others that had been so dreadfully seized with palsies, and had lost the use of their limbs to such a degree, as to be incurable by human art, were effectually recovered to health and strength.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

8 And such was the power of divine grace upon a multitude of souls, and such the miracles of mercy upon many bodies, that the greatest satisfaction and delight diffused through the minds and hearts of the people of that city, in their embracing the gospel.

9 But there was a certain man called Simon, which before-time in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one.

9 But there was a noted infamous man, one *Simon Magus*, who taking the opportunity of the general expectation of the Messiah in those days, and endeavouring to deface the good impressions which Christ had formerly made upon that people concerning himself, when he was personally among them, had for some time past used magical arts, and worked sham miracles, by diabolical aid, in this very city, and had thereby strangely infatuated and amused the minds of the *Samaritans*; he, at the same time, according to the custom of impostors*, boasting of himself as a very great and extraordinary man, of a divine character.

10 And

N O T E.

* Some think that *Simon* pretended himself to be the Messiah, or some great prophet and messenger from God; and it appears from *Ireæus*, *Tertullian*, *Justin Martyr*, and others of the antients, that he blasphemously gave himself out to be the chief God; yea, to be God the Father above all,

and God over all principality and power; and pretended to appear to the Jews as the Son, to the *Samaritans* as the Father, and to other nations as the Holy Ghost. See an account of these, and others of his monstrously blasphemous and abominably licentious doctrines, in *Lightfoot* and *Whitby* on the place.

10 To whom they all gave heed from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God.

11 And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries.

12 But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women.

13 Then Simon himself believed also: and, when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered,

10 And such a delusive influence had his magical pranks upon this people, that high and low, young and old among them, generally paid him a great deal of reverence and regard, and cried him up for a wonderful person, saying, He is surely endued with the almighty power of the great God himself.

11 And they gave great attention to him, and to all that he said; because for a considerable time he had enchanted and confounded their minds, through his artful management, in the way of witchcraft *, by unaccountable charms.

12 But when the very persons that had been so egregiously imposed upon by *Simon*, and led captive by the devil at his will, were by a divine influence convinced of, and brought to receive by faith the joyful tidings of salvation which *Philip* preached, relating to the spiritual blessings, privileges, and obligations of the gospel-state, which should issue in heavenly glory, and to Jesus Christ, as the only Saviour, Lord, and King of the church, by whose power alone all these miracles were wrought; they then deserted the impostor, and cheerfully came under the initiating seal of God's covenant, which in this new dispensation of grace, was equally applicable to male and female, they being all one in Christ Jesus, and become Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise, (*Gal. iii. 27, 28, 29.*) And so both men and women, who were now delivered from the power of Satan, and translated into Christ's kingdom, (*Col. i. 13.*) were baptized in his name in testimony of their devotedness, subjection, and adherence to him; and, in that way, became professed and acknowledged members of the Christian church.

13 Then *Simon* himself also seeing the miracles that were vastly superior to all he had pretended to, and observing that thereupon the people went over so entirely from him to Christ, was brought to a conviction in his own mind, that *Philip's* doctrine must needs be true: And he making an open profession of faith therein, ran with the crowd, and was baptized; after which, with all appearances of a sincere convert, he kept company with *Philip*, and attended on his ministry: And as he

was

N O T E.

* How fabulous & ever stories of witchcraft may have been in later ages, it seems as if, by divine permission, for the more evident distinguishing of true miracles from other appearances, there were really a diabolical power exerted by *Simon Magus*, in working his pretended miracles, like that of the magicians in Egypt: But this was as

much outdone by the true miracles of *Philip*, as that was by those of *Moses*; and we may be sure that God will always overcome, whenever the contest lies between him and the devil, and will give indisputable proofs of superior power in the miracles of which he is the author, beyond all that can be done by any mere creature in opposition to him.

dered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

was daily an eye-witness of still further wonderful works of divine power and goodness, which were so many undeniable attestations to the truth of the gospel, (see the note on *chap. ii. 22.*) he was filled with as much astonishment at them as the people had been before at his own forgeries.

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

14 Now, after some time, when the apostles, who still continued together at *Jerusalem*, (*ver. 1.*) came to hear the good news that many of the *Samaritans* had embraced the gospel as the word of God, they agreed to send two of their number to them; and particularly fixed on *Peter* and *John* for that purpose, that they might help forward the promising beginnings, by countenancing and assisting *Philip* in their preaching: by confirming the disciples, and conferring spiritual gifts upon them, which none but apostles were capable of doing; and by settling a church in those parts, and doing every thing else, that might be further requisite for propagating the interest and kingdom of the Lord Jesus, and the good of immortal souls.

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost.

15 And as *Peter* did not claim any superiority of power over the rest of the apostles, or take upon him to send others, or to go of his own head; so, by the order of his brethren, he and *John* cheerfully went, as fellow-servants and messengers of the body; and upon their arrival at *Samaria*, they recommended the new converts to God in prayer, that, at this first plantation of the gospel among them, they might be made partakers of such extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, as Infinite Wisdom should see fit to bestow upon them, for the more evident demonstration, that the doctrine they had received was indeed the word of God; that it had effectually worked upon their hearts; and that, under this blessed dispensation of grace, they should be admitted to equal privileges and blessings with *Jewish* converts.

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

16 For hitherto the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit had not descended upon any of these *Samaritan* believers; they were only partakers of his enlightening and sanctifying influences, whereby they were brought to believe in Christ, and to be baptized in his name, by virtue of his authority, and in token of their relation and subjection to him, as their only Lord and Saviour, and of their faith in him, and engagements to be his. (See the note on *chap. ii. 38.*)

17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received

17 When these two apostles had prayed for them, they used the significant ceremony of laying their hands upon them, as an intimation that their prayers were answered, and as a signal that the gifts prayed for were

were

ceived the Holy Ghost.

18 And when Simon saw, that, though laying on of the apostles hands, the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

were then conferred; and they accordingly were*, in a visible manner, made partakers of wonderful miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost.

18 And when *Simon* the forcerer saw, that, thro' the apostles laying their hands on persons heads, such surprising gifts of the Holy Ghost were, without any more ado, freely and immediately conveyed to them; he stared like a man aghast; and thinking with himself, that there was something very pompous and divine-like in this exercise of their authority, and that, if he were but able to do the same, it would effectually answer the utmost of his covetous and ambitious views; and imagining that the apostles were as mercenary creatures as himself, he offered to tempt them with a round sum of money,

19 Saying, Give me also this power, that, on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

19 Saying, Be so good as to confer this noble power upon me, that on whomsoever I shall lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost in the same manner as these persons have, by your laying hands on them; and all this treasure shall be yours.

20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

20 But as his making this proposal was the highest affront that could be put upon the apostles, and discovered the most carnal self-seeking temper of mind, and the most unworthy notions of the nature and design of the Christian religion, and of the miracles that confirmed it†, *Peter* said to him, with indignation and disdain, O thou abandoned wretch, we will have nothing to do with your iniquitous reward; we detest it as mean earthly treasure, which will perish with yourself, whose horrible abuse of your riches will aggravate your ruin, because you was so monstrously foolish and wicked, as to imagine that the free gift of God, in bestowing the Holy Ghost, for answering spiritual and heavenly purposes, might be bought with the pelf of this world, and that to subserve your vile design of going on to delude the people more than ever.

21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter:

21 Assure yourself, that you have no claim to the least share or inheritance in the privileges and blessings of the dispensation of the Spirit, and in Christ and heavenly glory: For how specious soever your professions of faith may be, it hereby appears, with undeniable evidence, that your heart is hypocritical and perverse; and that God has all along seen it to be so, what-soever

N O T E S.

* That it was in some visible manner, at least as to its effects, is plain from *Simon's* seeing it, (ver. 18) and it was probably true, in their speaking with tongues and

prophesying, as in chap. xix. 6.

† From this sin of *Simon*, the procuring of ministerial functions, or of ecclesiastical benefits, by bribery, is called *Simony*.

for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

21 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

23 For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

24 Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.

for ever men may judge concerning you, or whatsoever you may think of yourself.

22 It is therefore your highest interest, as well as duty, to take conviction of, and to be deeply afflicted and humbled for this your abominable crime, and earnestly to beg of God to give you a just sense of it, and to deliver you from its guilt and power, if it be not the unpardonable sin, and there be any possibility, after all, that the evil imagination of your heart may be graciously forgiven you.

23 For as to your present condition before God *, I certainly know that you are in a dreadful state of sin and condemnation, which is as distasteful to God, as nauseous in its own nature, and as bitter in its fruits and effects, (*Deut. xxix. 18. and xxxii. 32.*) as gall and wormwood can be to the palate of a man; yea, that you are as thoroughly drenched in the corruption of nature, and overcome by it, as a man is by the most pernicious intoxicating liquor when he is in drink; and that you are held fast by the cords and bands of wickedness, (*Isa. lviii. 6.*) bound down to the power of sin and Satan, and bound over to the righteous judgment of God, and to everlasting destruction by his holy law, in as deplorable circumstances as the greatest slave and criminal possibly can be.

24 Then *Simon* was so far struck at this close and awful rebuke, that as *Pharaoh*, though his heart continued to be hardened, desired *Moses* and *Aaron* to pray that the sore judgments which were inflicted, as the punishment of his sin might be removed, (*Exod. viii. 8. and x. 17.*); so this stupid magician, instead of being concerned that his heart might be right in the sight of God, and that he might have repentance unto life, and find gospel-forgiveness of his sin, was so afraid of God's judgments, that he said to *Peter* and *John*, Alas! my case being so bad as ye have told me, I cannot be supposed to have any interest with God myself; and therefore I intreat that ye, whom your Lord has honoured with visible tokens of his favour, would be so good as to beg of him on my behalf, that none of the terrible wrath and vengeance may be executed upon me, which, from what ye have said, I have reason to apprehend myself exposed to.

25 And

N O T E.

* It does not seem necessary to suppose that the apostle spoke this by an extraordinary discerning of spirits, which was sometimes exercised on special occasions, as a miraculous gift of the Holy Ghost; since a common judgment of discretion might be

sufficient to determine his thoughts in so plain a case, according to our Lord's own rule, about judging of pretenders to religion, *By their fruits ye shall know them.* (*Matth. vii. 16, 20.*)

15 And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

16 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, Lying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

17 And he arose and went. And, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and

25 And after these things passed between the two apostles and this sorcerer, when they had sufficiently established the testimony of *Philip*, by preaching the same gospel with him, and miraculously confirming it with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, as they themselves had received it of Christ, and so had settled a church in those parts; they, not being yet to disperse into various places, returned to their brethren, the other ten apostles, at *Jerusalem*; and, in their way, took all opportunities of publishing the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ, in many towns and villages of the *Samaritans*.

26 *Philip* also having finished his present work of preaching the gospel at the chief city of *Samaria*, beforementioned, (*ver. 5.*) one of the holy angels, who are Christ's servants, was dispatched with an immediate message from heaven; and, appearing to the evangelist, said, Get ready out of hand, and depart with all speed from hence into the solitary road which lies towards the south, and leads from *Jerusalem* to the city called *Gaza*, in the tribe of *Judab*, through the wilderness of *Judea*.

27 And though one would have thought that little work was like to be done in such a desert place; yet *Philip* immediately obeyed the divine order; got up, and went to the aforesaid place: And at his arrival thither, behold a signal opportunity offered for making Christ known to a man of quality, though not many mighty, nor noble are called, (*1 Cor. i. 26.*) and for transmitting the gospel, even as far as *Ethiopia* in *Africa*, according to the antient prophecy, (*Psal. lxxviii. 31.*) *Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.* There was a great man of that country, a chief officer, of eminent station and dignity, power and influence, under *Candace**, the then queen of *Ethiopia*; he was her high-treasurer, and being a proselyte of righteousness † to the

N O T E S.

Jewish

* *Candace* was a common name for the queens of *Ethiopia*, as *Pharaoh* was for the kings of *Egypt*, and *Cesar* for the emperors of *Rome*; and the chief officers were called *eunuchs*, though not always literally so, because such used to be chief ministers in the courts of the eastern nations: Hence the *Seventy* call *Putiphar*, τρυφωτοφάρω, an eunuch of *Pharaoh*. *Jerom* and *Eusebius* report, (*vid. Eccles. hist. lib. vi. cap. 1.*) that this eunuch became a preacher of Christ in *Ethiopia*.

† It appears that the eunuch was a proselyte of righteousness, because he had been at *Jerusalem*, to worship at one of the *Jewish* solemn festivals, and was reading in the prophets, which were not so much regarded

by the proselytes of the gate: and principally, because *Cornelius* and his family, who seem to have been proselytes of the gate, were, long after this, the first converts from among the *Gentiles*, (*chap. xv. 14.* and see the note on *chap. x. 1.*) which greatly alarmed and offended the believing *Jews*. The proselytes of righteousness were those that descended from *Gentile* parents, but were circumcised, and submitted to the whole law of *Moses*, and so were looked upon as *Jews*, there being one law to both, (*Exod. xii. 48, 49.*) But the proselytes of the gate, which were called strangers within the gates of *Israel*, (*Exod. xx. 10.*) were uncircumcised *Gentiles*, who, nevertheless were distinguished from the idolatrous *Gentiles*, by their worshipping

and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,

28 Was returning, and, sitting in his chariot, read *Esaïas* the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet *Esaïas*, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? and he desired Philip that he would come up, and sit with him.

32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth;

Jewish religion, had been at *Jerusalem* to pay his solemn homage to God there, according to the appointment of the law.

28 As this nobleman was going back for *Ethiopia*, and reading in his chariot, he, like a man of a religious and inquisitive temper, spent his time, suitable to the sacred work he had been about, in reading some part of the prophecy of *Isaiah*.

29 And as God, in the ordinary course of his providence, directs his ministering servants where, and to whom, they shall preach the gospel; so, in this more peculiar case, he, in an extraordinary manner, by an immediate suggestion of his Spirit, said to *Philip*, Draw near to that chariot which you see passing along the road, and join company with the person who is there on his journey.

30 *Philip* accordingly made up with all speed to him, and found him reading in the prophecy of *Isaiah*, with a great deal of earnestness, and so loud, that his attendants, or any that approached the chariot, might hear him: Hereupon he, in a respectful manner, put a reasonable and important question to him, saying, Do you, Sir, understand the meaning of that famous passage which you are pronouncing with your lips?

31 The eunuch replied, Alas! I am but a novice in religion, extremely ignorant of the great things of God, and insufficient to know them of myself: How therefore can I take in the true meaning of the prophet in this place, which appears very obscure to me, unless I had some good interpreter to open it? And apprehending that this stranger, who thus accosted him, might be such an one, he courteously intreated *Philip* to come into his chariot, and explain the prophet's words to him.

32 Now the paragraph of holy scripture which he was then reading, was that in *Isaiah* liii. 7, 8. according to the version of the *Septuagint* then in use, *He was led as a sheep to the slaughter*, when it is to be offered in sacrifice, discovering a meek, inoffensive, and resigned temper, and going just as his enemies pleased, without opposition or reluctance, while they were leading him to his death; and, *as a lamb before the shearer* of its fleece is still and silent, *so he opened not his mouth*, in a way of murmuring or recrimination; but was patient:

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worshipping the true God of *Israel*, and submitting to what were called the seven precepts of *Noah*, which, we are told, were these; They (1) Forbade idolatry, (2) Commanded reverence of God's name, (3) For-

bade murder, (4) Adultery and incest, (5) Theft, (6) Commanded the exercise of justice, and (7) Forbade eating things strangled, and blood. Vid. *Jurien Hist. de Dogm. & des Cult. de l'Eglise.* part I. chap. vi.

tient under all his sufferings, and readily complied with his Father's will in submitting to them.

33 *In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away,* which * signifies, that he appeared so mean a person in his low estate of self-abasement, that his enemies unrighteously judged him fit to be sacrificed to their rage; so that he was hurried, under custody, from place to place, from one judgment-seat to another, and then to execution; in all which his right was taken away, and no justice was shewn him; but, at length, he was judicially acquitted and discharged by God his Father, from his confinement in the grave, and from the unjust judgment that men had passed upon him; yea, and from the penal sentence of the law of God, which was executed upon him, as the substitute of his people; and so he was legally taken from prison and from judgment, in token of God's own approbation of him, and of his being fully satisfied by his death as a sacrifice for sin: *And who shall declare his generation,* so as to give account of his rise and original, or of his life in heaven, or of his numerous seed on earth! And who can express the wickedness of the age in which he lived and suffered? *For his life is taken away from the earth,* as if he had been as unable to preserve it, and as criminal as the worst of other men; and, like them, were to have no further interest or concern in this world, or in any affairs below.

34 Hereupon this great minister of state said to *Philip*, I beg you would satisfy me in a main point, relating to the passage before us, which I own myself to be at a loss to determine, Of whom are we to understand that *Isaiab* here speaks? Is it concerning himself, or with relation to some other eminent prophet in his, or our, or some future age?

35 Then *Philip*, glad to lay hold on such a favourable opportunity, opened his mouth and heart freely to him; and, taking this very passage of Scripture for his text, began from thence to shew him, that this and many other prophecies were clearly and fully accomplished in Jesus, which proved him to be the true Messiah, who had been unjustly arraigned, condemned, and crucified, and behaved all along with the most exemplary innocence, patience, and resignation to God his Father's will, who had appointed him to be a sacrifice of atonement; and who

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* As commentators are much divided in their sentiments about the meaning of this verse, I have endeavoured to take in every sense, that appears to be probable and con-

sistent with the context; though it is not to be supposed that the eunuch understood it in either of them, while he was reading it.

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation: for his life is taken from the earth.

35 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.

who publicly approved, acquitted, and owned him, as one that had compleatly answered all his demands, by raising him again from the dead, and exalting him to a throne of glory in the highest heavens; where he lives and reigns with all authority, in the exercise of which he has set up a kingdom of grace, into which believers are to be visibly entered by being baptized in his name; and is forming, and gathering in, subjects to himself, by means of his gospel, under the efficacious influence of his Spirit upon earth.

36 And, as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

36 And while they were riding along, and Philip was explaining and enlarging upon this delightful theme, they came to a place where there was some water*: And the eunuch's heart being opened; by means of this discourse, to receive Christ, he said, Look, here is water, why may I be not now baptized, without delay, as I am desirous to be, to testify my acceptance of Christ, and subjection to him? What objection can there be against it?

37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

37 Philip answered, If you sincerely believe, with full consent and approbation of soul, and with a determined adherence to, and trust in the Lord Jesus, for all salvation, there can be no just objection against your being partaker of this gospel-sign and seal of the righteousness of faith. To which the eunuch replied, saying, I do in my very heart believe, that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah, whom God has anointed to his saving office, and that he is a divine person; as such I cordially receive him, and place all my dependence upon him, and am determined, by his grace, to own and abide by him.

38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water; both Philip

38 And having made this noble confession of his faith to the entire satisfaction of Philip, he ordered the chariot to stop: And thereupon, both of them, the evangelist and the treasurer, went down from thence †

to

NOTES.

* *Ti. ubiq.*, a certain water, seems to be of diminutive signification, and to intimate, that it was not water of any depth: And *Jerome, Sandys*, and other travellers, speak of it, as a certain spring or fountain, that rises at the foot of a mountain in the tribe of Judah or Benjamin, whose waters are sucked in by the same ground that produces them; and they report that this was the place where the eunuch was baptized by Philip. Vid. *Hieron. de Locis Hebr.* pag. 41. and *Sandys's travels*, lib. ii. pag. 142.

† The prepositions *into* and *out of*, here, and in the next verse, rendered *into* and *out of* the water, frequently signify *unto* and *from*,

as every one must allow who understands the Greek language; and thus they are often used in the stile of the New Testament, and particularly of *Luke*, as for example; *into* signifies *unto* in *Matth.* xv. 24. *Luke* iv. 5. and vi. 12. and ix. 28. *Acts* xiv. 21. and *Coloss.* i. 20. And *out of* signifies *from*, *Luke* xx. 4. *John* xix. 12. *Acts* xiv. 8. and xv. 21, 29. and xvii. 3, 31. and xxvii. 34. (See the note on *Matth.* iii. 6.) But supposing we here understand them to signify *into* and *out of*, Mr Henry says, Philip and the eunuch did not strip off their clothes, and go naked into the water; but going barefoot, according to the custom, they went, perhaps,

Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

39 And, when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing thro' he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.

to the water, and *Philip* performed the office of baptism, according to Christ's institution, (*Matth. xxviii. 19.*) by washing him with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

39 But (1.) as soon as they came up the rising ground from the water, the Spirit of the Lord, by whose suggestion *Philip* had joined himself to the chariot, (*ver. 29.*) caught him away in a miraculous manner; which was equivalent to his own performing a miracle in confirmation of his doctrine, and, at the same time, shewed, that he neither expected nor waited for any reward, which, probably, this rich courtier, would have offered him; so that the eunuch, who would have been glad of more of his company, lost sight of him, and never met with him again: And having been thus highly favoured of God, he pursued his journey, rejoicing greatly in his own knowledge of Christ, and interest in him, and in the opportunity he had of carrying the glad tidings of a Saviour home to his own countrymen. (See the note on *ver. 27.*)

40 And (2.) *Philip* was carried as far as *Azotus*, or *Asdod*, (*1 Sam. vi. 17.*) about thirty miles distant from the place where he was taken up; and going from thence, he preached Christ to the inhabitants of many towns and cities through which he passed, till he arrived at *Caesarea*, the metropolis of *Palestine*, where he afterwards had his usual abode. (*Chap. xxi. 8.*)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What matter of lamentation is it, that faithful and eminent servants of Christ should be cruelly put to death! But, O the adorable wisdom of God, who makes the blood of martyrs the seed of the church, and over-rules the oppressions and scatterings of his servants for the wider spread of the gospel! And when he sets in, by his Spirit, with the preaching of Christ, how cordially is the crucified and exalted Saviour embraced; and how readily owned in a solemn profession of his name, and willing devotedness of ourselves to him, without delay, according to his institution by baptism, in case we, like the *Samaritans* and the eunuch, have not been brought under the gospel-administration of the covenant before! But, alas! how melancholy is the thought, that the hearts of any should not be right with God; and that is through avarice and ambition, they should be in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, while they assent to the doctrine of Christ, make a credible profession of him, are baptized in his name, wonder at the effects of his power on others, and abide for some time with his people and servants! But as the works of God every way exceed, and confound the sorceries of the devil; so true believers shall be confirmed in their faith and hope, while vengeance lights on the heads of apostates, that are not brought to true repentance:

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haps, up to the ankles, or mid-leg, into the water, and *Philip* sprinkled water upon him, according to the prophecy, which this eunuch had probably just now read; for it was but a few verses before those that *Philip* found him upon, and was very apposite to

his case, *Isa. lil. 15.* So shall he sprinkle many nations, kings and great men shall submit to him; for that which had not before been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard, shall they consider.

ance: And, O, with what earnestness should all those, that are falling into such deplorable circumstances, beg of God to convince them of, and recover them from, the wickedness of their hearts and ways; and how should they, with sincerer desires than *Simon Magus*, bespeak the prayers of his servants, to prevent its dismal consequence, before they are past hope of finding mercy! Though some flourishing professors may prove the grossest hypocrites; this should not discourage the ministers of Christ; they should still go on to preach the gospel, as they have opportunities; and when they follow the intimations of his word, Spirit, and providence, in their work, they may comfortably hope for happy success: He, by their means, will find out his elect, and make his word plain to them who did not understand it before; so that they shall be brought to believe in the Lord Jesus with all their hearts, as the only Saviour and the Son of God, and to yield themselves up to a professed subjection to his authority; and shall go on their way rejoicing in his love, and in all opportunities of publishing his praise. How good is it to be diligent in reading the scripture, and attending to gospel-ministrations; and how surely shall they know the Lord, that follow on to know him!

C H A P. IX.

Saul going to persecute Christ's disciples at Damascus, is converted by the way, 1,—9. Is baptized by Ananias, 10,—19. Immediately preaches Christ, 20,—22. The Jews and Greeks are so provoked at this, as to seek his life; but he escapes them both, 23,—30. Peter cures Æneas of the palsy at Lydda, 31,—35. And raises Tabitha from the dead at Joppa, 36,—43.

TEXT.

AND Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest.

PARAPHRASE.

AS for Saul, who has been taken notice of more than once before, as an approver and promoter of *Stephen's* death, and as a violent persecutor of others, (*chap. vii. 58.* see the note there, and *chap. viii. 1, 3.*) all the desire of his soul, and all his language and behaviour still continued to vent the malignant enmity of his heart, like hot and poisonous breath, which was natural to him, against the disciples of Christ, in bitter menaces to terrify them, and in all manner of severities to destroy them, verily thinking himself in the right, and that he was therein doing God good service, (*chap. xxvi. 9.* and *John xvi. 2.*) though, soon after, sovereign grace made an effectual change on this chief of sinners, as we shall presently see, (*ver. 3, &c.*) that none might despair of finding mercy, through faith in the all-sufficient Saviour. (*1 Tim. i. 15, 16.*)

2 And desired of him letters to Damascus.

2 As some of the persecuted brethren, (*chap. viii. 1.*) had carried the gospel as far as *Damascus*, a famous city, and formerly the metropolis of *Syria*, (*Isa. vii. 8.*) about one hundred and fifty miles from *Jerusalem*, and had planted it without disturbance there, and as the *Jewish synagogues*, beyond, as well as within the confines of *Palestine*, owned the authority of the sanhedrim;

Damascus, to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

so this young zealot applied to the high-priest, as head of that great council; and obtained warrants, under their seal, to the synagogues of that ancient city, (*chap. xii. 5.*) to require of their rulers, that, in case he should find any professors of that way, which was eminently the way of God for acceptable worship and all salvation by Jesus Christ, but which they called heresy, (*chap. xxiv. 14.*) they should deliver them up to him, without distinction of sexes, ranks, or ages, in order to his bringing them bound, like capital criminals, under safe custody, to be tried and punished by their supreme ecclesiastical court at Jerusalem, as enemies to their religion. (See the notes on *John xviii. 31.* and *Acts vi. 12.*)

3 And as he journeyed he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven.

3 And pursuing his journey with eagerness and resolution to execute his cruel commission with the utmost rigour, he drew near to *Damascus*; and there, unexpectedly, and all on a sudden, about mid-day, (*chap. xxii. 6.*) a miraculous light, an emblem of spiritual knowledge and purity, and of the divine presence and favour, darted down from heaven in strong rays of glory, and shone all around him with a dazzling lustre, far exceeding the brightness of the meridian sun. (*Chap. xxvi. 13.*)

4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

4 Upon which he, struck with awe and surprize, immediately fell prostrate on the ground; and, together with this appearance of the glory of the Lord, he distinctly heard an articulate voice, directed to him by name, in the *Hebrew* tongue, (*chap. xxvi. 14.*) saying, with great earnestness and compassion, as to one on the brink of destruction, and insensible of his danger, *Saul, Saul, What art thou a-doing? Why are you so foolish and hardened, daring, and mad, so desperate an enemy to God and your own soul, and so ungrateful, cruel, and unjust, as to reproach, blaspheme, and dishonour me, the kindest and best of friends to mankind, and to attempt the oppression and destruction of my people and cause? What good reason can you possibly give for this? And why do you still persist in it, as tho' you had not done mischief enough already?*

5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou per-

5 *Saul* being convinced that this was the glory and the voice of one from heaven, answered with shame and reverence, and a desire of information, Lord, Who art thou, that I have been thus wickedly and injuriously acting against? And the Lord Christ replied, I am that Jesus, the only Saviour, whose name you so much abhor, and usually mention, by way of contempt, as *Jesus of Nazareth*, (*chap. xxii. 8.*) and to whom

persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

you are offering the greatest cruelty, indignity, and injustice in my members, who are so intimately one with me, that I tenderly sympathize with them, and look upon your ill usage of them for my sake, as, in effect, an abuse done personally to myself: It is sad drudgery that you are engaged in; it is as foolish and fruitless, wounding and destructive to yourself, ~~thus to oppose~~ me, and my interest in, and among my people, as it would be to kick with your naked heel against briars and thorns, spurs and spears. (*Κυρρα.*)

6 And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

6 And these words came, not only with external appearances of divine majesty, (which had ~~but~~ been all, might have had no better effect upon him than upon the rest of his companions; or than the light and voice from heaven had upon the Jews at Christ's baptism; *Matth. iii. 16, 17.* or than the soldiers being struck to the ground had upon them, when they came to apprehend him, *John xviii. 6.*; or than *Elymas* the sorcerer's being smitten with blindness had upon him, *Acts. xiii. 10, 11.*): But they came likewise with such a powerful operation of the Spirit upon his heart, that he trembled under a sense of his shocking guilt and danger, and was astonished to think how vile he had been, and what might be the consequence of his sin, and of such an awful appearance and voice to him; and cried out, with great solicitude and concern, between hope and fear, Lord, I am ready to resign to thy authority and command; I have done wickedly, and would do so no more; O, what wouldst thou now have me to do? Let me be led into a right way for knowing and performing thy will; that I may testify my repentance, may do honour to thy name, and may find mercy to the forgiveness of my sins, and to my final salvation. Then the Lord Jesus said to him, Get up, and go forthwith into *Damascus*, and there, instead of acting under your unrighteous commission from the great council at *Jerusalem*, you shall have further instructions about my will, concerning the duty that lies before you, with regard to your own soul, and your being employed in my service. (*Chap. xxvi. 16. &c.*)

7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing

7 And the company that travelled with him, to aid and assist in his intended inquisition and severities, were confounded, and struck with such reverence and horror, that they made a full stop, like men aghast, that could not tell how to speak*, and had no heart to pray, but fell

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* They stood speechless, relates to their being so struck at this visible token of the di-

vine presence, as not to be able to move forwards, any more than to speak, and so to very

ing a voice, but seeing no man.

fell down with the utmost consternation to the ground: (*chap. xvii. 14.*) For they saw the light, and heard a sound of words, as if it had been the voice of thunder *, but did not understand its meaning, (*chap. xxii. 9.*) neither did they see the appearance of any person amidst the illustrious glory.

8 And Saul rose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened he saw no man; but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

8 As soon as Christ had given the word of command, Saul rose up from the ground, and opening his eye-lids to look about him, he found his sight was so affected with the dazzling light of the divine glory, which had shone upon him, (*ver. 3.*) that he was incapable of discerning any of his fellow-travellers; his bodily eyes being now as stark blind as the eyes of his understanding had been before, amidst the glorious light of the gospel that had shone around him: But they getting up also, took him by the hand, and led him into the city of *Damascus*, he going thither like a captive to Christ, instead of leading his disciples captive to the sanhedrim.

9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

9 And there he continued blind for the space of three days together, and was under such darkness and distress of soul, in reflection upon his sin, as took off all relish for food and drink; and so he spent his time in fasting and prayer. (*ver. 11.*)

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

10 Then at the end of three days, there being an eminent disciple of Christ at *Damascus*, *Ananias* by name, who had been a devout man, according to the law, and of good report among all the Jews that dwell there, (*see the note on chap. xxii. 12.*) but was now a convert to the Christian faith; the Lord Jesus appeared, and called to him in a heavenly vision, saying, *Ananias!* And he, to testify his faith and obedience, immediately answered, behold, Lord, here am I, as thy servant, ready to receive and execute any orders that thou shalt please to give me.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire

11 The Lord Jesus replied, Get ready with the utmost dispatch, and go into the street of the city which is called *Straight*; and at the house of a certain man there, who is well known by the name of *Judas*, ask for one

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very consistent with what is said (*chap. xvii. 14.*) about their falling to the earth; or after they got up again, their surprise was so great, that they stood still for a while, like men in amaze.

* Not to hear a voice, often signifies not to understand it; and in this sense, the verb *exauis* is frequently used by the *Septuagint*, instances of which may be seen in *Dr Whitty*; and so it is used and rendered. 1 *Cor. xiv. 2.* (*ver. xxvii.*) *No man understands him:* To

reconcile therefore the verse before us with *chap. xxii. 9.* we may suppose either that Saul's companions only heard a loud confused sound, like the noise of thunder, but not a distinct articulate voice of words, as in *John xii. 29.* Or that they were *Hellenist* Jews, and so strangers to the Hebrew language, in which these words were delivered. (*chap. xvi. 14.*) And therefore though they might hear them, they did not understand their meaning.

quire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

one Saul, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia *, to whom I now send you: For, behold, I have made a wonderful change upon him; he now, like a sincere convert, is brought upon his knees, and is pouring out his soul in prayer, after a different manner than he ever did before, with deep abasement, and grief of heart for his sin, and with earnest desire to know my mind and will concerning him.

11 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

12 And, for his encouragement, he has had, in answer to his prayer, a visible appearance, as extraordinary as this which I now present to you; and has therein seen you, in the representation of a man, bearing the name of Ananias, coming in to him, and laying his hand upon him as a signal of miraculously restoring him to his sight, which for these three days past he has been deprived of.

13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

13 Then (Dr) Ananias being surprized above measure at the hearing of such an unparalleled and unlikely event, and apprehensive that going to such a furious hardened persecutor, as Saul, might be unsafe for himself, and of no manner of advantage to him, was so far staggered in his faith and obedience, that, like Moses, when he was sent to Pharaoh, (Exod. vi. 12.) he objected against it, saying, Lord, I have been credibly informed from several good hands, that this very man is a most inveterate enemy to thee, and thy people and cause; I have particularly had melancholy accounts of the great havoc he hath made on thy holy and professed disciples at Jerusalem, (chap. viii. 3.) who have solemnly devoted themselves to thee.

14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

14 And I am furthermore certainly assured, that, in the heat of his mad zeal, he has actually obtained, and is now come hither with warrants from the sanhedrim †, in which the chief priests have great sway, (ver. 1, 2.) to impower him to apprehend and bind, and bring as criminals before them, all that he can meet with of thy true worshippers, who regard thee as the object of their faith, and accordingly make conscience of praying to thee, as a divine person, and their only Saviour.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy

15 But the Lord Jesus would admit of no excuse; and to silence his objections, and assure him that no harm should come, but all should be safe and succeed well,

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* It is very observable, that as Saul was to be the chief apostle of the Gentiles; so, though both his parents were Jews, his conversion at, or near Damascus in Syria, and his birth at Tarsus in Cilicia, were on Gentile ground.

† The chief priests are thought to have

been the heads of the twenty-four classes of the priests, that took their turns in the ministry, according as it was assigned to them by lot, an account of which we have, 1 Chron. chap. xxiv. See the note on Matt. xxvi. 3. and Univers. Hist. vol. 1. p. 643.

thy way : for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.

well, he replied, Go on the errand on which I send you, without delay or disputing, fear or doubting : For how vile and injurious soever he has been, he is one whom, in my wisdom and sovereign grace, I have chosen for myself, as a vessel of mercy afore prepared to glory, (*Rom. ix. 23.*) and as a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and filled with the rich treasure of the gospel, (*2 Tim. ii. 21. and 2 Cor. iv. 7.*) that, he, as an instrument in my hand, may promote my cause and interest, and may give an undoubted testimony to, and make a noble profession of, my name amongst even heathen nations, and before the greatest men upon earth, (such as *Festus* and *Felix*, King *Agrippa* and *Cæsar* himself, *chap. xxiv. 24, 25. and xxv. 23, &c. and xxvii. 24.*) and among my people *Israel*, to whom he shall be first sent to preach the glad tidings of salvation, (*ver. 20. and chap. xiii. 26, 46.*) and that he may confirm his testimony by miracles, and by various sufferings for my sake, till he shall seal it with his blood.

16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

16 For, that he may know the worst, as well as the best of the case, I will faithfully and plainly acquaint him with the severe persecutions and hardships which he must expect, even to the greatest that he ever inflicted upon others ; and which, considering the corruptions of mankind, and their enmity to me ; he will unavoidably meet with, and must be contented to undergo, in a dutiful and chearful subjection to my authority, for my service, and to my glory.

17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house ; and, putting his hands on him, said Brother Saul, the Lord (even Jesus that appeared un-
to

17 Then ⁽³¹⁾ *Ananias*, being fully satisfied, went immediately on his message, in obedience to the heavenly vision, without any farther demur, and entered into the house of *Judas*, where *Saul* lodged, (*ver. 11.*) ; and laying his hands upon him, he spoke to him as to one that was brought into the household of faith and fellowship of the gospel, and was was made a child of God, a fellow-labourer in Christ, and a fellow-heir of eternal glory, saying, Brother *Saul*, I am come with good tidings to you ; Our great Lord and Saviour, even Jesus, who so graciously and wonderfully appeared * to you in a cloud

N O T E.

* Though it is said here, that Jesus appeared to him in the way ; it is not necessary to understand it of *Saul's* seeing Christ then in person ; but only of his seeing that glorious light in the *Shechinah*, which was the symbol of his presence, as the elders, when they saw God's glory at mount *Horeb*, were said to see the God of *Israel*, though they saw no manner of similitude there. (*Exod. xxiv. 9, 10. compared with Dent. iv. 12, 51.*) And yet as *Paul's* qualifications for the

apostleship required, that he should have seen the Lord ; so he expressly affirms that he had seen him, (*1 Cor. ix. 1. and xv. 8.*) and therefore he saw his person before he was made an apostle, which was probably at his second journey to *Jerusalem*, whilst he was praying in the temple, and was in a trance ; an account of which is given, *Acts xxii. 17, 18. See Miscellan. Sac. story iii. p. 4. &c. and p. 11, &c.*

to thee in the way as thou comest) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost,

a cloud of glory, as you was on the road hither to persecute his saints, has ordered me to come to you, that by my hands you might be miraculously cured of your present blindness, and that you might be afterwards * still more miraculously filled with the extraordinary gifts, as well as graces, of the Holy Ghost, to qualify you for the great work for which he designs you.

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

18 And instantly upon *Ananias's* thus speaking and laying his hands upon him, a visible substance, like the scales of a fish, dropped off from his eyes; and he was immediately restored to his sight all at once; which was a lively emblem of the veil's being taken off from his heart, (2 Cor. iii. 13, 14.) and of his soul's being filled with light and joy: And he got up, as *Ananias* had ordered him, (chap. viii. 36) and was baptized with water, to signify his cleansing from sin, and to testify his faith in Christ, and his subjection and devotedness to him.

19 And when he had received meat he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus,

19 And when he had eat a proper quantity of food, after his having fasted three days, (ver. 9.) which, together with the deep concern of his mind, and his earnestness in religious exercises, had weakened his bodily strength, he was exceedingly refreshed, not merely by his corporal recruits, but chiefly by the joy of the Lord, which was his strength, both in the inward and outward man. (Neh. viii. 10.) After all this, *Saul* continued some time at *Damascus*; and instead of going to hunt out the Christians, that he might carry them bound to *Jerusalem*, he sought their acquaintance as a friend and brother, and associated with them, to comfort them, and to be comforted by them, who, having had plain and satisfying accounts from him, and from *Ananias*, of the wonderful change the grace of God had made upon him, gladly admitted him into communion with them.

20 And straightway

20 And instead of blaspheming the name of the Lord Jesus as formerly, and going to solicit the rulers of the synagogues to exert their power against Christianity, as he had intended, till Christ met him in the way; he immediately resorted to those places of public worship, and there, with abundance of courage and judgment, preached

N O T E.

* As the Holy Ghost, in his miraculous gifts, was communicated immediately by Christ himself to all his apostles, and perhaps never was conveyed by the hands of any man, except those of the apostles, to others; it seems as if *Saul*, upon his eyes being opened, and his being baptized, received the Holy Ghost in his extraordinary gifts, and that in a visible manner, immediately from Christ himself, as the rest of the apo-

stles did, (chap. ii. 1, 4.) and not by the laying on of the hands of *Ananias*, who was only a common ministering disciple, and had nothing of this kind mentioned in his orders, (ver. 12.) and when *Paul* afterwards gives an account of this transaction, (chap. xxii. 12, 13.) he speaks only of receiving his light from *Ananias*. See *ibid.* essay ii. p 55, — 52.

way be preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

preached up Jesus as the true Messiah, who was anointed of God the Father, to all the offices of a prophet, priest, and king, declaring him to be, by way of eminence and peculiarity, the Son of God, the same in nature and perfections with the Father: And he was so hearty and zealous in preaching this Saviour, *because* he is the Son of God, (*ὅτι υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς*) equal to his great office and every way worthy of the highest regard.

21 But all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?

21 And ⁽²¹⁾ all his numerous auditors were astonished at his doctrine, and said one unto another, What a surprizing, unaccountable alteration is here! Is not this the very man who persecuted them, even to the death, that made a profession of, and invoked the name of Jesus in their religious worship at *Jerusalem*; and who set out from thence hither, on purpose to seize as many of them as he could meet with here, and to carry them bound in chains, as criminals, to be judged and punished by the chief priests, and the rest of their brethren of the great council.

22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

22 But whatever harsh constructions and reflections some of them might make, as though he were an apostate, a madman, or an enthusiast; he was so far from recanting, or being disheartened, that he grew exceedingly in his knowledge and judgment of the great things of the gospel; in his affection, zeal, and courage for the cause of Christ; and in his fervent and successful way of preaching him: And he perfectly nonplussed the unbelieving *Jews*, that lived at *Damascus*; confuted all their objections by clear scriptural evidence; and proved by undeniable arguments, that this glorious person, Jesus the Son of God, whom they had crucified, and who was risen from the dead, is indeed the promised and long-expected *Messiah*. (*Chap. xvii. 2, 3.*)

23 And, after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him.

23 And, soon after this, he retired from thence to *Arabia Deserta*, where he preached Christ to the *Jews* of that country, to whom he had not been made known before; and, about three years afterwards, returned to *Damascus*, (*Gal. i. 15,—18.*) where the *Jews* were so enraged against him for coming to them again, and persisting in what they counted an apostacy, and for his nervous and pathetic way of preaching, and defending the important truths of the gospel, that they consulted together to put him to death.

24 But their lying wait was known of Saul.

24 But *Saul* had intelligence of their lying in wait for him, with a murderous design; and so industrious were they to secure him, that they represented him in an invidious and obnoxious light to the then deputy-governor of the city, which was under the dominion of

And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.

25 Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.

26 And, when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus

Aretas, the king of *Arabia*, and prevailed with him to assist them, by a detachment of soldiers from the garrison, in guarding the gates of the city night and day, that they might apprehend him, in case he should attempt to fly. (See the note on 2 Cor. xi. 32.)

25 Then the disciples of Jesus, being apprehensive of the extreme danger of this faithful servant, and tenderly concerned for his safety, concealed him by day, and took an opportunity one night to let him down privately in a basket, through a window of one of their houses, that stood on the city-wall; and so he escaped his enemies cruel hands. (2 Cor. xi. 33.)

26 Upon *Saul's* getting safe out of *Damascus*, he went, for the first time since his conversion, to *Jerusalem*, chiefly to confer with *Peter*, who was then at that place, (Gal. i. 18.); and when he arrived thither, his love and zeal put him upon attempting to associate with the persecuted and despised disciples of Christ, and to enter into communion with the church there: But as they had known, by sad experience, his former furious temper and violent practices against them, and had heard little of him, since his conversion three years ago, he having mostly spent his time in so distant and unfrequented a country, as *Arabia Deserta*, they were all shy and jealous of him, and afraid to trust him, or to admit him into their religious assemblies; they not being fully satisfied that he was a real convert, but rather suspecting that he came as a spy and informer among them.

27 But *Barnabas*, an eminent disciple*, being well acquainted with the true state of the case, introduced and recommended him to *Peter* and *James*, the only apostles that were then at *Jerusalem*, (Gal. i. 19.) and † gave them a distinct and particular account, how *Saul* had seen the glory of the Lord Jesus in his journey to *Damascus*, (ver. 3. see the note on ver. 17.) how he, at the same time, heard him calling and speaking to him, by name, from heaven; as also what a wonderful change

N O T E S.

* *Barnabas* is afterwards spoken of as an apostle, chap. xiv. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 5, 6. and Gal. ii. 9. (See the note on Acts xiii. 3.) And some have thought that he was *Saul's* fellow-pupil under *Gamaliel*, and so his old acquaintance. See *Miscel. Sac.* essay ii. p. 27,—29, &c. 'Tis highly probable that he received the account of *Saul's* conversion from his own mouth, or that he had it by conversation, or writing from *Ananias*, or some other Christians, who well knew the whole story of what passed in the way to

Damascus, and at that city.

† Some have thought that this narrative was made by *Saul*, but I rather apprehend it to have been made by *Barnabas*, because the construction most naturally carries it that way; and what is said of *Saul's* preaching boldly at *Damascus*, was more decent for *Barnabas*, than for himself, to relate to the apostles at *Jerusalem*, though he doubtless consented to, and confirmed the truth of, all that *Barnabas* reported concerning him.

cus in the name
of Jesus.

change was thereupon wrought in his heart, (*ver. 5, 6, 7.*) and what further passed between Christ and him in his vision, and between him and *Ananias*, who had been favoured with another correspondent vision at *Damascus*, (*ver. 10,—19.*) and how, by Christ's own authority and commission, he preached him publicly, with great liberty of spirit, holy confidence and courage, (*ὑπαπομάρτυρο*) in the synagogues of that city, to the amazement of all that had ever known, or heard of him before, to the joy and establishment of the saints, and to the envy and confusion of all the unbelieving *Jews*, (*ver. 20,—22.*)

28 And he was
with them com-
ing in and go-
ing out at Jerusa-
lem.

28 Hereupon, the apostles, being fully satisfied about him, gladly received him, and recommended him to the rest of the disciples, as a faithful brother and servant of Christ; and he continued with them fifteen days, (*Gal. i. 18.*) accompanying and joining with them in their work and labour, in public places of worship, and in Christian assemblies, at *Jerusalem*, where he had before been so notorious for his flaming zeal against, and bitter persecutions of the church.

29 And he spake
boldly in the name
of the Lord Jesus,
and disputed a-
gainst the Greci-
ans: but they went
about to slay him.

29 And during this time, (*ὑπαπομάρτυρον ὄντας ἰσχυρῶς*) he being much enlarged and emboldened in his own spirit, and having great liberty of speech, publicly preached Christ and salvation through him, by virtue of the authority which he had received from him, (*ver. 15, 16.*) and he supported the glorious doctrines of Christ's person, and offices, death, and resurrection, with great strength of argument, and of answers to objections in disputes, particularly with the *Hellenist Jews*, (see the note on *John xii. 20.*) whom he had concurred with in *Stephen's* martyrdom, (*chap. vi. 9, 11. and vii. 58, 59.*) But they were so confounded by his reasoning, and so prejudiced against Christianity, and against him for deserting their party, and being so strenuous an advocate for the faith of Christ, that, instead of embracing it, they contrived to send him after *Stephen*, by putting him also to death.

30 Which when
the brethren knew,
they brought him
down to Cæsarea,
and sent him forth
to Tarsus.

30 But (*ἔτι*) when his brethren in Christ understood their wicked design, they conducted him safe to *Cæsarea*, the chief city of *Palestine*, and took care to send him from thence, along the sea-coast, to his old friends and acquaintance at *Tarsus*, or, as it is called in the *Hebrew* tongue, *Tarsbisch*, his native place, where he might hope for safety, and where, in fact, he continued preaching the gospel, till *Barnabas* came to him. (*Chap. xi. 25.*)

31 Then had
the

31 Then, as *Saul*, who had been a most severe and inde-

the churches rest throughout all *Judea*, and *Galilee*, and *Samaria*, and were edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

indefatigable persecutor, was become an eminent and laborious preacher of Christ, and as he was gone from *Jerusalem*, where since his conversion he had so highly exasperated the *Jews*, they grew less violent in their proceedings against the Christians; and so the churches of Christ had a breathing-time of spiritual and temporal prosperity and peace, (*supra*) wherever they were planted in *Judea*, *Galilee*, and *Samaria*: and, having free'r liberty of the gospel than before, were built up on their most holy faith, in all the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and in their union and communion with Christ and one another, being edified together in love; and they persisting in, and living more and more under the power of that religious, new covenant-fear of God, which he had put into their hearts; and being evidently enriched with the consolations that proceeded from the light and influence of the Holy Ghost, they increased in numbers, and in all the increases of God, (*infra*)

32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed through-out all quarters, he came down also to the *Gins* which dwell at *Lydda*.

32 And *Peter* taking this favourable opportunity to visit the churches in all those parts for their further instruction, regulation, and establishment, and particularly for working signal miracles, imparting the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and settling faithful and well-qualified pastors over them, he, among other places, went to the sanctified in Christ Jesus, whose hearts were purified by faith, and who made a holy profession of his name, and resided in a town called *Lydda*, which lay in *Judea*, not far from *Joppa*, (*ver.* 38.) between *Azotus* and *Cesarea*, in the way of *Philip's* progress, after the conversion of the eunuch. (*Chap.* viii. 40.)

33 And there he found a certain man named *Eneas*, which had kept his bed eight years; and was sick of the palsy.

33 And there he providentially met with a certain distressed man, whose name was *Eneas*, and who had been bed-ridden for eight years past, having lost the use of his limbs, and been laid up with such an inveterate and dangerous palsy, that there was no hope of his recovering in the ordinary use of means:

34 And *Peter* said unto him, *Eneas*, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.

34 As soon as *Peter* saw him, he, to prevent all apprehensions as though there were any virtue in himself to heal him, said to him, *Eneas*, I declare, in the name of the Lord Jesus, the exalted Saviour of *Israel*, that he, at this instant, puts forth his almighty power, to restore you to perfect health and strength: And as Christ, in the days of his flesh, used to order them, whom he miraculously cured, to do something that might evidence it to the company; so, for the same purpose, I order you, by his authority, to get up from your bed, and make it with your own hands; accordingly

dingly he did so, without delay, in the sight of all then present.

35 And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

35 And such a blessing attended the gospel, as thus confirmed, that great multitudes of the inhabitants of *Lydda*, and of the adjacent town, and large fruitful valley of *Saron*, of whom it was prophesied, (*Isa. xxxv. 2.*) that *they should see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God*, saw the wonderful cure that Christ had wrought upon this cripple, and were so affected with it, as to yield themselves up to the Lord Jesus, and follow him in all his ways.

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named *Tabitha*, which, by interpretation, is called *Dorcas*: this woman was full of good works, and *alms-deeds* which she did.

36 Now at *Joppa*, a neighbouring sea-port town, there was a certain believer in Christ, whose name, in the *Syriac* language, was *Tabitha*, and in the *Greek*, *Dorcas*, both of which signify a hind or roe; this Christian matron abounded in acts of piety toward God, as fruits of her faith and love, and in works of righteousness, and of charity to the poor, for whom she provided garments to clothe them, which she wrought with her own hands, and generously disposed of, in her great compassion, to such as needed them.

37 And it came to pass in those days that she was sick, and died: whom, when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber.

37 And Providence so ordered it, for the greater manifestation of God's glory, that, during *Peter's* abode in those parts, this good woman fell sick and died; after which, her friends, according to the custom of the ancients, washed her dead corpse, and laid it out in an upper room, in order to its interment.

38 And forasmuch as *Lydda* was nigh to *Joppa*, and the disciples had heard that *Peter* was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

38 But (*81*) *Lydda* being within about five or six miles of *Joppa*, and some of her acquaintance and fellow-Christians, who were greatly concerned at the loss of such an excellent and useful woman, hearing that the apostle *Peter* was at *Joppa*, and had wrought a wonderful miracle there, they sent two of their number as their messengers unto him, to beg earnestly of him, in all their names, that he would be so kind as to come with all possible dispatch to them, on an important occasion, * to help and comfort them in their sorrowful circumstances.

39 Then *Peter* arose, and went with them. When he was come they brought him into the upper chamber:

39 Upon the messengers delivering their errand, *Peter* readily consented, and went along with them; and being come to *Joppa*, and to the friends that had sent for him thither, they conducted him to the upper room, where the dead corpse of *Dorcas* lay prepared for

N O T E.

* They, probably, hoped, that he who had restored *Enas* to his limbs, might restore *Dorcas* to life; the divine power of Christ, which had done one by his hands, being equally capable of doing the other: Or they might send for him to assist their

improvement of the affecting providence, to the glory of God, and their own edification and comfort, in such a way as *Peter* might be directed to, and enabled for, without prescribing to him.

ber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down and prayed, and, turning him to the body, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter she sat up.

for its funeral: And there he found the poor widows, that had been bountifully relieved by her labour and liberality, standing and weeping over her, with great lamentation for their loss of such a generous benefactress; and, at his coming into the room, they flocked about him, and, to move his compassion, spoke highly of her great virtues and usefulness, and shewed him the gowns and petticoats, and other garments on their backs, which she had employed herself in making, and with which she had, in her great generosity and goodness, clothed them, at free cost, while she was living.

40 Then (b) Peter desired them all to withdraw, that, like his Lord and Master, he might avoid all appearance of vain-glory, and that he might have the greater liberty and freedom in wrestling with God in prayer, for the restoration of such a useful person to life, and for the confirmation of the gospel thereby; and being alone, he kneeled down, and addressed the throne of grace in that humble posture, with faith in the Lord Jesus; and then being assured, by a divine impulse, that his prayer was answered, he turned himself about to the dead corpse, and speaking, as usual, (*ver. 35. and chap. iii. 6. and iv. 30.*) in the name of Christ, * he, after his example, (*Mark v. 4.*) said, *Tabitha, Arise from the dead*: And the Lord Jesus attended these words with such power, that she immediately opened her eyes, which death had closed; and, seeing the apostle by her, raised herself up into a sitting posture.

41 And he, reaching out his hand, assisted her rising upon her feet; and then, calling in her religious acquaintance, and the poor widows, who so greatly bewailed their loss of her, he set her before them, and made them a most acceptable present of their great benefactress and friend, alive and well, to their abundant joy.

42 And as soon as this wonderful miracle was known, as it quickly was through all the town, a great multitude were brought over to believe in the Lord Jesus, by whose divine power it was wrought; and they were made obedient to the faith.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lift her up; and, when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Joppa: and many believed in the Lord.

* Though *Peter's* expression, in this case, is much in the same form with that which our blessed Lord used in raising *Jairus's* daughter to life, (*Mark v. 41.*) yet his way of working this miracle was entirely different from that: For he first kneeled down and prayed, and so referred the matter to God, and applied to him with acknowledgments that it depended on his power and

will: and when he spoke to *Tabitha* to arise, he did not speak as from himself: Whereas our Lord behaved in his whole conduct, in the other case, as usual, with an air of absolute sovereignty by his own power and will, without taking the least notice of God his Father, and spoke to the young damsel in his own name; *I say unto thee, Arise.* See the notes on *John ii. 22. and xi. 41.*

N O T E.

43 And

43 And it came to pass that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

43 And as Christ had further work to do by Peter at this place, till he should be called from thence to other service among the proselytes of the gate, (*chap. x.*) Providence ordered his staying at Joppa for some time, where he took up his abode, not at *Tabitha's* house, (where he might have been liberally entertained) lest he should seem to receive a reward from her for the great miracle of mercy wrought upon her; but contenting himself with meaner fare, he went and lodged at a tanner's, whose name was *Simon*, and whose house was by the sea-side. (*Chap. x. 6.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What undeniable and glorious proofs hath our dear Lord and Saviour given of his exaltation to his heavenly kingdom! He has appeared and spoke from heaven with divine Majesty and glory, and has made a believing and authoritative use of his name, as effectual, for healing the sick, and raising the dead, as if he were visibly present to exert his divine power in commanding health to one, and life to another; and he produces the like effects upon diseased and dead souls: And, O how sovereign and victorious is his grace; and what a wonderful change does it make upon the heart and life! It strikes the most daring sinner, like *Saul*, into trembling and astonishment; stops him in his full career of wickedness, and makes him cry out, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? It gives him an heart to pray, and to follow directions and commands; and it turns a furious persecutor into a zealous preacher of Christ; and whilst others are amazed, some with joy, and some with envy, at such a visible alteration on the sincere convert, he is the more emboldened and strengthened, to the silencing and confounding of all that oppose him: And though the disciples of Christ themselves may at first be jealous of him, and afraid to countenance and embrace him, lest he should be a spy and hypocrite, or a wolf in sheep's cloathing; yet with what cheerfulness and satisfaction will they receive him, when the truth of grace appears in him! Christ is never at a loss for instruments to carry on his work; he will either find or make them; and take off all their objections, difficulties, and discouragements; and though his and their enemies may lye in wait to destroy them, he will make a way for their escape, till he has accomplished his designs by them. And, O how easily can he turn the threatenings and slaughter of his church, which he takes as done against himself, into rest and peace, and fill them with the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, that they may be both multiplied and edified! And with what pleasure and hope will the faithful servants of Christ visit such churches, to impart still further benefits to them! Their ministrations shall be attended with the power of the Holy Ghost, to turn many to the Lord, and add an abundant establishment to the saints. And O what an honour is it to Christ, and to the saints themselves, and to their holy profession of his name, when, for their eminence in religion and liberality, their lives, like *Dorcus's*, are greatly desired, and their deaths as much lamented!

C H A P. X.

Cornelius, a Roman Officer, being directed in a vision, sends for Peter, 1,—8. Peter, being encouraged in a correspondent vision, goes to Cornelius, though a Gentile, 9,—23. The discourse that passed between them, in which Peter preached Christ to him, 24,—42. The Holy Ghost falls on Cornelius and his friends, and thereupon they are baptized, 43,—48.

TEXT.

THERE was a certain man in Cæsarea, called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band.

PARAPHRASE.

THE gospel having, by this time, been preached about seven years to the native *Jews*, and the proselytes of righteousness, and to the *Samaritans*; God would now introduce it among the *Gentiles*, beginning with the *proselytes of the gate*, in order to its spreading, by degrees, to the uttermost part of the earth, (*chap. i. 8.*) Accordingly there was at *Cæsarea*, so called in honour to *Augustus Cæsar*, where *Philip* had been preaching to the *Jews*, (*chap. viii. 40.*) a certain man named *Cornelius*, who was a *Roman* captain over an hundred soldiers belonging to an *Italian* regiment, (*στρατιὰ*) which were placed under a governor there, to support the imperial authority over that people, which consisted of *Jews* as well as *Gentiles*.

A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

2 This man, though an uncircumcised *Gentile*, (*chap. xi. 3.*) was a sincere ^a proselyte of the gate; a man of a devotional temper of mind; and one that worshipped the true God of *Israel*, revered his name, and feared to offend him; and, like *Abraham* and *Josbua*, (*Gen. xviii. 19.* and *Josh. xxiv. 15.*) was exemplary in keeping up religion in his family, which owned and believed in the same God with himself; he likewise was of a very charitable disposition, distributing with great liberality to the necessities of the poor, whether they were *Jews* or *Gentiles*; and he conscientiously observed the *Israelites* stated hours of prayer, morning and evening, in his daily addresses to God.

3 He saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and

3 While he was one day praying, about three o'clock in the afternoon, he, being fully awake, had a clear vision, with his bodily eyes, of a glorious angel of the Lord, who appeared to him in the form of a man, surrounded with rays of light, (*ver. 30.*) as *Gabriel* formerly did to *Daniel*, at the same time of the evening oblation, when he was employed in the like religious manner, (*Dan. ix. 21.*); and to shew the special notice God

N O T E.

* As the proselytes of righteousness were accounted clean, and were admitted to all the privileges of natural *Jews*; and *Cornelius* was deemed an unclean *Gentile*, (*ver. 28.*) for going in to whom the *Jews* were highly offended with the apostle *Peter*, (*chap. xi. 2, 3, &c.*) and he, in vindication of himself, spoke of it, as God's first visiting the *Gentiles*, (*chap. xv. 14.*) It is commonly, and I think justly, concluded, that *Cornelius* was a proselyte of the gate, (see the note on *chap. viii. 27.*) For as praying to God alway, signified observing the *Jewish* hours of prayer, every day at the third and ninth hour, or at nine o'clock in the morning, and three

in the afternoon, as appears from *ver. 3.* and from *Luke xxiv. 53.* compared with *Acts ii. 46, 47.* and *iii. 1.*; so he observed the hours of temple-service; and his being called (*εὐσεβὴς καὶ φοβούμενος τὸν Θεόν*) a devout man, and one that feared God, is a description of that sort of proselytes who are promiscuously spoken of, *chap. xiii. 16, 26, 43.* as (*προσηλύτοι τοῦ Θεοῦ*, and *εὐσεβεῖς προσκείμενοι*) persons that feared God, and were devout or religious proselytes; accordingly the apostle *Paul* alleged the prophecies of the Old Testament to them, as what they were acquainted with, which he never did in preaching to the idolatrous *Gentiles*.

and saying unto him, *Cornelius*.

God took of him, he called to him by name, saying, *Cornelius*!

4 And, when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

4 But ⁽³¹⁾ when *Cornelius* looked at the angel, he was filled with reverent awe, and great surprise; and, addressing him with the respect due to a messenger from the heavenly world, said, Lord, What is the meaning of this extraordinary appearance? Art thou come in mercy, or in wrath? What is thy will and pleasure? and the angel, to comfort and encourage him, replied, All is well, your spiritual sacrifices of prayer, and liberality to the poor, (*Phil. iv. 18.* and *Heb. xiii. 15, 16.*) are graciously accepted of God, as tokens of your faith and love, according to your present light, more than if you had presented a memorial of incense, and a meat-offering made by fire, which are spoken of as a sweet savour to the Lord. (*Lev. ii. 2, 9.* and *vi. 15.*)

5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one *Simon*, whose surname is *Peter*:

5 And as you need a further revelation of the mind and will of God, to direct your faith to the only true Messiah, and to lead you into the way of salvation by him; and as he has appointed to communicate it to you, not by the ministry of angels, but of men of like passions with yourself, that their terror may not make you afraid, and that the excellency of the power, which attends their ministrations, may the more evidently appear to be of God, (*2 Cor. iv. 7.*) I am commissioned to order you to send messengers immediately to *Joppa*, the town from whence the prophet *Jonah* was sent to preach to the *Gentiles* at *Nineveh*, (*Jonah i. 2, 3.*) and fetch from thence a certain man, who is commonly known by the name of *Simon*, and whom his Lord surnamed *Peter*, on account of the use he would make of him, in laying the foundation of the Christian church. (*Mat. xvi. 18, 19.*)

6 He lodgeth with one *Simon* a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

6 That you may not mistake the man, and may be thoroughly satisfied that this is a divine direction, I am further to tell you, that he now sojourns there, as a guest with his name-sake *Simon*, who is by trade a tanner, and whose house stands on the shore of the *Mediterranean* sea: He shall acquaint you with those things*, which, according to the present new dispensation of God's

N O T E.

* Though *Cornelius*, being a proselyte, is to be supposed to have believed in the promised and expected Messiah, and this, in former dispensations, was sufficient for salvation; yet after Christ had actually appeared, and finished the work of redemption, and published it in the gospel, it was further necessary, that faith should be directed to, and should terminate on his particu-

larly, as the only Saviour, (*chap. iv. 12.*) And as the ordinary means, by which God brings any to this faith, is the preaching of the gospel, (*Rom. x. 14, 17.*); so he would rather dispatch an angel from heaven to direct this religious proselyte to those means, than not honour his own institution of the gospel-ministry.

God's grace, are necessary for you to know and do, in order to your being eternally saved. (*Chap. xi. 14.*)

7 And, when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household-servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually :

7 As soon as the angel had delivered his message, he disappeared ; and *Cornelius* being fully satisfied, as to the reality and vast importance of what he had seen and heard, and earnestly desirous of learning the way of salvation, he immediately, in obedience to the heavenly vision, called to him two of his own domestic servants, and one of his soldiers, who, like himself, was a religious proselyte, and therefore so highly in favour with him, as to be usually employed in waiting upon him.

8 And, when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

8 And these being all trusty men, whom he could depend upon, and for whose salvation he was concerned, as well as for his own, he related to them all that had passed in the vision, that they might go the more cheerfully on his errand, and be the more urgent with *Peter* to come to him : Accordingly he ordered them to set out the next morning for *Joppa*, (*ver. 9.*) it being then too late for them to perform the journey that night.

9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, *Peter* went up upon the house-top to pray, about the sixth hour.

9 Now, that *Peter* might be the better disposed to receive and comply with their message, notwithstanding his prejudices against conversing with, and preaching to uncircumcised *Gentiles*, Providence wisely ordered, that whilst, on the morrow after the vision, the messengers were on the road, and arrived near to the town, unknown to him, he, according to the example of *David* and *Daniel*, who used to pray three times a day, (*Psal. lv. 17.* and *Dan. vi. 10.*) went up about noon, to the flat roof of the house, (see the note on *Mat. xxiv. 17.*) to spend some time in secret prayer, that the word of the Lord might have free course and be glorified.

10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten : but while they made ready he fell into a trance,

10 And, during this devout retirement, he was exceeding hungry, and wanted to eat something for the refreshment of nature ; but while dinner was preparing, he suddenly fell into a supernatural ecstasy of mind, (*ecstasy*) the external senses being at the same time as much locked up, as if he had been asleep, which was one of the ways wherein God had used to reveal himself to his servants of old.

11 And saw heavens opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been

11 And, in answer to his prayer, a visionary representation, suitable to his situation and hungry circumstances, was made to him from an opening in the heavens, to intimate that the light and authority, conveyed thereby, came from God, to unfold the mystery about the calling of the *Gentiles*, which had not been clearly made known in former ages. (*Eph. iii. 3, 4.*) He likewise

a great sheet, knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth :

likewise saw, with the eyes of his mind, a sort of great bag descending from thence towards himself, in the form of a large sheet, with its four corners gathered and tied together, and, (*καθήμενον*) as divinely sent, it gradually dropped down just by him, near the roof of the house, toward the earth, to intimate that the gospel-church should be collected from the four quarters of the world.

11 Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

12 In the open sides of the sheet, he saw all sorts of tame and wild beasts, and other animals, that, instead of walking, crept on the earth, as also birds that fly in the air, some of all which were, by legal institution, ceremonially clean, and others unclean ; God thereby intending to instruct him, that all sorts of sinners, and persons of all nations, should be acceptable to him, through the faith of Jesus, under the gospel-state. (*ver. 35.*)

13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter ; kill and eat.

13 And a voice from heaven attended the vision, which called to him by name, saying, *Peter*, Get up, slay and eat, freely and indifferently, of any of these living creatures that are set before you, without asking questions for conscience sake.

14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord : for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

14 But *Peter* being startled at the proposal, and apprehending that this voice came from Christ, only for his trial, replied, No, Lord, may I never venture upon such a transgression ! I dare not make this use of all these creatures promiscuously ; for my conscience will not suffer me to feed upon any thing, that is forbidden by the law of *Moses*, and so is justly reputed unclean ; neither have I ever hitherto done it.

15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

15 Then the voice, being directed to him a second time, said, God's authority can supersede the ceremonial distinction, that was made by his own appointment, between things legally clean and unclean, for a time, and for certain emblematical reasons, suitable to the Old Testament-dispensation ; and he is now, agreeable to the gospel-state, putting an end to the distinction itself, and to that which was peculiarly signified by it ; meaning that all meats should henceforth be used indifferently, and *Gentiles* should be taken into God's covenant, promiscuously with the *Jews* : Accordingly the voice said more expressly, What God has sanctified for your use, and for his own praise, you must no longer reckon to be unlawful or unclean ; thereby designing to shew him, that God had taken away the prohibitions concerning some kinds of meat, and the difference between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, which was kept up by means of these positive laws ; so that *Peter* might

safely eat any thing that should be set before him, and ought freely to converse with, and preach the gospel to, the uncircumcised *Gentiles*.

14 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

16 This wonderful scene was repeated three times, one after another, to assure him that the vision was certain, and to engage his attention to it; and then the great bag was drawn up from the earth to heaven, to signify that believing sinners of all ranks, degrees, and nations, should be received up to glory.

17 Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate.

17 Now when the vision was over, as *Peter* was seriously debating, and at a loss in his own thoughts about the meaning of what had been in so surprizing a manner presented to him, God having not yet explained it, observe how admirably the wisdom of Providence ordered a concurrence of circumstances to satisfy him about it; The messengers that were sent by *Cornelius*, having inquired out the house of *Simon* the tanner, at which *Peter* lodged, were then arrived, and actually standing at the door, or porch. (204211.)

18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

18 And speaking to some of the family, they desired to know of them, whether one *Simon*, a certain famous man, whose surname was *Peter*, dwelt there, and were within; and whether he were at leisure for them to wait upon him, or not.

19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

19 Whilst, I say, *Peter* was ruminating upon the vision, and perplexed in his mind about it, as the virgin *Mary* was when the angel saluted her, (*Luke* i. 29.) the Spirit of the Lord, by an extraordinary afflatus, powerfully and distinctly suggested to him an unexpected fact, and some thoughts upon it, which naturally led the way to his understanding the design of his vision, saying, Observe something now occurs, that will explain what you have seen and heard: At this very instant, three men are come up to the door of this house, with an important errand to you, and are inquiring after you.

20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

20 Make haste therefore, and go down to them; and, though they are uncircumcised *Gentiles*, make no scruple of freely conversing, and going along with them, as if it were unlawful, or inexpedient; and fear not any danger from the men you are to go with, nor from the *Jews*, on that account: For these men are come in consequence of express orders *, which I have given to their master, who has sent them on a special message to you;

N O T E.

* The Spirit's saying that he had sent these messengers, was taking upon himself the stile and work of God, who dispatched the angel to *Cornelius*, to order him to send

them to *Peter*; and as these were personal and divine actions of the Holy Ghost, they shew him to be such a person as is also God.

you; and this shall be your sufficient warrant for complying with their request, whatsoever others may object against it.

20 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius, and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?

21 Then Peter, being fully satisfied, that what he had seen and heard, in so extraordinary a manner, was from God, went down immediately, in obedience to the heavenly order, to speak with the messengers that were come from *Cornelius*, and to learn all he could from them, that might give him further light about the special and determinate meaning of the vision; and in order thereunto, as soon as he saw them, who by this time had just arrived at the house, (*chap. xi. 11.*) he said, Behold, I am the man whom ye have been inquiring for: On what account, I pray you, are ye come hither, and what is your business with me?

22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.

22 And they replied, Our errand to you, Sir, is this: *Cornelius*, a Roman officer, who has an hundred soldiers under his command, a man of great probity, who, tho' an uncircumcised *Gentile*, is a proselyte of the gate, and a very religious worshipper of the God of *Israel*, and has an universally good character, for piety, justice, and charity, among the *Jews* themselves; while this worthy person was praying in his house, at one of the *Jewish* hours of devotion, (*ver. 30.*) he was favoured with an heavenly vision of an holy angel, whom God dispatched to him, and by whom he ordered him to send messengers to you by name; telling him the very house where you lodged, (*ver. 6.*) and that you, coming to him, should give him instructions about the way of salvation. (*Chap. xi. 14.*)

23 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from *Joppa* accompanied him.

23 Then he courteously invited the men, though they were but servants, to walk further into the house; and entertained them there that night, that he might shew his hospitality to them, and might have the better opportunity of informing himself, yet more fully, about *Cornelius's* character, and what had passed between the angel and him. And the next morning Peter, without any hesitancy in his own mind, cheerfully went along with them to their master; and six of his Christian brethren, *Jewish* converts at *Joppa*, attended him, (*chap. xi. 12.*) that they might shew their respect, and be assistant, if needful, to him; but chiefly that they might have the benefit of his conversation, and be eye witnesses of what might pass between the centurion and him, and vindicate it afterwards to the *Jewish* Christians, if there should be occasion.

24 And the morrow after they entered

24 And in the afternoon of the day, (*ver. 30.*) which followed their setting out from *Joppa*, they arrived at *Cæsarea*;

tered into Cæſarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

25 And, as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

26 But Peter took him up, ſaying, Stand up: I myſelf alſo am a man.

27 And, as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

28 And he ſaid unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation: but God hath ſhewed me that I ſhould

Cæſarea; and, going to Cornelius's houſe, found him waiting in expectation of them; and with him, ſeveral of his relations and moſt intimate friends and acquaintance, whom he, like a good man, who was concerned for their ſalvation, as well as his own, had got together, that they might partake of the important inſtructions, which he hoped would be communicated to them.

25 And as Peter was entering the houſe, Cornelius, having notice of his arrival, ran with great eagernels to meet, and bid him welcome; and, throwing himſelf down proſtrate at his feet, he expreſſed the higheſt reverence for him*, as one ſent in an extraordinary manner from God, with a ſpecial meſſage of the utmoſt conſequence to him.

26 But the apoſtle Peter, deteſting all appearance of religious adoration being offered to a creature, inſtantly ſtretched forth his hand, and raiſed him up from the ground, ſaying, with holy reſentment, and jealousy for the divine glory, Get up immediately; ſuch homage as this is not due to me, neither will I receive it: For I myſelf, like you, am no more than a mere man, tho' honoured with a commiſſion from God to his people, and now particularly to you.

27 Hereupon, ſtill further to take off the centurion's fear, and increaſe his hopes, he converſed familiarly with him, (*συνημιλον αὐτῷ*) though he was an uncircumciſed Gentile; and, going into the houſe, he met with a conſiderable number of people, who were gathered together there, by Cornelius's invitation, (*ver. 24.*) to hear what the apoſtle had to ſay to them.

28 Then, to take off the prejudices of the company, who might wonder to ſee him ſo free in talking with an uncircumciſed Gentile, he ſaid, Ye doubtleſs cannot but be very ſenſible, that the Moſaic law having made a difference between Jews and Gentiles, the ſtrained interpretations, and the traditions of the elders, have ſo far widened the breach between them, as to pronounce it an abominable crime (*αἵμιον*) for any native Jew, to aſſociate with, or come, in a friendly and familiar manner, into the houſe and company of one of a different nation and religion; and I have long been of that opi-

nion

N O T E.

* It ſeems, by Peter's anſwer, that it was not merely ſuch civil reſpect as was uſually paid to great men; but that it was religious adoration which Cornelius offered to him, whom he poſſibly took for the Meſſiah, or for an incarnate God. But whether it were civil or religious worſhip, which I have left undetermined in the Paraphraſe, Peter took

that opportunity to ſhew his own modeſty, and his utter deteſtation of every thing, that carried the leaſt appearance of giving that honour to a creature which is due to God only; as the angel did, when the apoſtle John, under ſomething of a like miſtake of him for Chriſt, offered to worſhip him. Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 9.

should not call any man common or unclean.

nion myself: But God, having set up a new dispensation of grace, hath, within these two days past, fully assured me, by a divine and undoubted vision, that all distinctions of nations are now to have an end, and that no man is any longer to be excluded from his covenant, or to be deemed profane, or even ceremonially impure, merely on account of his being a *Gentile*.

29 Therefore came I unto you, without gain saying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

29 I therefore readily came to offer my service to you, without any further scruple or objection in my own mind against it, as soon as ever I perceived by the messengers, (whom I met with immediately after, and according to, the intimations given me in the vision, *ver. 19, 20, 21.*) that I was sent for, and that God would have me come hither: And now, that I may be more fully and particularly led into his mind and will in this case, I beg you would please to tell me plainly, what were your motives and ends in sending for me, and what is it that ye expect from me?

30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

30 Then *Cornelius* rehearsed the whole matter to him, and said, Being convinced in my conscience, that the God of *Israel* is the only true God, I stately worshipped him at the *Jewish* hours of prayer, and am a careful observer of every other duty of a moral nature, such as fasting and alms-deeds, which I desire to perform in such a manner as may be most acceptable to God, waiting for still further light about his will: Accordingly, for the greater solemnity of my devotion, and deeper humiliation of my soul before the Lord, I four days ago kept a fast, and continued without tasting any thing, till this hour of the day, and at three of the clock in the afternoon, when, you know, the evening sacrifices are offering in the *Jewish* temple, I went to prayer in my family * who are likewise worshippers of the same God with myself, (*ver. 2.*) and, immediately upon my having prayed for divine guidance in his ways, he, to my awful, and yet happy surprize, mercifully favoured me with the vision of an angel, who, whilst I was broad awake, stood by me in the form of a man, arrayed with splendid robes of glory, like an inhabitant of the heavenly world.

31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance

31 And he accosted me in the most friendly and encouraging manner, saying, *Cornelius*, your humble petition for further discoveries of God, and of the way of salvation, is graciously heard and answered; and your charitable distributions to the poor are had in favourable

N O T E.

* *Oikos* $\mu\epsilon\upsilon$ in my house, answers to *οικος* with his house, (*ver. 2.*) where it manifestly signifies his family; and therefore it

was probably not secret, or closet, but family prayer, that the centurion was then engaged in.

ance in the sight of God.

31 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter: he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner, by the sea-side; who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation, he that feareth

favourable remembrance before the throne of God, who sees your very heart, and the principles, motives, and ends, that influence and govern you.

32 I therefore am dispatched from heaven, to order you to send messengers forthwith to the town called Joppa; and there let them inquire for one Simon, who is surnamed Peter, and desire him to come hither: And, to assure you that this is a divine admonition, and that they may certainly find him, I now tell you, that he is at present entertained, as a guest, in the house of another Simon, who is a tanner by trade, and lives upon the sea-shore there: He is commissioned of God to declare his mind and will; and, when he comes, he will direct you to the only Saviour, and shew you the way to eternal life through him.

33 Hereupon I, in obedience to the heavenly vision, sent to you without delay; and you have been exceeding kind to us, as well as faithful to your great Lord, in coming hither: And since you are now come, by divine order, with a message of the utmost consequence, we all, whom you see assembled together, are met in a religious manner to present ourselves before God, in his fear, and with hope in his mercy, looking upon ourselves to be under his immediate eye, and in his special presence, who knows our hearts, that we may seriously attend unto, and readily receive every thing, without exception, which he has commissioned you to deliver to us, whether it be agreeable to our former sentiments, and our temporal interests, or not.

34 Then Peter, comparing the two visions together, was fully satisfied, that God thereby designed to intimate, that the gospel should be no longer confined to the Jewish nation; accordingly he began to speak to Cornelius and his friends, with great seriousness and earnestness, courage and freedom, as the Lord gave him utterance, saying, Whatsoever my former prejudices were, I am now abundantly assured, that the great God has broken down the middle wall of partition, which was between the Jews and Gentiles, and no longer regards with favour, or rejects with abhorrence, any persons whatsoever, merely on account of their nation, family, or external circumstances.

35 But of what country or people soever they be, the man † who, like a Gentile proselyte, though uncircum-

N O T E.

† This seems to be a plain description of proselytes of the gate, such as Cornelius and his house were. (See the note on ver. 2.)

But as Peter had no notion, as yet, of the gospel's being preached to the idolatrous Gentiles for their salvation, he cannot reasonably

seareth him; and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

circumcised, is a religious worshipper of the true God, and attends to the duties of moral obligation, such as fasting and alms-deeds, which are a part of righteousness, (*Psal. cxii. 9.*) as well as prayer, is so far agreeable to the divine perfections and will, and so far accepted of God, as to be freely admitted to bear and receive the gospel, in order to his being saved.

36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, (he is Lord of all,)

36 Even that gospel, which God has sent by the ministrations of his servants in the first place, and hitherto only, to the *Jews*, (*μαρτυρομεν*) preaching the glad tidings of the noblest peace, inclusive of reconciliation with himself, and of all spiritual harmony and happiness, through the merit and mediation of the anointed Saviour. (He, as a divine person, is the author, proprietor, and governor of the whole creation; all things being made by him and for him, (*Col. i. 16.*) and he, as vested with office-authority in human nature, has power over all flesh; and, being exalted far above all principality and power, is head over all things to the church, (*Eph. i. 21, 22.*) has all persons and things on earth, and all the devils in hell, under his command and controul; is Lord of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and will be the universal Judge at the last day.)

37 That word (*Εγώ*) you know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached:

37 Ye who live in *Paestine*, which has been for several years the grand stage of action relating to the Messiah, must needs know something of this word of peace, which was spread abroad, and early talked of, in all the cities, towns, and villages of *Judea*, pursuant to its having been first published in *Galilee*: And this was soon after *John* the Baptist had prepared the way for it, by his baptizing with water, and preaching the doctrine of repentance and remission of sins, thro' the approaching Messiah, (*Mark i. 4.*) whom he at length openly shewed, and recommended once and again to the people, that they might believe in him. (*John i. 29,—36.*)

38 Ye

N O T E.

ably be supposed to have meant, that all persons who served God according to their present light, whatsoever their religion were, should be accepted of him to eternal life: And the apostle *Peter's* being sent to *Cornelius*, to tell him words whereby he and all his house should be saved, (*chap. xi. 14.*) intimates, that even they were not already in a state of salvation, according to the tenor of the gospel; but were to be brought into it, by means of the gospel. I therefore take it, that the acceptance, here spoken of, relates chiefly, if not only, to the profelytes of the gate being so far accepted of God, as

to be admitted to an enjoyment of the privilege of the gospel for their own salvation; and that their fearing God, and working righteousness, as far as it went, was agreeable to the perfections and will of God, though it did not give them a claim to eternal life, any more than the penitent and becoming behaviour of a condemned rebel, which is pleasing to his prince, can entitle him to a pardon of his crime, and to high favour and honours in his kingdom; but, for wise ends of government, the prince may nevertheless order him to be executed for his rebellion.

38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him.

38 Ye, I say, cannot but have heard at least, how apparently, powerfully, and remarkably, God the Father, consecrated, authorized, and qualified that famous person for the Messiah's office, by a visible descent and unmeasurable effusion of the Holy Ghost upon him at his baptism, who was commonly known by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and was indeed brought up at that city, (*Luke iv. 16.*) and who thereupon travelled about from place to place, and laboured indefatigably, by his preaching and miracles, in doing good to the souls and bodies of men, and in relieving and recovering, not only those that were sick with divers diseases, but even all that were corporally possessed and cruelly tormented by the devil, and were brought to him for a cure, (*Luke iv. 40, 41. and Matth. iv. 24.* where see the note.) For, as is abundantly evident from all this, God was singularly present to concur with, and shew his approbation of, this wonderful Saviour.

39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew, and hanged on a tree:

39 And we, the apostles of this great and glorious Lord, together with many others of his disciples, were eye and ear-witnesses of all the great and beneficent things which he spake and did in all the provinces of *Israel*, and particularly in *Jerusalem* itself; where, at a time of general concourse, the *Jews* barbarously insulted, abused, and vilified him, till at length they murdered him, by putting him to the most ignominious, painful, and accursed death of the cross, without the gates of the city, as the bodies of the sacrifices, which typified him, were burnt without the camp. (*Heb. xiii. 11, 12.*)

40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

40 But still, to shew that he was accepted of God his Father, not only in all that he had said and done, but likewise in his sufferings unto death, and that reconciliation was made, and Divine Justice was fully satisfied thereby, for the sins of all that should believe in him, God, in a judicial capacity, took him from prison and from judgment, (*Isa. liii. 8.*) by raising him on the third day from the dead: And to encourage and confirm our faith in him, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, (*Rom. iv. 25.*) his Father (*ἰδὼν αὐτὸν ὑπεράβη τὴν κρίσιν*) granted that he should be manifested alive, after his passion, to a great number of persons in the most visible and demonstrative manner.

41 Not to all the people, but unto

41 Not, indeed, as he was before, and at his crucifixion, to the whole multitude of the *Jews*, the rulers, priests, and common people in general; No, they had despised and obstinately rejected him, in defiance of the plentiful evidence he had given of his being the true

unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

Messiah; and when plain informations were afterwards given them of his being risen, according to his own predictions, some of them contrived, and others joined in entertaining and propagating a senseless and malicious story to stifle the belief of it, (*Matt. xxviii. 11,—15.*) and so forfeited the privilege of ever seeing him again, and shewed themselves to be resolutely determined, not to be convinced at any rate whatsoever: But God, in his infinite wisdom and grace, ordered his appearing corporally to a sufficient number, of proper and unexceptionable witnesses, who had been strongly prejudiced against, and were very hardly brought to believe his resurrection, even to *above five hundred brethren at once*, (*1 Cor. xv. 6.*) as well as, at several other times, to such as had all along attended him, and were perfectly acquainted with him, and had been before appointed and set apart by God himself and our Saviour, (*John xv. 16.*) to testify his doctrine and miracles, death and resurrection, even to us the apostles, who, accordingly, not only saw and heard him, (*1 John i. 1.*) but also, several times, and once particularly, upon his own kind invitation to a dinner, did eat and * drink with him in a familiar manner, (*John xxi. 12, 13.*) after he, by his own, as well as by his Father's power, had rose from the dead. (*John ii. 19, 21. and x. 18.*)

42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge

42 And our risen Lord himself gave us a special charge and commission to preach his gospel, in due season, to every reasonable creature, through the whole world, as we might have opportunity for it, (*Mark xvi. 15.*); and (as he further explained his commission) *to be his witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.* (*Chap. i. 8.*) † And he particularly ordered us to declare, that he is the true and long-expected Messiah; to whom God the Father *has committed all judgment*, (*John v. 22.*) relating to the temporal and eternal concerns of the children of men; and whom he has appointed to have the honour, in that nature which was crucified, of being the Judge of the whole world, both of all that are

N O T E S.

* Christ eat in the presence of the apostles, (*Luke xxiv. 43.*) and, it seems, they eat with him once at *Emmaus*, (*Luke xxiv. 30.*) and another time at the sea of *Galilee*, (*John xxi. 9,—15.*); and as the expressions there used were commonly put for a whole meal, (see *Matt. xv. 2. and Luke vii. 36.*) so the apostle *Peter*, who was present, at least at two of these interviews, here assures us, that they drank, as well as eat with him.

† Though Christ's order to the apostles to testify this concerning him, is not expressly recorded in any of the evangelists; yet, as in the forty days that he was seen of them, between his resurrection and ascension to heaven, he spoke of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, (*Chap. i. 3.*) so the apostle *Peter* here tells us, that this was one of those things.

judge of quick and dead.

42 To him give all the prophets witness, that, thro' his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision, which believed, were astonished

are now living, and that are already dead; and of all that shall be found alive or dead at his second appearing.

43 And as he is infinitely worthy of this honour, so it is matter of great encouragement to think, that he will be our judge at last: For, to refer you to writings which ye, as proselytes of the gate, are conversant with, the general current of the antient divinely inspired prophets, in all their records of typical sacrifices and predictions of the Messiah's atoning death, centers in this, that through his mediation, on account of his merit and righteousness, and, by his advocacy and authority, every one, be he *Jew* or *Gentile*, a greater or lesser sinner, who, under a deep and humble sense of his own guilt and danger, heartily approves of, embraces, and relies upon him, as the divine and only Saviour, without whom he must be lost for ever, shall be actually, and completely forgiven all his iniquities, be they ever so heinous or many; and so shall stand before his judge with safety and joy at the great day.

44 While the apostle *Peter* was warmly, and authoritatively declaring these solemn and delightful things concerning Christ; the Holy Ghost at that very instant, set in with his words, to own them, and make them effectual; insomuch that he descended with miraculous gifts and powers*, as well as gracious influences upon the whole company of *Gentile* proselytes, that were there present to hear the gospel.

45 And the six believing *Jews*, even all that accompanied *Peter* in his journey to this place, were exceedingly struck with surprize, at such an unexpected and extraordinary event; because, directly contrary to all their notions about their own prerogative, and the abandoned

N O T E.

* Since it is said in the next verse but one, (*ver.* 46.) that they spoke with rangers, and in *chap.* xi. 15. that the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on the apostles at the beginning; some have thought, that the Holy Ghost descended upon them with a sound of a mighty rushing wind, and in a visible appearance of cloven tongues of fire, as he did at first on the Jewish disciples, (*chap.* ii. 2, 3.) But if it were so, the believing *Jews*, being present in the room, must needs have known it; and it is much that no express notice was taken of this: However, it is certain, that the Holy Ghost was poured out upon *Cornelius* and his friends, in miraculous gifts and operations; and it was highly proper that it should be so, at this first introduction of the gospel to the *Gentiles*, that God might openly testify his acceptance of them, to

the greater satisfaction of *Peter*, in his having come in to them, and to the silencing of all the objections and cavils of the *Jews* against him for it; accordingly he, in *ver.* 47. and afterwards, (*chap.* xi. 15, — 18.) appealed herunto for these purposes, with irresistible force of argument. But, that the Holy Ghost likewise came upon them with gracious, renewing, and sanctifying influence, may be intimated by its being added, *ver.* 44. that they magnified God; and by *Peter's* saying, that the angel assured *Cornelius*, that the apostle should tell him *whereby* he and all his house should be saved; and that they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; upon which the *Jews*, who had objected against his going to them, said, *Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* (*Chap.* xi. 14, 17, 18.)

nished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then

doned state of the nations round about them, the Holy Ghost was abundantly shed down, as the free gift of God, in a miraculous way, on *Cornelius* and all his *Gentile* friends, in like manner as he had been before on *Jewish* converts, which was undeniably manifest by its supernatural effects.

46 For these believing *Jews* heard these uncircumcised *Gentiles* utter themselves in various languages *, which they had never learnt before; and were ear-witnesses of their extolling the praises of the Lord, for his unexpected and undeserved mercy to them, and speaking forth the great things of God's infinite love and grace, in their redemption and salvation by Jesus Christ, with high expressions of faith, adoration, and joy: Then the apostle *Peter*, being much affected with this glorious dispensation, and observing how his *Jewish* friends were astonished at it, appealed to them, saying,

47 Is it not plain, beyond all contradiction, that God has now taken these *Gentiles* into the gospel-covenant †; and that they may, and ought to be baptized with water; who have already been baptized with the Holy Ghost, in his being poured out upon them, as certainly, evidently, and in like manner, as he has been upon ourselves? Is there any room to question, whether they who are partakers of the thing signified, have a right to the instituted sign and seal of it? Or can any be justly offended at its being applied to them?

48 And as this was so clear a point, and his friends, as well as he himself, were so fully convinced of it, that they had nothing to object against it, he ordered ‡, and took care that these favourites of heaven should be baptized, by the authority, and into the faith, profession, worship, and obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, and the Saviour of lost sinners; and || so should

N O T E S.

* As they spoke with tongues, it is probable that they were designed for ministers of the gospel, and had this gift conferred upon them, to enable them to preach to people of different languages, wheresoever they might go.

† The pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them, was an evidence of their being taken into God's covenant; and the apostle's arguing from thence, that they ought to be baptized, intimates, on the one hand, that they who are taken into the gospel-covenant, and are under the promise of the Spirit, have a right to the sign and seal thereof in baptism; and, on that other, the persons having the inward baptism of the Spirit, is so far from being an argument against the need

of their being baptized with water, that it is an argument for it, in case they had not been baptized before; and so both infant and adult baptism, in different circumstances, are entirely consistent under the gospel-stare.

‡ Its being said, that *Peter* commanded them to be baptized, seems to import, that it was done by some of the believing brethren of the circumcision who attended him, they, probably, being ministers, and not immediately by his own hands: Though, perhaps, his commanding them to be baptized may only mean, that he commanded water to be provided for baptizing them.

|| *Gratus* observes, that, in the name of Christ is tacitly understood the Father, who anointed him and the Spirit, with whom he

They prayed they
him to tarry cer-
tain days.

should be solemnly devoted to him, together with the Father, who had poured out his Spirit upon them, and the Holy Ghost, who had wonderfully wrought in them: Which being done, the new converts earnestly intreated *Peter* to continue with them for some time, that they might be still further instructed, strengthened, edified, and comforted by his ministrations.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How good is it for us to draw near to God, who is the only object of religious worship, and is to be addressed as such in our families, as well as secret retirements! They that truly fear him, will be conscientious in the performance of all acts of piety and morality, according to what faith and light they have; and will be importunate in their prayers for further guidance in his way. And though these regards to God and duty, are not the righteousness by which any of us are justified in his sight, or for the sake of which we can claim eternal life; yet, as far as they are found in us, they are agreeable to his perfections and will; and, though attended with great obscurity, they lie as a memorial before his throne of grace, for good: Yea, they are accepted of him to such a degree, that, rather than the souls that thus fear him shall perish, for lack of the knowledge of Christ, he will dispatch a messenger from heaven, to put them into the way of being acquainted with him by the word of the gospel: But God has appointed his gospel to be preached, not by angels, but by men, who are commanded to testify, among other things, that Jesus Christ was anointed to, and owned of God in the Messiah's office, as an evidence of which, he went about doing good, and working miracles of power and mercy of every kind; that he, at length, was put to death, and hung upon a tree, under the curse of the law; that, as he died to make atonement for sin, he rose again for the justification of all that believe in him, and that he, in his human nature, is appointed by God the Father to be the judge of the whole world at the last day. How awful and endearing is his character, as the only Saviour and Lord of all, to whom give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whoever believes in him, shall receive remission of sins! Happy souls, that are brought, by Divine Providence, under the preaching of peace by Jesus Christ, with a design of special grace toward them, and who appear before God, to hear what he has to say to them, with reverence and attention, with all readiness of mind to receive it, and with an expectation of saving benefit by it! The Holy Ghost loves to own, honour, and set in with such ministrations, and such attendances upon them; and whilst others wonder, they, who are favoured with his powerful influence, will magnify God with thanksgiving, joy, and praise, as being admitted to all the blessings and privileges of the gospel-state; and they cannot but desire to be more and more acquainted with them, established in them, and edified by them: And O with what surprising condescension, and operations of providence and grace, has God now manifested his favour to *Gentile* sinners, in publishing his gospel, and making it effectual to them, which at first was sent only to the *Jews*! They are now no longer to be deemed unclean; for God has no respect of persons, on account of external characters and circumstances of any kind; but believers of all nations are now upon a level; and baptism, instead of circumcision, is alike the initiating seal of God's

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was anointed to his office as the Messiah: and this may be the reason of its being generally recorded in this manner in the *Acts of the apostles*. And as these *Gentile* privileges of the gate had before believed in God the Father, and could not but now believe in the Holy Ghost, under whose powerful influence they felt themselves to be at this very time; there was the less need of taking

notice that they were baptized into the belief and profession of the Sacred Three; though it is not to be thought, but that the apostle kept to the form of administering the ordinance which Christ himself had expressly prescribed, as to be done in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (*Math.* xxviii. 19.) See the note on *chap.* ii. 38.

God's covenant to all that are taken into it. How earnest should we be in inquiring after the only way of salvation by a Redeemer! How concerned that our families and friends may be brought into it with ourselves! And what a pleasure is it to have devout and faithful servants, that may be trusted, and will heartily join with us in serving the Lord! How readily should the ministers of Christ go, wherever he calls them, in hopes of success, whatsoever difficulties or discouragements may lie in their way! And how worthy are they to be entertained with hospitality and friendship, as *Peter* was by the centurion, and by *Simon*, the tanner!

C H A P. XI.

Peter is accused by his brethren at Jerusalem for going in to the Gentiles, 1,—5. He makes his defence to their abundant satisfaction, 6,—18. The gospel spreads abroad with great success in Antioch, and other places round about, 19,—21. Barnabas is sent, and, finding Paul, goes with him, to help forward the good work there, 22,—26. Agabus prophesies of a great famine; and relief is sent by the Gentile converts to the brethren in Judea, 27,—30.

TEXT.

AND the apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,

3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

4 But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning,

PARAPHRASE.

NOW (A) the conversion of *Cornelius* and his friends being an entirely new, unexpected, and extraordinary case, the report of it soon spread abroad; so that the apostles and Christian brethren at *Jerusalem* heard, to their great astonishment, that the gospel of Christ, which is indeed the word of God, had been preached to, and embraced by, even the *Gentile* proselytes of the gate, though they had never been circumcised.

2, 3 And when the apostle *Peter* went up to *Jerusalem*, shortly after, to carry the joyful tidings himself: the *Jewish* believers, that were still fond of legal rites and ceremonies, as religious badges of distinction between them and other nations, were so far from owning him to be the supreme, or infallible head of the church, or of submitting to his authority as such, by an implicit faith, that they were offended at him, called him to an account, and quarrelled with him for the part he had born in that affair; saying, with warm resentment and indignation, You have taken too much upon you, have prostituted our peculiar privileges, defiled yourself, stretched and abused your apostolic commission, and brought a scandal upon Christianity, by going, as we have heard, to preach the gospel to uncircumcised *Gentiles*, and conversing freely with them.

4, 5 But *Peter* being fully assured in himself, and desirous to satisfy them, that he had done nothing therein, without an express order from God, frankly related to them the plain matter of fact, in all its circumstances, from first to last; and set its several parts in a just light,

ning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,

5 I was in the city of Joppa, praying: and in a trance I saw a vision. A certain vessel descended, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners: and it came even to me.

6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and souls of the air.

7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed that call not thou common.

as he went along, that they themselves might judge of it, saying, I was not long since at the maritime town called *Joppa*, where I took up my quarters with a *Jewish* brother, *Simon*, the tanner; and being one day at prayer, on the top of his house about noon, I found myself to be very hungry, and would willingly have eaten something; but, while the dinner was preparing, (*chap.* x. 9, 10.) a visionary representation of a surprising scene was made to me, in the following manner: There appeared in my view, a certain large bag, like a great sheet, with its four corners tied together, which was let down by them from heaven, and gradually descended till it came so low, as to be very near me, and to point, as it were, at me, that I might look upon myself to be immediately concerned in what might be designed by it.

6, 7 When, looking earnestly at it, I critically observed its contents, and plainly saw, through the openings, all manner of living creatures, such as tame cattle and wild beasts, that walk with their four feet on the earth, and things that creep, without any visible appearance of legs, and fowls that fly in the air: And whilst I was ruminating upon this strange sight, and considering what might be its meaning, I distinctly heard a voice, apparently divine, directed to me, saying, *Peter*, Get up from your knees immediately, kill and eat any of these animals, that may be most agreeable to your taste, without scruple, on account of the religious distinctions that have been made between some and others of them.

8 But I, supposing that this was designed only for the trial of my faith, replied, No, Lord, I dare not go into such a downright violation of the law of *Moses*: For I have always hitherto cautiously abstained from so much as tasting any thing which has been disallowed by that law, and deemed unclean.

9 But to set me to rights in that matter, the voice came to me again from heaven, by which I was assured that it was of God, saying, in a way of reply to my objection, The great God, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof, has an indisputable right of granting, or denying the use of his creatures, as he pleases; and what he has seen fit to purify from ceremonial defilement, it is not for you to refuse, under pretence that it is unlawful or unclean: He thereby intimating to me, that all *Mosaical* distinctions of meat were, under the gospel-state, to be laid aside; and that the difference between *Jews* and *Gentiles*, on religious accounts, was no longer to subsist; but that persons of all nations were to be gathered into the Christian church.

10 And this was done three times : and all were drawn up again into heaven.

11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come into the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me.

12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover, these six brethren accompanied me ; and we entered into the man's house :

13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter :

14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

10 And the vision and voice were repeated three times over, to shew that the thing intended was certain, and to engage my attention, and prevent mistakes; and then the whole scene was regularly withdrawn, being taken up again into heaven, from whence it came.

11 And still further to instruct and confirm me in the design of all this; whilst I was thinking of it with wonder, and was hesitating in my own mind about it, observe a remarkable occurrence, answering to a promotion which the Spirit of God had just before given me of it, (*chap. x. 19.*) : There were, at that very instant, three messengers actually arrived, who had inquired me out, and were below at *Simon's* house, and had been sent from *Cesarea*, to desire me to go with them thither.

12 And in the previous notice which the Holy Spirit gave me of them, by an immediate powerful suggestion, he commanded me to comply with their request, without fear or scruple, though they were *Gentiles* : Accordingly, upon this warrant, I went along with them; and for proceeding with the utmost caution, and preventing offence, I took with me from *Joppa*, the six *Jewish* brethren here present, to be witnesses of all that might pass; and, as they can certify, we all went together into *Cornelius's* house, where I found him, and several of his relations and particular friends, waiting for me. (*Chap. x. 24.*)

13 And upon my asking the reasons for his sending for me, he told me, that having set apart some time for solemn fasting and prayer, in his own house and family, four days before I saw him, (*chap. x. 29, 30.*) he was favoured with a vision of an holy angel, in the form of a man, who stood before him in shining garments, like an inhabitant of the heavenly regions, where all is light; and, assuring him that his prayer, for further discoveries of God's mind and will, were answered, (*chap. x. 31.*) charged him to send faithful messengers to *Joppa*, and there to inquire for one *Simon*, who was particularly known and distinguished by his surname *Peter*.

14 He, said the angel, having a commission to preach the gospel, will instruct you into the knowledge of the true Messiah, and of the only way of salvation, through him; that you and your household may come under the promises, and be partakers of the privileges which belong to the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, according to the tenor of the covenant, as made with him; and that a spiritual and eternal salvation, which has heretofore been confined to the *Jews*, may now come to your *Gentile*

tile family, through faith in that Saviour whom *Peter* will preach unto you.

15 And, as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

15 Upon hearing this, and comparing *Cornelius's* vision with my own, I clearly understood, and was fully confirmed in the meaning of both, as carrying a divine command, that I should communicate the gospel to those *Gentiles* who were profelytes of the gate, and as such feared the Lord: And as soon as I began to preach Christ to them, in his awful and endearing characters, and to recommend him as the proper object of their faith, in order to their receiving the remission of sins, (*chap. x. 36,—43.*) God signally owned the word of his grace, by shedding down the Holy Ghost, who came upon them, not only with gracious influence to enlighten their minds, and change their hearts; but likewise, in an immediate and miraculous manner, bestowing upon them the gift of tongues, even as he did on us, the apostles, and other *Jewish* believers, at the first wonderful effusion of the Spirit, on the famous day of Pentecost. (*Acts ii.*)

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

16 Then, to my still further satisfaction and joy, I could not help reflecting upon that well-known promise of our blessed Lord, just before he took his affecting leave of us, and ascended up to glory, (*Acts i. 5.*) saying, *John*, my forerunner, indeed administered to you the baptism of water; but, as the fruit of my exaltation at the Father's right hand, ye shall be partakers of a much nobler, and more efficacious baptism, of which his was a lively emblem, by my shedding down the Holy Ghost, in all his gifts and graces, abundantly upon you: And I cannot but observe, with pleasure, how this glorious promise was as truly and evidently fulfilled in these *Gentile* converts, as it had been before upon ourselves and other native *Jews*.

17 In as much therefore as God, in the riches, freedom, and sovereignty of his grace, undeniably conferred on those believers the like precious gift of the Holy Ghost, as he had done, at the beginning of this new dispensation, upon us, the natural seed of *Abraham*, who received and trusted in Christ by faith, as our Lord and Saviour, and the anointed of God to all his offices of prophet, priest, and king; Who was I, or what do ye take me to be, that I should be desirous, or, had I been so wicked, that I should be able (*κατανα*) to hinder or defeat the will and counsel, authority, power, and grace of God, which in so wonderful a manner appeared to them? Or that they having the thing signified, I should refuse applying the sign of it to them in baptism?

17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that

I that I could withstand God?

baptism? I would not, I could not, I durst not go about to deny them this privilege, and so fight against God.

16 When they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God shew'd to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

18 This free and genuine account, which the apostle *Peter* gave of all the transactions that had passed relating to this grand affair, was so satisfactory and striking, that as soon as the rest of the apostles, and all the brethren, who had before been highly offended at him for it, heard how the Lord himself so manifestly directed, ordered, and succeeded it, they were thoroughly pacified, and had not one word to object against it, or against *Peter* for interesting himself so far in it. On the contrary, all their prejudices against these uncircumcised *Gentiles*, were turned into brotherly love and affection toward them, their envy into joy, and their murmurings into praise; and they immediately broke out into lively and solemn ascriptions of glory to God, on account of this extensive, unexpected display of his power and mercy, and unexampled advancement of the Redeemer's cause and interest, saying, with high approbation and holy ecstasy, From all this it appears, with demonstrative evidence, that God, in the surprising riches of his grace, and by the mighty operation of his hand, has freely vouchsafed to the once abandoned *Gentiles* themselves, a sincere repentance for sin, and conversion to himself, which has brought them to a spiritual life, and shall issue in eternal life, that they may share with us, in all the privileges and blessings of his covenant here, and may sit down with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, in the kingdom of God for ever.

17 Now they which were scattered abroad, upon the persecution that arose about *Stephen*, travelled as far as *Phenice*, and *Cyprus*, and *Antioch*, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

19 Now till this first admission of the devout, tho' uncircumcised *Gentiles*, to the faith and fellowship of the gospel; those ministering servants of Christ, who had been, four or five years before, driven from *Jerusalem* to all parts of *Juden* and *Samaria*, by the severities of the persecution, which immediately upon *Stephen's* death was raised and carried on, with great fury by *Saul* before his conversion, in concert with other inveterate enemies to Christianity, (*chap. viii. 1.*) these servants of Christ, I say, were indefatigably laborious in going about, and preaching the glad tidings of salvation through *Palestine*, till at length they went further, and reached as far as *Phenicia*, a province in the coast of *Syria*, and to *Cyprus*, one of the largest islands in the *Mediterranean*, and to *Antioch*, the metropolis of *Syria*: (See the note on *chap. xiii. 14.*) But in all these dispersements, till now, they confined their ministrations of the word of faith to the *Jews* only, whom they

met with in those *Gentile* countries; they not, as yet, understanding that the gospel was to be preached to any other sort of people.

20 And some of them were men of Cyprus, and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

20 And some of these preachers were inhabitants of Cyprus, and other of Cyrene, a noted city in Africa, who hearing of the conversion of *Cornelius*, and of his family and friends, all proselytes of the gate, and how it had been represented to, and approved of by, the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem, (ver. 18.) they, arriving at Antioch, took encouragement from thence to apply themselves, not only to such Jews as used the Greek language*, but likewise to the devout Gentiles, who were sometimes called the Greeks; preaching to them a crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour, who is Lord of all.

21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

21 And the arm of the Lord was revealed, (Isa. liii. 1.) his mighty power attended their ministrations, not merely in the wonderful miracles that were wrought to confirm their doctrine, which multitudes saw, and all might see, without any saving advantage to themselves; but also in effectually working with it upon the souls of their hearers: And this produced such glorious and happy fruits, that abundance of them believed in the Lord Jesus Christ: And, as an evidence of the sincerity of their faith, they, like a willing people in the day of his power, were turned in heart and life from all their self-confidences, and all their iniquities to him, as their only Saviour, the Lord their righteousness and strength, and to God through him, as their chief good and highest end.

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas,

22 The joyful news of this great harvest, not only of Hellenist Jews, but likewise of Gentile proselytes of the gate, soon reached the church, which, notwithstanding the violence of the times, still subsisted at Jerusalem, under the care and direction of the apostles, who frequently resorted thither: And as Barnabas was a man

N O T E.

* Some copies read (ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΑΙ) the Grecians; but the Alexandrian manuscript, and the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read (ΕΛΛΗΝΕΣ) the Greeks. Vid. Mil. in Loc. I have therefore taken both into the Paraphrase, but am inclined to think that the Greeks, or devout Gentiles, are principally, if not only intended; because this best suits the sense, connection, and order of the history: For the conversion of the Grecians or Hellenists, who were as properly Jews as any others, (see the note on John xii. 20.) was taken notice of before in the course of this history, (chap. vi. 1.); and they seemed to be intended by the Jews mentioned ver.

19. of this chap. who are called the twelve tribes scattered abroad, Jam. i. 1. But here the Greeks are opposed to the Jews; and an account is given of the time when the gospel was first preached, and embraced among the devout Gentiles, or proselytes of the gate, consequent to its being received by the Hellenist Jews; and so its gradual advances through Judea and Samaria, to the uttermost parts of the earth, is set in a clear and regular view. Vid. Miscel. Sac. History IV. p. 13, &c. But afterwards great debates arose about those believers being circumcised. See Lightfoot's Harmony of the New Testament, vol. I. p. 286.

has, that he should go as far as Antioch.

a man of excellent talents, and a native of *Cyprus*, (*chap. iv. 36.*) the church at *Jerusalem*, in concurrence with the apostles, deputed * and solemnly set him apart, as a proper person to be sent into those quarters, that he might go through them, (*δυσκον*) even as far as *Antioch*, to salute the new converts there, in the name of the Lord, and to further assist and establish them in the faith, hope, and holiness of the gospel.

23 Who, when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

23 Though this was a long journey, *Antioch* being about three hundred miles distant from *Jerusalem*, he willingly undertook it, for the service of Christ and immortal souls; and when, upon his arrival at that great city, he saw the evident tokens and fruits of the grace of God, which had made a wonderful change upon the hearts, and the lives and conversation of multitudes there, he, like a true son of consolation and of exhortation, (*παράκλητος*) *chap. iv. 36.*) laid himself out, to the utmost, in stirring up their pure minds, and encouraging them, by many comfortable and persuasive considerations, taken from the riches and freeness of that grace which had manifested itself to them, in the inestimable blessings it had conferred upon them, in the securities and hopes it afforded them, and in the clearing as well as solemn obligations it laid upon them, to adhere to Christ, and to abide by their holy profession of his name in a way of dependence upon him, and devotedness to him, with steadfastness and perseverance, and with all the united powers of their souls.

24 For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

24 For this *Barnabas* was a man of a most excellent spirit and temper, disinterested, obliging, courteous, generous, and benevolent, and abundantly furnished with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, and with an extensive knowledge of the doctrines of Christ, and a strong and lively faith in him, as revealed therein: And the Lord Jesus attended his ministrations to the people of this place, with such efficacious power on their hearts and consciences, that still many more were wrought upon to believe in him, and to enter into a solemn profession of his name †, by their being baptized and brought into a church-state, for walking in all the ordinances of the ~~gospel~~, and in the fellowship of the gospel.

25 Then

N O T E S.

* The sending forth of *Barnabas* by the church at *Jerusalem*, seems to be like what was afterwards done by the church at *Antioch*, when *Barnabas* and *Saul* were separated for the work, wherunto the Holy Ghost called them, with fasting, and prayer, and imposition of hands, and were sent away. *Chap. xiii. 1, 2, 3.*

† Added to the Lord, may be of much the same import with added to the church, *chap. ii. 47.* and so may intimate, that these believing proselytes of the gate were, together with the Hellenist Jews, formed into a church-state, upon their first conversion at *Antioch*, as the believing Jews had been before at *Jerusalem*.

26 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul.

25 Then so large a field of service opening in this populous city, *Barnabas*, intent upon his Lord's work, and desirous of having a faithful fellow-labourer in this harvest; and having heard that *Saul* was about an hundred miles off, preaching at, and round about *Tarsus*, a chief city of *Cilicia*, and his native place, (*chap. xxi. 39.*) he went thither to find him out; who having been born on *Gentile* ground, was the more likely to be acceptable among the proselytes of the gate; and whom he highly esteemed, and, about three or four years before, had introduced and recommended to the apostles at *Jerusalem*, as an eminent instance of sovereign grace, and as a very able and zealous advocate for the cause of Christ. (*Chap. ix. 27, 28, 29.*)

36 And, when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people.

26 And when he met with him, he acquainted him with the wide and effectual door that was opened at *Antioch*; and was so far from seeking his own honour, or having any uneasiness at the thought of being outshone by a brighter light, that he intreated *Saul's* assistance, who cheerfully accompanied him thither. And God having still much more work for them to do at that place, his providence ordered their staying there a full year; during which time they improved all opportunities for frequently assembling with, and ministering to this new church of devout *Gentiles*, that had embraced the faith of Christ; and they preached the gospel promiscuously and freely to abundance of other people, that came to attend on their ministrations: And whereas hitherto the *Jewish* converts had been called by their enemies, in a way of reproach, *Galileans*, *Nazareans*, and the like; and by one another, *disciples*, *believers*, *brethren*, the *saints*, and the *church*, to denote their acknowledgment of Jesus as their master, and their faith and love, piety and holiness, in conformity to the doctrine they had learned of him; so God put a peculiar honour upon this church of converted proselytes, calling them by another, and a new name, which it was prophesied the mouth of the Lord should name, (*Isa. lxi. 2. and lxx. 15.*); for as the various sects of philosophers, *Platonists*, *Epicureans*, and others, took their names from their first founders; so these believers at *Antioch* were the first, who in a still higher sense, not without warrant from divine intimations, * publicly and solemnly

N O T E.

* It is well known that (*χρηματισμὸς*) the word here used, commonly, if not always, in the New Testament signifies to be divinely *warmed*, or *warned of God*: And this is the sense in which our sacred historian used it,

chap. x. 12. and Luke ii. 26. It is therefore highly probable, that this is the new name, which the mouth of the Lord named, by immediate suggestion to *Saul* and *Barnabas*, or to some of the *Antiochian* believers; and that they

people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

ly took upon themselves the name of *Christians*, in opposition to unbelieving *Jews* and *heathens*, and all sorts of infidels; thereby professing, and glorying in their relation to *Christ*, as the only anointed Saviour; in their entire dependence upon him, holy unction and high expectations from him; and in their obligations, devotedness, and obedience to him, and imitation of him; and thereby shewing that all invidious distinctions between believing *Jews* and *Gentiles* should cease for ever, now they were incorporated together into one and the same body of *Christ*.

27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

27 And as there were prophets in the Christian church, * who were eminent ministers, next in office to the apostles, (1 Cor. xii. 28.) and to whom the Spirit of truth, according to Christ's promise, (John xvi. 13.) revealed some future events, for the direction of the church's conduct in particular cases, and for the confirmation of the gospel, when the facts that were foretold should come to pass; so, about this time, some of these holy and inspired men, having heard what great things God was doing in these parts, came from *Jerusalem* to *Antioch*, to counsel, comfort, and establish the Christians, and help forward the work of the Lord there.

28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world; which came

28 Among these, *Agabus* by name, who afterwards foretold *Paul's* sufferings and bonds, (chap. xxi. 10, 11.) rose up one day in a public assembly, and declared, by the spirit of prophecy, that as our Lord himself had predicted that *famines* would be among the signs which should precede his coming to destroy *Jerusalem*, (Luke xxi. 11.) so there would very soon be such a scarcity of corn, as would be very extensive; would grievously oppress the whole land of *Judea* in particular *, and even a great

N O T E S.

they thereupon took it solemnly upon them, as the distinguishing, and yet common character of the faithful in *Christ Jesus*, in opposition to all unbelieving *Jews* and *heathens*. And as to its having been taken upon them in a public and solemn manner, we are told that, in other writers, "This word (*χριστιανισμός*) is used with regard to edicts and proclamations, such particularly as contained the people's professions of allegiance to emperors, and the privileges granted by them to the people; after which mutual declaration, the emperor in that place was publicly acknowledged, and the account of state-transactions were reckoned from that æra." Dr. *Staubert's* paraphrase on the epistles, &c. vol. iv. p. 312.

* See a particular account of these prophets at large in Dr. *Whitby's* general preface

to the epistles, § 12. and in *Misellany. Sac. Essay* i. pag. 45.

Josephus, who wrote principally about the affairs of the *Jews*, says, in his antiquities, lib. xix. cap. 2. That the famine spread over their country: And *Eusebius*, in his *Chronicon*, places it in the fourth year of *Claudius*; and in his *ecclesiastical history*, lib. ii. chap. 8. takes notice, that it was recorded by historians, who were most abhorrent of the Christian religion, and that it oppressed the world, or the *Roman* empire, (*τοῦ οὐμανίου*) which, in the days of its pride and vast dominion, the *Romans* often stiled the whole world; (*οὐκ οὐκ παλαιὰ καὶ οὐκ οὐκ οὐκ*) and as *Luke* himself used the phrase in this sense, *Luke* ii. 1 it may not be necessary to confine the extent of this famine to the land of *Judea*, as some learned men have done: And though

came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea.

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

a great part of the *Roman* empire, to such a degree, that the poor would be in great want of bread; which accordingly fell out about two years afterwards, in the fourth year of the emperor *Claudius Cæsar*.

29 Then the Christians at *Antioch*, who were a trading people, and whom God had prospered in their secular affairs, believing that he had revealed this important secret to his servant the prophet; and taking it as a seasonable hint of what he was about to do, and of what he called them to, by his Providence, came into a common resolution and agreement, that every one of them, in proportion to his ability and abundance, (*κατὰ τὴν ἰκανότητά του*) would cheerfully testify their affection to their *Jewish* brethren in the faith, that resided in *Judea*; where the poor, many of which received the gospel, were very numerous, through a general want of traffick in those parts; where the difficulty of the times to the poor saints was exceeding great; and where the famine was like to be most raging: For as these *Gentile* converts had been made partakers of their spiritual things, by receiving the gospel from thence; so they thought it their duty to minister to them in carnal or temporal things, (*Rom. xv. 27.*) by relieving their necessities.

30 And as they had a willing mind, so there was a readiness to perform the good purposes of their hearts, which they did by making liberal collections; and that their bounty might be distributed with faithfulness and impartiality, as need might require, they sent it, against the days of scarcity, to the officers *, and particularly the deacons of the church at *Jerusalem*, by the hands of *Barnabas* and *Saul*; who readily undertook this service, and were glad of such a favourable opportunity of reporting there the great things that the Lord had done among the proselytes of the gate at *Antioch*, of setting them in the most advantageous light, and of cultivating a good understanding between the *Jewish* and *Gentile* believers, and further helping the faith and joy of the disciples in *Judea*.

RECOL.

NOTES.

though mention is made, *ver. 29.* of the disciples sending relief, according to their ability, to *Judea*, without taking notice of their sending to any other place; this may only intimate, that the providence of God ordered, and over-ruled this famine, so soon after the conversion of the *Gentile* proselytes, to give them opportunities of softening the prejudices of the *Jews* in *Judea*, and ingratiating themselves with them, by their liberal distributions to the poor of that country, which, perhaps, was most afflicted by the

famine's prevailing more there than in other parts.

* It is probable, that these elders, and those mentioned *chap. xv.* were some of Christ's first disciples, upon whom the Holy Ghost had fallen in a plentiful effusion of gifts and graces, on the famous day of *Pentecost*, *chap. ii.* and that out of them the prophets and teachers were taken, and the first deacons were chosen, *chap. vi.* See *Miscel. Sac.* vol. II. p. 110, — 119.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a pleasure is it to hear of sinners receiving the gospel; and how much more so, to see the evident fruits of the grace of God, as effectually working in them! The honour and interest of the dear Redeemer, and the good of immortal souls, are so eminently advanced hereby, that we ought to glorify God on this account: and yet, alas! How apt are prejudices, envy, and jealousy to rise, in the hearts of some weak Christians, at the thought of their enemies, and persons of detested characters, like the *Gentiles*, being made partakers of equal privileges and blessings with themselves! But the servants of Christ must follow his directions and execute his commission, in preaching the gospel to every creature, how much soever some may be offended at it; and yet they should be ready to clear their conduct therein to scrupulous minds, and to such as would rejoice in proper evidence, that it is of God, and that he owns it. Who are we, that any of us should go about to withstand God, who distributes his free favours to whom he pleases, and over-rules even the violence of persecutors to the spreading of the gospel; and who, by the power of his Spirit attending it, brings great numbers to believe and turn to the Lord! And when he has granted to any repentance unto life, what an honour should they count it to be vested in the privileges, and a't up to the profession and obligations, that are included in their being called after Christ's name! How openly should they avow their character, as *Christians*; and how cheerfully hold communion one with another, though distinguished by other denominations, like the circumcised and the uncircumcised! How concerned should they all be to cleave with all purpose of heart to the Lord! And with what readiness of mind should the rich communicate to the poor in times of want; and especially in times of great scarcity and famine, which never come upon the earth without the foreknowledge of God; and which his providence sometimes involves his own people in, for the trial, exercise, and improvement of their own, or of others faith and love, as well as of various other graces, and of their self-denying obedience!

C H A P. XII.

Herod persecutes the Christians, kills the apostle James, and imprisons Peter, 1,—4. Peter is brought out of prison by an angel, in answer to the prayers of the church for him, 5,—19. Herod, in the midst of his pride, is struck by an angel, and dies miserably, 20,—23. After his death the word of God prevails exceedingly, and Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch, 24, 25.

TEXT.

NOW, about that time, Herod the king stretch-

PARAPHRASE.

ABOUT the time that the gospel had such a wonderful spread among the proselytes of the gate, as well as the Jewish strangers at Antioch, and that Agabus foretold an approaching famine, (*chap. xi. 26, 28.*) Herod * Agrippa, a man of the same spirit with Herod the great who murdered the infants of Bethlehem, in his thirst for the

N O T E.

* Herod was the surname of this Agrippa, and he was the grandson of Herod the great, and the nephew of Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, (*1. xxi. iii. 1.*) and was himself not only made governor of Galilee by Caligula in Antipas's room, but was confirmed therein, with the addition of the kingdom of

Judea, by Claudius Caesar, to whom he had been serviceable in obtaining his advancement to the imperial crown: And he was the father of that king Agrippa, before whom Paul was brought, and whom he almost persuaded to be a Christian, *chap. xxvi. 1,—28.*

ed forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

3 And, because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread.)

4 And, when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quartermasters of soldiers to keep him, intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.

5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer

the blood of Jesus, (*Matt. ii. 16.*) and with *Herod Antipas*, who cut off the head of *John the Baptist*, and treated our Lord himself with derision, (*Luke ix. 9. and xxiii. 11.*) this *Herod Agrippa*, who was king of *Judea* and *Galilee*, began to raise a fresh persecution against the church at *Jerusalem*, greatly distressing many of its members.

2 And after he had harassed, and inflicted various punishments on some of less note and figure among them, he proceeded to still bolder and more cruel acts of violence, even to the taking away the life of the apostle *James*, who was the son of *Zebedee*, and brother to the apostle *John*, and for his zeal and fervour was surnamed by our Lord, a son of thunder, (*Mark iii. 17.*) And so, according to Christ's prediction, (*Matt. xx. 23.*) he was baptized with the baptism of sufferings, and that even to the shedding of his blood; and was the first of all the apostles that suffered martyrdom for his sake, which *, for the manner of it, was by cutting off his head with a sword.

3 And as one act of wickedness leads the way to another, and *Herod* found that this execution was very acceptable to, and highly ingratiated him with, the chief people among the *Jews*, such as their priests, elders, and rulers, who continued to be inveterate enemies to the gospel of Christ, he proceeded to apprehend the apostle *Peter* also, just as the paschal feast was coming on, with an intention of making a sacrifice of him, who was most remarkably active, bold, and instrumental in the conversion of *Jews*.

4 When therefore he had seized him by his officers, he ordered him to be clapped up in prison, and committed him to the care of sixteen soldiers, strictly charging them to keep watch and ward over him, four at a time in their turns, that he might by no means escape, as he had before, (*chap. v. 19.*) *Herod* designing to bring him out, and expose him to the rage of the people, after the passover; but not during the time of that festival, lest they, who were better affected toward the Christians than their rulers were, (*chap. ii. 47.*) should claim their privilege of begging that he might be released to them, according to their custom at that feast. (*Matt. xxvii. 15.*)

5 For this reason, he kept *Peter* in close custody, till a favourable opportunity might offer for cutting him off: But the church at *Jerusalem*, being apprehensive of his danger

N O T E.

* As far as I find, it is generally agreed, that, according to *Eusebius's* account, (*Eccl. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 5.*) *James* was behead-

ed with the sword; and some have thought, that this was done by the sword, as a more disgraceful way of execution than by the axe.

er was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.

6 And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and the keepers before the door kept the prison.

7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands.

8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind

danger, and of the great importance of his life to the interest of religion; and being full of affection and concern for him, united their earnest, importunate, and frequent prayers to God, day and night, on his behalf, in faith and hope that he would graciously and powerfully p^{er}severe, in his own way and time, for his deliverance.

6 And as he gave them opportunity and space for fervent, solemn, and repeated addresses to a throne of grace, that he might glorify his own name, as a God hearing prayer; so he seasonably, and in a surprizing manner, answered their supplications: For the very night before the day which *Herod* had appointed to bring the apostle out of jail, in order to his being publicly put to death; *Peter*, not being terrified by his adversaries, nor yet expecting immediate deliverance, laid himself down and slept with a composed and quiet heart, as knowing that he suffered for a good cause; two of the soldiers at the same time being chained *, one to his right hand, and another to the left, to prevent his privately slipping away from them; and two others standing as centinels at the door of the prison, that none might force its locks and bars, and open it for his escape; in this manner four at a time kept watch and ward. (*ver.* 4.)

7 And whilst every thing was thus made as sure as possible, for detaining him, behold how wonderfully God appeared at the critical juncture, and surmounted all difficulties in releasing him! All on a sudden, an angel of the Lord, dispatched from heaven, entered the prison, and was surrounded with such bright and glorious rays as enlightened the whole room; and having roused *Peter* out of his sleep, by giving him a jog on his side, he †, unawares to all the soldiers, (*ver.* 18.) gently raised his body; and, speaking to him at the same time, said, Stand upon your feet without delay. Upon which the chains, that fastened him to the two soldiers lying by him, were miraculously snapped asunder, as if they had been but twined thread, and fell off from his hands.

8 The angel likewise said to him, with authority and engaging kindness, Gird those clothes about you, in which you have lain, and are now clad; and put on your

N O T E S.

* The Roman way of chaining prisoners was, by fastening one end of an iron chain of some length to the right hand of the prisoner, and the other end to the left hand or arm of a soldier, if but one had the custody of him; and by fastening another chain, in like manner, to the left hand of the prisoner, and the right of another soldier, if he were

committed to the care of two, as *Peter* was.

† The soldiers might be either cast into a deep sleep, or struck with blindness, or else with such confusion and astonishment at this awful and illustrious appearance of the angel, as made them incapable of observing what became of *Peter*.

bind on thy sandals : and so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.

9 And he went out, and followed him, and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on thro' one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.

11 And when Peter was come to himself he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath

your sandals, tying them fast with their thongs to your feet; which he accordingly did: And the angel further added, Throw your loose upper garment about you, and then come after me; intimating, that he was sent of God to deliver him out of prison, and out of the cruel hands of Herod.

9 And Peter obeying the word of command, without hesitancy or disputing, readily followed his heavenly guide, wherever he might go before him; and yet, knowing himself to have been in a sound sleep, he did not immediately apprehend, that all this management of the angel was really matter of fact; but rather imagined that he had only a clear visionary representation of these things, in a dream, as tho' they had been real.

10 When the angel had conducted him undiscovered, through the first and second watches, that were set for the greater safety in the night *, they came to the iron gate, that stood between them and the city; and tho' it was exceeding strong and heavy, and well fastened with locks and bars, it, by an invisible power, was made to fly open, as readily, and all at once, as if it had opened merely of itself; hereupon they went out of the prison-yard with safety, free from all obstructions that lay in their way; and having walked together the length of one street in the city, which brought the apostle out of the clutches of his keepers, and into his own knowledge, and gave him a fair opportunity of shifting for himself, the angel immediately disappeared; there being no further occasion for extraordinary assistance to compleat his escape.

11 Then Peter, being alone, and, having recovered himself from the ecstasy and surprize which had made him ready to think of himself, as only like one who dreamed of things that were too great and good to be true; he, in a composed reflection on all the circumstances of the case, said in his own mind, I am now thoroughly assured, that this was no imaginary scene, by way of divine premonition of what should be; but that the Lord Jesus has actually sent one of his holy angels, who are all ministering servants unto the heirs of salvation, (*Heb. i. 14.*); and that, by the kind mini-

stration

N O T E.

* It is mostly thought, that the prison was in the suburbs, because the iron gate is said to have led into the city; but then one would be apt to expect, that, being already out of the prison, *escaping, they went out* to the city, should rather have been, *they went into*: It therefore seems, that the iron gate, which led into the city, was only a

strong outward gate between the prison and the city, whether the prison itself were within, or without the walls; and, perhaps, the first and second watches were rather such as were placed in the prison-yard for greater security, than publick watches belonging to the city.

had delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

11 And, when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together, praying.

12 And, as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda.

13 And, when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate.

14 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was

stration of this messenger from heaven, he has miraculously delivered me out of Herod's power, who thought he had got me safe; and has disappointed the hopes of those unbelieving and malicious Jews, who were looking and longing for my death.

12 And when he had deliberated with himself what might be his prudence and duty to do, for improving this extraordinary deliverance, he went, under a happy direction of Providence, to the dwelling-house of Mary, one of his friends, (who was the sister of Barnabas, *Col. iv. 10.*) and the mother of John Mark) where a considerable number of the church were assembled together, as they used to do in the night, for fear of the Jews; (*John xx. 19.*) and, encouraged by Christ's promise, (*Matth. xviii. 19, 20.*) were spending time in solemn prayer, as they had often done before, (*ver. 5.*) for their beloved apostle in bonds, that God would appear for him at this critical juncture, since Herod had resolved to proceed against him the next morning. (*ver. 6.*)

13 And as soon as Peter knocked at the door of the porch (*τῆς θύρας τοῦ προθύρου*) of the house, a young woman, whose name was Rhoda, went to listen and inquire who he was, or whom he would speak with, and what his business might be at that unreasonable time of night, that she might be satisfied whether it were a friend, or an enemy, before she would venture to let him in.

14 Upon Peter's telling her his name, and desiring to be let in, she, well knowing his voice, was so excessively transported with joy, and surprised at the unexpected and unlikely event, that she had not patience, and presence of mind enough, to open the door, but ran back with all speed to the company, and told them, that Peter himself stood at the door, seeking entrance; God having answered their prayers, while they were yet speaking, according to his promise, (*Isa. lxi. 24.*)

15 Then they being as much surprised as she, and knowing that he was in fast hold, cried out, That is impossible; some excess of your passions therefore must certainly have turned your brain, and made you talk thus wildly: But she persisting, like one in her senses, that she was positively sure it was he; they concluded * that

N O T E.

* As the word *αγγελος* signifies a messenger, as well as an angel, I have taken it in both senses; but am inclined to think that the last was intended, because angels often appeared in those days, and an angel was more likely than a messenger from Peter, to imitate his voice; and these disciples seem to have received the common notion of the

Jews in those days, that every good man had his tutelary, or guardian angel, who, on special occasions, could assume the shape and voice of the man himself; though it do not appear that there is any foundation, in the word of God, for this conceit, of each one's having his particular guardian angel, in distinction from others. *Vid. Cels. in Luc.*

was even so. Then said they, It is his angel.

that it was either some messenger from him, who spoke like him, or mentioning his name was misunderstood, as tho' he had called himself *Peter*; or that it was an angel from heaven, who imitated the tone of his voice, and came to bring them some tidings concerning him.

16 But Peter continued knocking. And when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished.

16 But while they were debating the matter, *Peter*, finding that the family was up, continued still knocking; and the company, being desirous to see how far the young woman might be in the right, ordered the door to be opened: And when, upon seeing the apostle, they were satisfied it was really he himself, they were exceedingly amazed to think how he got thither, and could not forbear asking him about it.

17 But he, beckening unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

17 But as no time was to be lost in particular inquiries and answers, lest his enemies should pursue and find him out, he made a sign with his hand to intimate his desire that they would be silent, and give him audience; and then briefly told them in what a wonderful manner the Lord Jesus, by an angel, had set him at liberty: And as none of the other apostles were present at this assembly; but *James* the less, the son of *Alpheus*, (*Matth. x. 3.* see the note there) was then * not far off, he ordered them to go and acquaint him, and the rest of the brethren, how miraculously he was brought out of prison, in answer to their prayers, that they might bless God for it, and be comforted and encouraged by it. Thereupon he took his leave of the company, and went to another place, that they might not be exposed to danger for his sake, and that he might wait for a proper opportunity of getting out of the way of his enemies, and going on with his Lord's work, wherever he should call him.

18 Now, as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers what was become of Peter.

18 Now, as soon as the following day came on, the guards awaking, missed their prisoner, and were in the utmost consternation and fright, in thinking what was become of *Peter*; one charging another with neglect, and all of them being utterly at a loss to account for his escape, and dreadfully apprehensive that the government would be extremely severe upon them, as having connived at it, or been wanting in their duty to prevent it, if not accessory to it.

19 And when Herod had sought for

19 And they had reason to be afraid of this: For when *Herod* sent for him to be brought out of jail, in order to the intended public execution, and perceived that

N O T E.

* It is uncertain whether *James* were at that time in *Jerusalem*, or in some neighbouring parts of the country; but wherever he was, neither he nor any other of the apostles could appear openly with safety, because

of the violence of *Herod's* persecution, which now seemed to be most directly levelled against such apostles as were within his reach; and therefore all the rest of them were gone from that city.

for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from *Judea* to *Cæsarea*, and there abode.

20 And Herod was highly displeased with them of *Tyre* and *Sidon*: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made *Blasphus* the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace: because their country was nourished by the king's country.

21 And, upon a set day, Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.

that he was gone; and when he had made inquiry after him in the city, but could not find him, he, summoning the soldiers to appear before him, strictly examined those four of them particularly, whose turn it was to be on their watch, how they came to lose their prisoner; and they being unable to give any account of it, he forthwith ordered that their lives should go for his. After this, he set out from *Judea* to *Cæsarea*, where he continued for some time*, to pursue his diversions in celebrating the games, which *Herod* the great had instituted to be observed every fifth year, to the honour of *Cæsar's* memory.

20 And as this *Herod Agrippa* was highly offended with, and (*θυμωμένος*) threatened to make war upon the people of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, for some misdemeanor, which he charged them with; so they took the opportunity, whilst he was in their neighbourhood, of sending ambassadors to him, by a united deputation from both those cities, to make their submission, and appease his resentment: And having obtained the friendship of *Blasphus* the king's chamberlain, who had his ear, they made use of his interest to procure their reconciliation with him, which was highly necessary for them, because, being a numerous and trading people, and having little land of their own, they could not well subsist without a supply of corn, honey, and oil, and such like provisions from *Judea*, and other parts of the king's dominions, (1 *Kings* v. 11. and *Ezek.* xxvii. 17.) which they feared he would prohibit, unless the breach were made up between him and them.

21 And upon an appointed day, when there was a great concourse of all ranks and orders of men, *Herod* appeared in wonderful pomp and state, clothed with magnificent glittering robes of silver brocade, which by the shining of the sun upon them, perfectly dazzled the eyes of the spectators, and gave him a most awful and august appearance: Thus arrayed, he placed himself on his royal seat, and made a fine speech to the people, in praise of *Cæsar's* memory †, and of his own high

N O T S.

* *Josephus* says, that he went down to *Cæsarea* for this purpose; and that it was at the end of the third year of his reign over all *Judea*. *Vid. Antiq. lib. xix. cap. 8.*

† It is very probable, that this oration was suited both to the occasion of the assembly, in honour of *Cæsar's* memory, and to the affairs that lay between *Herod* and the inhabitants of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, who are the proper antecedent to them, to whom this oration was made; and that it was calculated

to extol his own, as well as *Cæsar's* praises, on account of his power over them, and condescension to them. *Josephus* tells us, that this was on the second day of that festival; and that *Herod* went early in the morning into the theatre, clothed with a robe of curious workmanship, all of silver, which reflected the rays of the rising sun with such lustre, as struck the eyes of them that looked upon him, with a sort of dread and horror. *Antiq. lib. xix. cap. 8.*

high pretensions, and great goodness in passing by the offence of the inhabitants of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, upon their submission to him.

21 And the people gave a shout, saying. It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.

22 Thereupon the people, partly pleased with this discourse, and partly desirous to gratify his pride and ambition, surrounded him with shouts and applauses, as though he were a god *, saying, An oration delivered with such majesty and sweetness, eloquence and force, is rather the voice of an incarnate deity, or at least of one that deserves to be deified, than of a mere mortal man.

23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

23 But (2c) God soon humbled him, in a most exemplary manner, for the iniquity of his pride, and of his cruelty to the servants of Christ, as he had some other haughty tyrants and persecutors before him: For as *Nebuchadnezzar*, amidst his imperious boasts, was driven from his throne, and levelled with the brutes, (*Dan.* iv. 31, &c.) and *Belsazzar*, whilst he was lifting up himself against the Lord of heaven, had an astonishing notice of the loss of his kingdom, (*Dan.* v. 22,—28.); so the angel of the Lord, as a minister of justice, immediately struck *Herod* with a loathsome and mortal disease †, because his vanity was so tickled with the impious flatteries of the people, that, instead of checking and rebuking them, he was fond of taking those divine honours to himself, which were due, and ought to have been ascribed to God only: And so malignant was his distemper, that, in the compass of five days, he was in a manner devoured by worms, which bred in his putrified flesh, and preyed upon it, till he finished his wretched life by a most deplorable death.

24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

24 In the mean while, notwithstanding the late fierce oppositions and cruelties of *Herod* against the Christians, but especially after he was cut off, in so astonishing a manner, by the righteous hand of God, the gospel was freely preached in many places, and attended with great success in the conversion of multitudes, and in the edification and establishment of the disciples in their most holy faith.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned

25 And about this time, *Barnabas* and *Saul* having dis-

N O T E.

* Such blasphemous flattery was the more criminal in this company, as many of them were Jews, who professed to abhor the polytheism of the heathens; and perhaps they designed it as an affront to Christ, by setting up *Herod*, in opposition and preference to him, who had spoke of himself as God incarnate.

† We have account at large of this disease in *Josephus*, and of *Herod's* being forced to

acknowledge, that he, who was then cried up for a God, must die like a mortal man. *Antiq. lib. xix. cap. 8.* And *Eusebius* has related the whole story of him, as an attestation to the truth of the scripture-history of it. *Vid. Ecclesiast. hist. lib. ii. cap. 10.* See also *Whitty* on this place, for various instances of the like miserable exits of violent persecutors, who were eaten up of worms.

turned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

discharged their trust at *Jerusalem*, in delivering, and taking care about a due distribution of the charity sent by the *Antiochian* Christians to the believers there, (*chap. xi. 30.*) returned from thence back to *Antioch*, to carry on the begun work of the Lord, in that great city, and to be sent from thence to still remoter parts among the *Gentiles*, (*chap. xiii. 1, 2, &c.*) And they took along with them *John Mark*, at whose mother's house the disciples were met to pray for *Peter*, when he came to them, (*ver. 12.*) and who was *Barnabas's* nephew, (*Col. iv. 10.*) that they might train him up for the ministry; and that he might be assistant to them in their travels and labours, (*chap. xiii. 5.*) accounts of which are given at large in the following parts of this history.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

Which shall we most wonder at, the wickedness of men in promoting, or the wisdom of God in over-ruling the persecutions of the church? This is an iniquity made up of selfishness and pride, rashness and cruelty; it is nothing but *doing evil*: and as the way of sin is all down-hill, one step drags on another, and cannot tell how to stop short of usurping God's prerogative, and of imprisoning and murdering the best of men: But how pleasing soever all this may be to ignorant and furious bigots, and how much soever applauded by mean-spirited flatterers, it is highly offensive to the merciful and holy God, who often, in jealousy for his own glory, makes the haughty and most violent persecutors memorable examples of his dreadful vengeance, and delivers his faithful servants out of their hands: O with what amazing management does his providence operate, in over-ruling the worst that men can do, to subserve the propagation of the gospel, and the increase of the church; and in seasonably cutting off its implacable enemies, amidst all their pomp and grandeur! The prayers of his people are their arms of defence; and will, one time or other, prove too hard for all that oppose them; when God pours down his Spirit of grace and supplication, it is a sign that their deliverance is at hand; and the time of their extremity is his opportunity to arise for their help; in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen; he will rather send an angel from heaven, than not execute his kind designs toward them: But when he affords them ordinary means for their preservation, miracles are needless, and they ought not to expect them.

C H A P. XIII.

Saul and Barnabas are solemnly separated to their apostolic office among Gentiles, as well as Jews, in the church at Antioch, 1,—3. Their first apostolic journey, beginning at Seleucia, and proceeding from thence to Salamis and Paphos, in the isle Cyprus, 4,—7. Their encounter at Paphos with Elymas the sorcerer, and converting Sergius Paulus, 8,—12. Saul, who from that time is called Paul, goes with Barnabas and others to Perga in Pamphylia, and from thence to Antioch in Pisidia, where they preached Christ to the Jews, and devout Gentiles, many of which were converted, 13,—43. But other Jews contradicting and blaspheming, they waxed bold, and preached to the idolatrous Gentiles, with great success, 44,—49. And, the unbelieving Jews raising persecution against the apostles, they de-

part from thence to Iconium, bearing their testimony against those infidels, and leaving the disciples full of joy, 50,—52.

TEXT.

NOW there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers: as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW in the church at *Antioch*, the metropolis of *Syria*, which, consisting mostly of *Gentile* converts, (see the notes on *chap. xi. 20, 24.*) was deemed the mother-church of the believing *Gentiles*, as that at *Jerusalem* was of the believing *Jews*, and of all that should be afterwards brought to the faith of *Christ*; there were not only ordinary preachers of eminent gifts and graces, but likewise a considerable number of prophets, who were the highest rank of officers next to the apostles, (see the note on *chap. xi. 27.* and were the principal ministers in this church; as particularly the before-mentioned *Barnabas*, (*chap. xii. 25.*) and * *Simeon*, who for his tawney complexion, and the colour of his hair, was surnamed, by the *Latins*, *Niger*, which signifies *black*: There were also † *Lucius*, a native of *Cyrene*; and *Manaen*, who had been educated with *Herod Antipas*, the tetrarch of *Galilee*, (*Luke iii. 1.*) and so was such an intimate friend and favourite of that prince, as might have expected great preferments from him; but, grace having reached his heart, he, like another *Moses*, despised them all for *Christ*; And, to name no more, there was the famous *Saul*, who lately returned hither with *Barnabas* from *Jerusalem*.

* As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work where

2 Whilst, on a certain day, these inspired prophets were leading, directing, and assisting the worship of the church, in exhortations to them, and in acts of religious devotion to the Lord *Jesus*, for the honour of his name, and in obedience to his commands; and while, for the greater solemnity and continuance of the service, and humbling of themselves before him, they abstained from the usual refreshments of nature, the Holy Ghost said to them, by immediate suggestion, and † with the majesty and authority of a divine person, Set apart *Barnabas* and *Saul* in a solemn manner, as ministering servants dedicated to me, and to the good work

NOTES.

* Some have thought that this *Simeon* was *Simon the Cyrenian*, who was compelled to bear the cross after our Lord to *Mount Calvary*. (*Mat. xv. 21.*)

† We read of one *Lucius*, who is mentioned by the apostle *Paul* as a person of note, (*Rom. xvi. 21.*) he might probably be the *Lucius* here spoken of as a prophet; and Dr *Lightfoot* imagined, that this might be *Luke*, who was the writer of this history, and of that Gospel which bears his name.

‡ The Holy Spirit's using the personal

pronouns *I*, and *me*, is speaking to the prophets; and its being said, that he called the apostles to their work, and they were sent forth by him, which are all personal actions, shew him to be what we call a *person*; and his ordering, by his own authority, and in an absolute way, that *Barnabas* and *Saul* should be separated to him, as persons devoted to his honour and service, in the work to which he called them, shews that he is a *divine* person, or truly *God*.

whereunto I have called them.

3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia: and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

5 And, when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.

work to which I, together with the great Head of the church, have appointed, called and anointed them, and inclined their hearts, that they might go into distant countries, and preach among the Gentiles, as well as Jews, the unspeakable riches of Christ. (Eph. iii. 8.)

3 Accordingly, when the prophets, with the concurrence of the church, had spent some further time in fasting and prayer, for recommending them to the grace of God, (chap. xiv. 26) and for a blessing on their labours; and had laid their hands upon them, as an ordinance to their faith, and as a signal of further extraordinary furniture and assistance which he would give them for fulfilling that part of their ministry, (συναγωγῇ) they dismissed them, with high approbation of their travelling, in the quality of apostles *, to disciple all nations, according to the commission which Christ, before his ascension, had given to his servants in general.

4 They therefore (w) being in this public and solemn manner, and with this rich encouragement, sent out by the special direction, influence, and power of the Holy Spirit, began their first apostolick journey, by going directly to Seleucia, which lay about fifteen miles from Antioch, on the river Orantes; and from thence, going a ship-board, they sailed away to the island Cyprus in the Mediterranean sea, which was Barnabas's native country, and abounded with Jews.

5 And when they arrived at Salamis, which was the chief town of the eastern part of that island, over against Syria; they first of all repaired to the synagogues there, as they usually did in other places, and preached the gospel of the grace of God to the Jews, that they might give them the preference, and leave them without excuse: And John, whose surname was Mark, (chap. xii. 25.) attended them, to assist them in the

N O T E.

* The author of *Miscellaneous Sacra* has made it exceeding probable to me, that as it was necessary for an apostle to have seen the Lord after his resurrection from the dead; so Saul's late journey with Barnabas to Jerusalem, was the time when he saw the person of Christ in a trance in one of the courts of the temple, which is referred to, chap. xxii. 14. (see the note on chap. ix. 11) and that then he received his commission immediately from Christ himself, for his apostolic office, which was to be exercised principally among the idolatrous Gentiles; for till now, he preached only as a prophet, without the apostolic character, about seven or eight years to the Jews only, and about two or three

years more to the Gentile proselytes of the gate: As also that, about the same time, Barnabas was made an apostle of the Gentiles, together with him; and that this was first notified to the prophets at the church at Antioch, who could not but be pleased with these two persons, whom Infinite Wisdom had fixed upon, as the most proper and unexceptionable messengers to the heathen; because they themselves were born on Gentile ground, one at Cyprus, and the other at Tarsus; and had for a great while publicly approved themselves to be eminent and faithful ministers of the gospel. See this subject elaborately discussed in *essay II. p. 27. &c.* and *essay III. throughout.*

the work of the Lord, as private or public opportunities might offer.

6 And, when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain forcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus :

6 And when they had travelled through the greatest part of the island to *Paphos*, which was its chief city on the western coast, and had been famous among the heathens for the temple of *Venus* : At this place they met with a very noted forcerer, who dealt in the wicked art of divination, set up for a prophet and fortune-teller, and was a Jew by birth, whose name was *Bar-Jesus*, which signifies the son of *Josbua*.

7 Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man ; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

7 This infamous wretch had got access to *Sergius Paulus*, the Roman governor of the island *, endeavouring to ingratiate himself with him, who resided at this city, and was (corrector) an understanding, considerate man ; and who having heard something of the fame of *Barnabas* and *Saul*, and of the new doctrine they taught, was desirous to see them, and hear from their own mouths what they had to say about the Christian religion, that he might the better compare and judge between their pretensions and those of *Bar-Jesus* : And therefore he sent for them to come to him, as *Cornelius* had for *Peter*, (chap. x.) Providence so ordering it, that their way might be the clearer, in their first going to preach to an idolatrous Gentile, as that apostle's was, for his first preaching to the proselytes of the gate.

8 But Elymas the forcerer, (for so is his name by interpretation,) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

8 But when they went to instruct him in the chief points of the gospel, this forcerer (whose Arabic name, *Elymas*, signifies a magician) set himself to contradict and oppose them with all his tricks and arts, as the magicians in *Egypt* did *Moses*, (*Exod. vii. and viii.* compared with 2 *Tun. iii. 8.*) endeavouring thereby to prevent the governor's receiving the faith of Christ ; lest not only he, but many other idolaters likewise, by his example and influence, should be induced to believe ; and so both his own and Satan's interest should be overturned among them.

9 Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) lifted with the

9 Then *Saul*, who from this time forward shall be called, and commonly went by his Roman name *Paul* †, as

N O T E S.

* The word here rendered the deputy, (*ἀνδραγατῆς*) signifies a *proconsul*, which was the chief governor of a province, when he was set over it by the Roman senate : But this officer was called *proprator*, when he was made governor of a province by the emperor, as the lieutenant is made governor of *Ireland* by the king of Great Britain. The same title is likewise given to *Gallio*, the elder brother of *Seneca*, (*cæsp. xviii. 12.*) with an exact propriety, because, at the time of *Luke's* writing his history of the *Acts*,

both these persons were made governors of their respective provinces by the senate ; tho' before that time, the governors of them severally received their authority from the emperor, and then were called *proprators*. Testimonies to this purpose from *Dio Cassius*, *Strabo*, *Suetonius*, and *Tacitus*, may be seen in *Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel Hist.* vol. I. p. 44. &c.

† As his being so constantly called *Paul*, ever after this, was most agreeable to the Gentiles, when he became an apostle to them :

the Holy Ghost,
set his eyes on
him,

as the most acceptable name to the *Gentiles*; and who, being the most eminent and active apostle in his ministrations to them, bears a chief part in the following history; this *Paul*, I say, being filled with wisdom and knowledge, and with a just indignation and zeal, by an extraordinary afflatus of the Holy Ghost, fixed his eyes stedfastly upon the magician, to put him out of countenance, and observe what change might appear in it; as also to intimate, that God took particular notice of all his abominable wickedness.

10 And said,
O full of all subtil-
ty, and all mis-
chief, thou child
of the devil, thou
enemy of all right-
eousness, wilt thou
not cease to per-
vert the right
ways of the Lord?

10 And, by an immediate dictate of the Spirit, he severely reprimanded him, saying, O the astonishing deceit and cunning, and pernicious malignity, that have thoroughly possessed thee, thou child of the devil, that old deceiver and false accuser, who hearest his likeness, pursuest his interests, actest under his influence, and practisest his treacherous and inveterate arts! Thou implacable adversary of all religion and holiness, truth and goodness, which the gospel is evidently designed to promote! How durst you still, while the light of this glorious gospel shines round about you, persist in putting false constructions upon, and turning men aside from, the ways of the Lord Jesus, which he has appointed and opened for duty and happiness; and which directly lead to eternal life, and are all right and true, without the least iniquity, or error in them.

11 And now,
behold, the hand
of the Lord is up-
on thee, and thou
shalt be blind, not
seeing the sun for
a season. And im-
mediately there
fell on him a mist
and a darkness:
and he went about
seeking some to
lead him by the
hand.

11 And now behold, with dread, conviction, and submission! The mighty power of the Lord Christ, whom you have despised, reproached, and opposed, will soon decide the controversy between us his servants, and you the servant of the devil: His immediate and righteous judgment is now irresistibly coming down upon you; and, mangre all the art and force of earth and hell, you shall be instantly deprived of your bodily sight, and continue so totally dark for a considerable time, at least, as not to be able to see the smallest glimmering of the shining sun at noon-day; which will be an exemplary and emblematical punishment of your sin, in the wilful blindness of your own heart, and in your perverse endeavours to do Satan's work in blinding the minds of them that believe not, (2 Cor. iv. 4.): Accordingly, all on a sudden, a thick impenetrable mist of darkness miraculously spread over his eyes, and made him so entirely blind, that he groped about to feel his way, and begged that somebody would have so much pity upon him, as to take him by the hand, and be his guide.

12 Then

N O T E.

So the conversion of *Sergius Paulus* might give the immediate occasion for this alteration in the use of his name, from that of

Saul to that of *Paul*; the first of which was his *Jewish*, the second his *Roman* name, both of which were given him in his infancy.

11 Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.

13 Now, when Paul and his company looked from Paphos, they came to Parga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.

14 But, when they departed from Parga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day, and sat down.

15 And, after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying,

12 Then the governor having been not only present at the debates that had passed between the apostle and the magician, but likewise an eye-witness of this awful and miraculous event, believed in the Lord Jesus, who had made known his divine power, in so surprising a manner, to the confusion of *Elymas*, and the confirmation of his own most excellent and holy doctrine, which proceeded from himself as its author, and related to him as its principal subject; and which came in the demonstration of the Spirit to this great man's heart.

13 Now when the apostle *Paul*, and those that accompanied him, set sail from *Paphos*, and so departed from the isle *Cyprus*, they directed their course to *Parga*, a city of *Pamphylia*, which was a province of *Asia the less*; and the most memorable occurrence there was, that *John Mark* took his leave of them, and returned to *Jerusalem* to see his mother, and to seek for *Peter* there, now *Herod* was dead, choosing to be with them, whom he affectionately loved, rather than to go forward with these apostles in their difficult and dangerous enterprize among the *Gentiles*; in which he discovered so much of a timorous and selfish spirit, as was highly displeasing to *Paul*. (chap. xv. 38.)

14 But to go on with the account of these apostles' journey and labours, when they left *Parga*, they went further northward, till they came to *Antioch*, the capital city of *Pisidia*; * and there, according to custom, they went to the synagogue, where *Jews* and devout *Gentiles*, (ver. 16.) were assembled for religious worship, on the sabbath-day; and set themselves down in a proper place among them, hoping for an opportunity of speaking to the whole congregation †.

15 And after the sections of the law and prophets, appointed for that day, were read as usual ‡; the ruler of the synagogue understanding that *Paul* and *Barnabas* bore a public character as extraordinary prophets, sent to

N O T E.

* This *Antioch* is different from that mentioned ver. 1. That was the metropolis of *Syria*, and this of *Pisidia*, a country in the *Lesser Asia*; and both were called *Antioch*, as is most generally thought, by *Sextus Nicanor*, who built them, and gave them that name in honour of his father *Antiochus*.

† Though the apostles constantly observed the Lord's day, as the New Testament sabbath, for celebrating all religious ordinances in Christian assemblies; yet they took opportunities of going to the synagogues of the *Jews* on their sabbath, because then the greatest company of them were gathered together.

‡ The law and the prophets were each of them divided. say some, into fifty-two, or, say others, into fifty-three, or fifty-four sections; and by reading of one section of each every sabbath day, or joining two of the shortest, once or twice in the year, if there were occasion for it, the *Jews* used to read over those parts of the Old Testament in their synagogues once a year; but the *Hagiographa*, which are called the *Psalms*, in distinction from the law and the prophets, were not publicly read among them. See *Lightfoot*, vol. i. p. 531. and vol. ii. p. 1102. and *Perini's exercit.* vol. iii. p. 175.

saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

16 Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.

17 The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it.

18 And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness.

19 And, when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan,

to let them know that they might have the free liberty of the synagogue, (see the notes on *Luke iv. 16, 17.*) saying, in a stile of civility and respect, Ye men and brethren, who are partakers of the same human nature, and descended from the same father of the faithful with ourselves, if ye are inclined to expound what has been read, or to give any word of exhortation or consolation (*παρακλῆσις*) to the people, be pleased to let us hear it.

16 Then Paul got up, and making a sign for silence, by a motion of his hand, addressed them in the following manner: Ye descendants of our father Jacob, and Jews by religion; and ye devout Gentiles, who profess to worship the God of Israel, (see the note on *chap. viii. 27.*) I beseech you to hear with attention, impartiality, and patience, the important things I am going to deliver according to the scriptures, which ye all own to be the word of God:

17 The only living and true Jehovah, who made the heavens and the earth, even the covenant God, and the great King of the *Israelitish* church and nation, made choice of our ancestors as his peculiar favourites, in distinction from all the rest of the world; and though at first they were but few in number, he, for his own name's sake, signally multiplied, preserved, and countenanced them, while they sojourned, about two hundred and sixteen years, as strangers in the land of Egypt: And when the king of that country, envying their prosperity, laid them under grievous oppressions, the Lord delivered them out of their house of bondage by wonderful signs and miracles, which his almighty power wrought on their behalf.

18 He likewise gave them his statutes and ordinances to direct and regulate their religion and morals; and when, notwithstanding all this, they soon rebelled against him, he, in his amazing patience and long suffering, bore with their ingratitude, perverseness, and unbelief; yea, with their murmurings, mutinies, and idolatry, and other numerous provocations, for about forty years in the wilderness of Sinai*; and all along provided for them with the tenderest care, and by a train of miracles. (*Deut. i. 31.*)

19 And when he, in his righteous judgment, had cut off seven wicked and idolatrous nations for their iniquities, that were in possession of the land of Canaan,

to

N O T E.

* Several copies and versions of considerable reputation read: *επορεσασθησαν, he nourished them*, instead of *επορεσασθησαν, he suffered* their manners. Vid. Mill. in loc. And that is the word used by the Seventy in *Deut. i. 31.*

an, he divided their land to them by lot.

to make way for his chosen people, (*Josh. iii. 10.*) he gave them the inheritance of that fruitful country, a figure of the heavenly one, which was divided among them by lot.

19 And after that he gave unto them judges, about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

20 And here they continued, for about four hundred and fifty years, under the immediate government of God himself; who, as occasions required, raised up, and eminently spirited, a sort of extraordinary officers called *Judges*, that they, under him as the only Sovereign, might rule his people *Israel*, fight their battles, vindicate their rights, and deliver them out of the hands of surrounding enemies, who were frequently troublesome to them; under which form of government they continued till the days of the famous prophet *Samuel*.

21 And afterwards they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years.

21 But after all this indulgent care and kindness, which God had shewn them, they, wanting to be like the nations round about them, ungratefully desired a king to be set over them; And God, highly displeased with them for rejecting him, that he might not reign over them, and preferring a temporal monarch to him, granted their request in judgment to them, (*1 Sam. viii.*) and appointed *Saul*, the son of *Cis*, of the tribe of *Benjamin*, to be their king, whose reign, together with *Samuel's* preceding government, filled up the space of forty years.

22 And, when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king: to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

22 And when God had rejected, (*1 Sam. xv. 28.*) and in his providence taken away, this prince, who had disobeyed his commands, and perverted the true ends of government; he, in his great goodness, appointed, spirited, qualified, raised up from a low and mean state, and enthroned *David* to be their king; a man of eminent wisdom, piety, and valour, to whom the Lord himself bore an honourable testimony, saying, I have pitched upon, and provided a king, even *David* my servant, the son of *Jesse* the *Bethlehemite*, of the tribe of *Judah*, (*1 Sam. xvi. 1.*) a man whom I know and approve of, and who will be ready to answer all my designs and orders in governing the people: By all which ye may see how free and sovereign, undeserved and yet abundant, the care and kindness of God have been to his people *Israel*, through various dispensations, as so many types and specimens of the further favour he intended for them, by settling the Messiah's kingdom on *David's* house.

23 Of this man's seed hath God, according-

24 Of whose offspring, as pertaining to the flesh, God, according to his promise, first to this great man himself, (*Psal. cxxxii. 11.*) and afterwards to the whole church;

according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus :

church, (*Isa. xi. 1, 2.*) has now at length authorized and qualified, exhibited and exalted, and first of all sent to his own covenant-people, the *Israelites*, Jesus Christ, whom he has raised up as an horn of salvation for them in the house of his servant *David*, (*Luke i. 69.*) to deliver them from sin and misery, and advance them to heavenly glory.

24 When John had first preached before him, coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

24 To introduce this glorious Saviour, in a manner suitable to the dignity of his person and office, *John the Baptist*, going before him in the spirit and power of *Elias*, to prepare the way for his appearing in his public ministry, preached the necessity of repentance to all the people of *Israel*, without distinction; and called upon them to make a solemn profession of it, by being baptized in the name of the approaching Messiah, that they might obtain remission of sins through faith in him. (*Mark i. 4. and Luke iii. 3.*)

25 And as John fulfilled his course he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he, But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to looke.

25 And in the course of *John's* ministry, when, toward the close of it, his reputation grew, and was established, and the people began to have a notion as tho' he were the Messiah himself, he said to them, What do ye take me to be? if ye imagine that I am the promised Messiah, whom all of you are now in expectation of, ye are under a great mistake; for I assure you, that I am not he, (*John i. 20.*) But behold, said he, I bring you the best of tidings; there is one just at hand, ready to appear in his public character, who is indeed the Christ; and, compared with whom, I am so very mean and contemptible, as to be utterly unworthy of performing the most humble service of taking off his shoes.

26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and who-soever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.

26 This brings us to the main point, which we, the apostles of Christ, are driving at in speaking to you, whom we look upon, and would treat, with the utmost respect and earnest solicitude for your welfare, as ye are rational creatures, that are capable of considering, and have immortal souls to be saved, or lost for ever, and as ye are our brethren, partakers of flesh and blood, and children of the promise together with ourselves, even all of you, whether ye be the natural seed of *Abraham*, or *devout Gentiles*, that worship the God of *Israel*; we, in the name of our great Lord and Master, do, for your caution and encouragement, declare to all and every one of you, that the gospel, which shews the only true way of spiritual and eternal salvation, by Jesus Christ, is now sent, by his commission, to be published to you, and freely proposed to your acceptance, as persons that need it, and are concerned in it, though it was first of all sent

to them that dwelt at *Jerusalem* and in *Judea* and *Galilee*.

27 For they that dwell at *Jerusalem*, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath-day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

27 For to take off your prejudices against *Jesus of Nazareth*, on account of his ignominious death, and to shew what abundant grace is in his heart to the worst of his enemies; let it be seriously considered, that the common people at *Jerusalem*, and their chief priests and rulers, who stirred him up against him, joined together in procuring his crucifixion, because they really did not know who this Lord of glory was, nor yet understand the true meaning of what was foretold concerning him by their own prophets, which are read in their synagogues every sabbath-day: (see the note on ver. 15.) But as it was owing to their own perverseness, that they were strangers to these things; so their ignorance, and their wickedness, in condemning him, as an impostor and malefactor, were over-ruled, by the wisdom of God, in such a manner, that they themselves thereby, unwittingly, and contrary to their own design, exactly fulfilled those very prophecies concerning him which foretold the Messiah's sufferings and death.

28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain.

28 And though they could prove no crime upon him, for which he deserved to die; and the *Roman* governor himself, before whom he was tried, declared that he found no fault in him, (*Luke* xxiii. 4.) yet so malicious and outrageous were they against him, that they insisted, and incessantly pleaded, till they prevailed with *Pilate*, even against his will, that he should be put to death.

29 And, when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.

29 And when, by this their ill usage of him, they had accomplished all that is recorded in the ancient prophecies, relating to the manner of his death, even to the most minute circumstances of it; they, being assured that he was really dead, consented to *Pilate's* order, that he should be taken down from the cross, and should be laid in a sepulchre, as one that ought to be buried; and kept as securely as possible under watch and seal, to prevent all fraud in removing his body, and all false pretences thereupon, that he had revived again. (*Matth.* xvii. 58,—66.)

30 But God raised him from the dead.

30 But notwithstanding all their malice and precautions, God raised him from the dead on the third day, to vindicate his character, and testify his own entire approbation of him; and to shew that his law and justice were compleatly satisfied by his sufferings for the sins of all that should believe in him.

31 And he was seen

31 And, to put this important fact past all dispute, the

seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.

the risen Saviour was seen, and conversed with, at several times afterwards, in the space of forty days, by a great number of his disciples, men of unquestionable reputation for honesty, that were well acquainted with him, and had often attended his ministry, and travelled with him from *Galilee to Jerusalem*, and so could not mistake any other person for him; these he appointed to be witnesses of it; and they accordingly have, in the face of all opposition and danger, and at the peril of their lives, attested it; and as many of them as are still living continue to assert it to the people, with invariable unanimity and constancy, wherever they come, to this very day.

32 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*

32, 33 And we ourselves, having seen the Lord Jesus since his resurrection, (see the note on *chap. ix. 17.*) readily join in their testimony; and are come hither to proclaim to you the most joyful tidings that ever reached the ears of the sinful sons of men, *viz.* That God having in former ages made a gracious promise of the Messiah, in whom all nations should be blessed, and having often repeated it to the patriarchs, our pious ancestors, has now in his faithfulness actually accomplished it to us, their descendants, and the imitators of their faith; soasmuch as he has given the highest proof and demonstration of the divine and office-character of our Jesus, in that he raised him up again from the dead; and so shewed that he is the very person spoken of in the second *Psalms*, where the eternal Father is brought in, as saying to the Messiah, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*: That is, thou art my true and proper Son; I in the unsuccessive day of my eternity have, in an ineffable manner, begotten thee: and in the day of thy resurrection have I eminently manifested and declared it, and have further notified thee to be Lord and heir of all, as the first-begotten, and first-born from the dead, whom I have raised to all the honours of thy kingdom. (*Rev. i. 5. and Col. i. 18.*)

34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

34 And it is plain that (*vers. 32.*) God the Father raised him from the dead, not to die again, as those did whom Christ raised in the days of his flesh on earth, but to be advanced to an immortal life of all authority, glory, and blessedness in heaven, never to die any more, (*Rom. vi. 9*) or to be laid again in the grave, which is called *the pit of corruption*: (*Isa. xxxviii. 17.*) For in that everlasting covenant, in which God speaks of his Son, (*Isa. lv. 3; 4.*) as a *witness, leader, and commander of the people*, including *Jews and Gentiles*, even such as compose this assembly, he expresses himself to them after this manner, *I will give you the sure mercies*

of David, meaning the great mercies, which he had freely promised, confirmed by oath, and would certainly perform in faithfulness to David and his house, relating to the perpetual blessings of the Messiah's seed and kingdom, (*Psal.* lxxxix. 1,—5. and 13,—37. and which should be fulfilled in that descendent of David, who was typified by, and mentioned under the name of his royal father; and was, by way of eminence, called the Son of David.

35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine holy One to see corruption.

35 Therefore, still more exactly to characterize the only true Messiah, he, in another of the *Psalms*, is brought in as saying, with holy confidence to God his Father, (*Psal.* xvi. 10.) Thou, in thy mercy, faithfulness, and justice to me, and my cause, wilt not permit thy Holy One, meaning his Anointed, or his Christ, to continue so long in the state of the dead, as that his body should be corrupted in the grave: This could not be literally true of David himself.

36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

36 For we all know, that after David, the antient king of *Israel*, had fulfilled the duty of his day, in the many good services which he did to his contemporaries, and by doing which he was a public blessing to that age, according to the commanding and disposing will of God; he then, by divine ordination, rested from his labours at death, like one who, after the toils of the day, falls asleep at night; and thereupon was laid in the grave, the house appointed for all living, (*Job* xxx. 23.) as his ancestors had been before him; and his body has, long before this, been turned into corruption and dust.

37 But whom God raised again saw no corruption.

37 But the forementioned words were remarkably fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God, according to this prediction, raised again on the third day, before the time that a dead carcase, not worn with sickness, nor loaded with physic, and embalmed as the body of Jesus was, (*John* xix. 40.) uses to putrify; and so his body, by these means, as well as by a special providence, was not subject to corruption, nor will it ever be so hereafter; God the Father having now exalted him to an immortal state of glory, that by his perpetual agency in heaven for sinners on earth, he might be a public blessing, not to that generation only, in which he lived here below, but to all ages, till time shall be no more.

38 Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that thro' this

38 It is therefore a matter of vast importance to be known, and taken notice of, as we now declare it to you of the human race, whom we delight to think of, and speak to, as our brethren, and hope to have you

this man is
preached unto
you the forgive-
ness of sins:

you so in Christ, that an act of grace for the free and full remission of sins is now, by a divine warrant, proclaimed to each and every one of you, through the merit, and on account of this Jesus, who was partaker of human nature, and in that nature was once crucified, and is now exalted at the Father's right hand; that upon this ground ye severally may be encouraged to come to God, through him, for this inestimable blessing, which involves, and leads the way to all others.

39 And by
him all that be-
lieve are justified
from all things,
from which ye
could not be jus-
tified by the law
of Moses.

39 And through his blood and righteousness, who died in the room and stead of sinners, and lives in heaven to make intercession for them, every one that is brought to rely upon him, and receive him by faith, as the only Saviour, is so compleatly justified, as to be entirely discharged from the guilt of all his sins, even of such as are so great, that no sacrifice was appointed for them in the ceremonial law; and as to be freed from all the condemnation due to them, from which he never could have been acquitted, by virtue of any works commanded, or any sentence pronounced, in any part of the law of *Moses*.

40 Beware,
therefore, lest that
come upon you
which is spoken
of in the pro-
phets.

40 Take heed therefore to yourselves, I beseech you, especially you of the *Jewish* race, that, through the perverseness of your own hearts, ye do not obstinately reject this our gracious errand to you; lest that awful and alarming threatening be applicable to, and executed upon you, for so provoking a sin; in the utter destruction of your nation in this world, and more dreadful ruin of your own souls in the next, which God spake by one of the prophets, (*Habbak. 1. 5.*) with reference to the terrible havock that was made by the *Chaldeans* on the *Jews* of that age, who persisted in their iniquities, notwithstanding all the messages he sent by the prophets to reclaim them. The purport of whose words, as they may be well accommodated to the present case, is this:

41 Behold, ye de-
spisers, and won-
der, and perish:
for I work a work
in

41 Behold, with dread and horror, the irreversible sentence I pronounce against you, O ye contemners of my solemn warnings, and of my kindest messages of peace to you; and stand amazed at your own stupidity and perverseness in rejecting them, and at the righteous vengeance that is coming upon you on this account; yea, (*απανοθετε*) let your faces be covered with paleness, and hide yourselves, for fear and shame, at the thought of your astonishing perdition for, and in your iniquities: For, in this present age, I have wrought the greatest work of mercy that ever was brought about in the redemption of my people; and, for your in-
fidelity

in your days, a work which you shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.

42 And, when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.

43 Now, when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

fidelity with respect thereunto, I will bring to pass a surprising work of judgment to some, and of mercy to others, in utterly abandoning you, and calling the *Gentiles* in your stead; neither of which will ye regard, or give any manner of credit to, though it be ever so plainly, fully, and demonstratively declared to you, by any whom I have commissioned to assure you of it.

42 And when those *Jews* that resolutely persisted in their unbelief were so exasperated at this close and touching discourse of the apostle's, that they went out of the synagogue, to shew their public dislike and contempt of him, and of his doctrine, yea, and of Christ himself whom he preached to them; then the *Gentiles* earnestly intreated him to favour them so far as to preach another sermon to them upon the following sabbath *, to instruct them in the important truths of the gospel, which so many of the *Jews* had despised, and turned their backs upon.

43 Now, when the assembly was dismissed, a considerable number of *Jews*, and † devout *Gentiles* were so affected and impressed with what they heard of Christ and the forgiveness of sins through faith in him, that they embraced the apostles' doctrine; and so became followers of them and of the Lord, and went after them to their lodging, that they might be further instructed in the way of salvation; and the apostles, rejoicing to see what God had wrought in them, discoursed freely with them, and urged upon them the necessity, the pleasure, and advantage of their continuing to adhere stedfastly, in their hearts, to the truths of the gospel, which proceed from the free favour of God, display its glory, raise our hopes in it, and are the means of conveying its blessings to us; and they excited them to persevere in a solemn and holy profession of these doctrines of grace. (*Heb. xiii. 9.* and *1 Pet. v. 13.*)

44 And

N O T E.

* The words (*εἰς τὸ μετὰ σαββάτου*) here translated the *next sabbath*, are a very uncommon phrase, and might be most literally rendered *between the sabbath*, meaning between this sabbath and the next; or if the word (*σαββάτου*) be taken to signify a week, as it is in *chap. xx. 7.* *Luke xviii. 12.* and *xviii. 1.* and several other places, they may be rendered *in the middle of the week*; and were it not that, in *ver. 44.* we are told, all the city, including the *Gentiles*, came together the next sabbath-day to hear the word of God, I should incline to understand this, as a request of the *Gentiles*, that as Paul was employed in preaching to the *Jews* on their

sabbaths, he would spend some time on week-days in preaching to them: But this, together with a like sense of the word *μετὰ*, as signifying the *next*, or *following*, seems rather to favour the sense given in the Paraphrase, unless we also, in *ver. 42.* take the sabbath to signify the week. Vid. *Pol. Synop. Crit.*

† The religious or worshipping proselytes, (*εὐσεβεῖς*) and the devout or religious Greeks, and devout persons or worshippers, (*chap. xvi. 14.* and *xvii. 4, 17.*) were proselytes of the gate, who renounced idolatry, and worshipped the God of Israel. See Mr *Jos. Mede's* *disc.* iii. p. 27. vol. 1.

44 And the next sabbath-day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

44 And as Paul and Barnabas left no means unattempted, for private instruction, all the following week-days; so on the next sabbath, they, according to the earnest request that had been made to them, (*ver.* 42.) took an opportunity of preaching publicly, and particularly to all such *Gentiles* as should come to hear them: And the inhabitants of the city *, even the *idolatrous* as well as *devout Gentiles*, having notice of it, came together almost universally, some out of curiosity, others with worse, and others with better motives, to hear the gospel, which God is the author of, and which he had given his servants a commission, now at length, to preach to them. (*Chap.* i. 8. and *Luke* xxiv. 47.)

54 But, when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

45 But when the unbelieving *Jews* saw such vast crowds assembled together, and among them many *idolatrous Gentiles*, to attend on the apostles' ministrations, they swelled with envy, indignation, and rage, at their being so openly favoured with the messages of grace, and shewing such attention and regard to its preachers, as Christ foretold they would, in the parable of the elder brother's being angry and surly at the return of the prodigal son, (*Luke* xv. 28, 29, 30.) and they set themselves to cavil and dispute against, and run down the doctrines that Paul preached; and not only disputed, but spoke reproachfully, in an outrageous manner against them, even to the blaspheming of the glorious name of the Lord Jesus, who was the principal subject of the apostle's discourse, (*ver.* 16, — 41.) and blaspheming the blessed Spirit, as if all his gifts and operations, by which their doctrine was delivered and confirmed, were impostures of the devil †.

46 But

N O T E.

* It appears from the following verses, that some of this vast multitude were *idolatrous Gentiles*, who, upon the rumour that was spread abroad of this new doctrine, joined the assembly of the religious proselytes to hear what it was; for the prophecy recited, *ver.* 47. relates to them; and it was the apostles preaching to them, that raised the envy of the *Jews*, *ver.* 45. and put them upon stirring up the devout women-proselytes to persecute Paul and Barnabas, *ver.* 50. Accordingly they are called (*ver.* 18, 19, 20) the *Gentiles*, *ver.* 43, 46, 48. in distinction from the proselytes of the gate, as well as from the *Jews*, *ver.* 16, 26. And when the apostles returned to Antioch, they reported, (*chap.* xiv. 27.) how, in this journey, God had opened a door of faith to the *Gentiles*, which must mean the *idolatrous Gentiles*, because that door had been opened to the *devout Gentiles*, at the conversion of *Cornelius*, long

before: Thus the gospel was gradually published, first to the *Jews* and proselytes of righteousness, who were of the same church with them; then to the *devout Gentiles*, or proselytes of the gate; and now, at length, to the *idolatrous Gentiles*, and that upon their own request here, as it had been to *Sergius Paulus* at his request before, *ver.* 7. And, from this time forward, it was preached by Paul and Barnabas chiefly to these, though not without first offering it to the *Jews*, where there were any of them in the places to which Providence called these apostles. (See the note on *ver.* 46.)

† This envious and malicious contradicting and blaspheming, under all the light and evidence that these *Jews* may be supposed to have had, looks very like the sin against the Holy Ghost, which our Lord spoke of as what should never be forgiven; and therefore it is no wonder that the apostle, on this occasion,

46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles:

46 But Paul and Barnabas, being inspired with a holy zeal for their Lord and Master's glory, and the conversion of the poor idolatrous *Gentiles*, and with an undaunted courage and resolution, which the present circumstances of things called for, replied, with awful boldness to those *Jews*, saying, The privileges of birth-right, which belonged to you, and the covenant made with your fathers, as well as the appointment of God, and Christ's own express order, laid us under a necessity, which we cheerfully complied with, of publishing this new dispensation of the word of God's grace, in the *first place* to you: But this is not, like the *Mosaic* dispensation, to be confined to you; and since ye so shamefully abuse all this indulgence and kindness, and so openly disclaim, obstinately reject, and maliciously vilify these glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ, and thereby evidently pass judgment against yourselves, as persons that are utterly unworthy of any further tenders of this blessed doctrine of eternal life; behold the wisdom of God, as seasonably displayed in his severity and goodness on this occasion! Our way is now plain; and we henceforth shall make no scruple of turning away from such desperate refusers*, and freely preaching Christ to the *Gentiles*, of what rank soever they be; and this we are impowered to do, by a divine warrant from those scriptures which ye yourselves own to be the word of God.

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

47 For this is not only what the Lord Jesus himself has commanded us, (*chap. i. 8.*) but what God the Father likewise, in a famous prophecy of these days, has, by just construction, enjoined upon us, as the ministers of Christ, when, in a foreview of the unbelief of the *Jews*, he said, by way of encouragement and promise to the Messiah, (*Isa. xlix. 6.*) I have granted and constituted thee to be a glorious light, to enlighten the dark minds of the *Gentiles*, that thou mayest be the sum and substance, and the purchaser, author, and giver of a spiritual and eternal salvation to them, wherever they are spread abroad in all nations, even to the uttermost parts of the earth.

48 And when the *Gentiles* heard this

48 And when the idolatrous *Gentiles* heard with what favour the apostles spoke of them, as by warrant and command

N O T E.

occasion, spoke such severe things against them, and turned to the *Gentiles*. (See the note on *Matth. xiii. 37.*)

* The apostle did not hereby intend that he would never preach again to any of the *Jews*; for we find that after this, it was his custom to do it in all other places, where he

met with them. (*chap. xvii. 2.*) But he meant that he would no longer preach to those refractory *Jews*, at this *Antioch*, and would no longer confine his ministrations to that sort of people; but would immediately preach the gospel to the *Gentiles*, and take all opportunities ever afterwards of doing so.

this they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

command from Christ, and from God himself; they rejoiced to think that they might be admitted to all the blessings of the gospel, without being obliged to submit to circumcision and the ceremonial law; and they wonderfully extolled the doctrine of the Lord Jesus, which, with so much condescension and grace, was preached to them: And though many of these were only like the stony ground hearers, that *received the word with joy*, (Luke viii. 13.) and like the attendants on Christ's ministry, who, when he was opening a prophecy concerning himself, *wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*, (Luke iv. 22.) yet (some) such of them as were appointed *, or laid out for the inheritance of endless life and glory, in the holy, wise, and sovereign disposals of God, according to the eternal counsel and purpose of his will, (Eph. i. 11.) were so affectually wrought upon by his Spirit, that they believed in Christ to the saving of their souls.

49 And the word

49 And after this, by the diligent and successful labours of the apostles, and by means of these *Gentile converts*, who were ready to tell what God had done for their

N O T E.

* As the word (*τατάχοντο*) signifies *disposed or set in order*, in allusion to a general's ordering of soldiers to their respective posts in an army, as well as *ordained or appointed*, I have taken in both senses; but cannot think that it, here at least, signifies an *internal disposition of heart*, much less that these persons *disposed themselves* to eternal life: for all such dispositions are from God, who *works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, (Phil. ii. 13.) and are rather the fruit and consequence, than the cause of that *faith which purifies the heart*: (chap. xv. 9.) Nor does it appear to me, that the verb, (*τατάχοντο* vel *τάχοντο*) which, in its signification, is *transitive*, is ever used in the New Testament, and particularly by the writer of this history, to signify *disposing one's self*, or *determining one's own inclinations*, unless some other word be added to express that meaning: the principal passage pleaded for it, is in chap. xx. 13. which is rendered, *we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul, for so had he appointed, minding himself to go a-foot*. But it seems to me, that the true sense of the expression (*Ὅτι οὕτως ἔτατάχοντο*) is not, *for so had he appointed*, but *for so it was appointed*, or *determined*, viz. by an agreement between him and the ship's company, before they set sail; they agreed before-hand to take him in at Assos, because he had a mind to go thither a-foot: and as this is consonant to that sense of the word, by which God's *ordaining* per-

sons to life is expressed; so in all other places, where our sacred historian uses it, it is still in the same sort of sense, as particularly in chap. xv. 2. and xxii. 10. and xxviii. 23. and Luke vii. 8. and thus it is used in Matth. xxviii. 16. and Rom. xiii. 1. which are all the places that I can meet with where it is found in the New Testament, except 1 Cor. xvi. 15. and there *ἐτάχοντο οἱ αὐτοὶ* is rendered, *they addressed themselves*; but as neither *τατάχοντο*, *themselves*, nor any thing like it, is added in the place before us, there is no reason to understand it of these persons being *well disposed*, or *disposing themselves* to eternal life: for I take their being ordained to eternal life to be mentioned, not in opposition to the contradicting and blaspheming Jews, spoken of in ver. 45. but in distinction from others of this company that *were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord*; who are spoken of in the former part of this verse. These seemed as much disposed for eternal life as the rest; but while the work went no further, than to stir up affections of joy and wonder in them, there were others of that applauding multitude, in whom it proceeded to saving faith, even in such as *were ordained of God unto eternal life*; and so it intimates, not that *all* the elect in that assembly believed at the same time; but that among them, in whom there were such promising appearances, those that were chosen to eternal life did savingly believe.

word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

50 But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their country.

51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.

52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

their souls, and were very desirous of the salvation of others; the gospel of the Lord Jesus, which was so full of him, and derived its authority from him, (*disseminate*) was carried and divulged, with rich advantage, through the whole country of *Pisidia*. (*ver. 14*)

50 But, as has been observed, (*ver. 45*.) the infidel Jews were so enraged at the idolatrous Gentiles being received into the kingdom of the Messiah, that they, having little interest in those parts themselves, used their utmost endeavours, by artful, malicious, and scandalous representations, to provoke, and stir up some women of quality, who were zealous proselytes of the gate; and, by their means, to incense the chief magistrates of the city against the apostles and their doctrine; and so they spirited up a violent persecution against Paul and Barnabas; insomuch that orders were issued out to banish these kind messengers of peace from those territories; and they were forced to fly for their own safety, which providence over-ruled for the still further propagation of the gospel.

51 But at leaving that city and its borders, they, according to our Lord's direction and order, (*Luke ix. 5*.) shook off the dust of their feet, to testify a just abhorrence and contempt of this wicked and ungrateful people, and God's casting off all further care and kindness for them: And then these indefatigable preachers proceeded to *Iconium*, the chief city of *Lycaonia*, a neighbouring province in the *Lesser Asia*.

52 In the mean while, the disciples of Christ at the *Pisidian Antioch*, especially those of them that had been converted from heathenism; though they had lost the desirable company of the apostles, and seen the inhuman persecutions they suffered; yet observing with what faith, patience, and holy magnanimity they endured them, were filled with abundance of divine consolation, and were likewise enriched with such assistances, graces, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, as confirmed their faith, and inspired them with a noble courage in their profession of it *.

R E C O L -

N O T E.

* These were the first considerable church that was gathered from among the idolatrous Gentiles at this *Antioch*, (*chap. xiv. 20, 21, 22*.) though the door of faith had been opened to them at the *Isle Paphos*, *ver. 6*. as the first famous church was gathered from among the proselytes of the gate, at the other *Antioch* in *Syria*, *ver. 1*. after the like door had been opened at *Cæsarea* to them, *chap.*

x. And it is highly probable that, as the Holy Ghost fell down immediately upon the first fruits of the devout Gentiles, (*chap. x. 44, 45*.) so he did upon this first company of converts from among the idolatrous Gentiles; and that in this manner, without the laying on of the apostles' hands, they were filled with the Holy Ghost in his extraordinary gifts, as well as saving graces.

R E C O L L E C T I O N S.

How important are the directions of God's Spirit and Providence for due ministrations of his gospel ! He lays out the work of his servants, qualifies them for it, calls and separates them to it, in ways, among people, and by means of his own appointment, and succeeds them in it. And with what pleasure, courage, and hope may they set about it, when they are satisfied that he has sent them ! But, alas ! how great is the opposition, that Satan and his instruments make, to the most gracious and holy revelation of the divine will, especially when the greatest sinners, who had long been his slaves, are like to be converted by it ! All the arts of sorcery on one hand, and of infidelity on the other ; all the fury that blind zeal, bigotry, temporal interests, and envy can inspire ; and all the powers of this world, are stirred up to suppress it, and the work of God by it : and yet no weapon formed against *Sion* shall prosper ; but the word of salvation, attended with the power of the blessed Spirit, shall so much the more run, and spread, and be glorified. And O what joyful tidings does the gospel bring of the promised Saviour, for whose coming all former dispensations to *Israel* prepared the way, till *John the Baptist* was raised up as his immediate fore-runner ; and who was crucified and raised again from the dead, according to Old Testament-prophecies of the Messiah ! With what infinitely wise and seasonable advances has the knowledge of Christ spread, and prevailed in our world ! He, through the wonderful-condescension and grace of God, is now preached, even to the work of *Gentile* sinners ; and the gospel of salvation is now sent, by a divine order, to us, who live, so distant from *Palestine*, in the ends of the earth ! Christ is now set up as a light to us, and through him is preached to us the forgiveness of sins. O happy souls, who heartily believe in a once crucified, and now risen Jesus ! They were obtained to eternal life before all worlds, are completely justified, through the Redeemer's blood and righteousness, from all sins and charges, from which they could not be justified by the law of *Moses* ; and, under a sense of this, they not only think and speak honourably of the word of the Lord ; but are filled with holy joy, and have such supplies of the divine Spirit, as are needful for their establishment and edification ; and they are encouraged, as well as obliged, to continue in the doctrine of the grace of God, in the exercise of every grace, and in a profession of Christ's name and gospel, with holy boldness, notwithstanding all the persecution they may suffer for his sake. But, on the other hand, how dreadfully, at their peril, do unbelievers, and especially such as are visibly in covenant with God, reject and despise the only Saviour, and set themselves to reproach his servants, truths, and ways ! They resolutely put away the gospel and eternal life from themselves, and provoke God to cast them off in his hot displeasure, as a people whom he justly abhors ; and they must perish with astonishment and confusion for ever. But blessed be God, that while some desperately harden their hearts against Christ, and others only applaud the doctrine of salvation by him ; he has a people that shall believe in him to everlasting life ; and among these there are some, who, like *Sergius Paulus*, are men of sense and figure ; and others, who, like the idolatrous heathens, are the most vile and stupid sinners : so free, sovereign, and victorious is gospel-grace !

C H A P. XIV.

Paul and Barnabas preach the gospel at Iconium, from whence they are driven by a Jewish persecution to neighbouring towns, 1,—7. At Lysra a cripple is miraculously healed, and the people thereupon are scarce restrained from offering sacrifices to the two apostles, as incarnate gods ; and yet soon after, by the insligation of the Jews, they stoned Paul, till they thought they had killed him, 8,—20. The apostles visit the churches which they had lately planted, to confirm them,

them, and settle pastors in them, 21,—23. And then return to Antioch in Syria, to report what God had done, by them, in this their first journey among the idolatrous Gentiles, 24,—28.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass in Iconium that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews, and also of the Greeks, believed.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Paul and Barnabas were at the forementioned Iconium, (chap. xiii. 51.) they, still continuing the custom of offering the gospel first to the Jews, repaired to their synagogue at the time of public worship; and went into it together, to shew their joint concurrence in their Lord's work, and their mutual affection to each other, as well as to add the greater weight to their testimony; and these apostles preached to the people there, in so clear and convincing, judicious and scriptural, moving and affectionate a manner, like persons who heartily believed the importance, as well as the truth of the doctrines they delivered, and were earnestly concerned for the salvation of their hearers; and they spoke with such evident demonstration of the Spirit and power, to the heart and conscience, that abundance both of Jews and Gentile proselytes of the gate, who were called devout Greeks, and used to attend synagogue-worship, believed in Christ as the only Saviour.

1 But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

2 But the greater success the gospel had, the more the devil was enraged at it; and those Jews that persisted in their infidelity, finding they had not strength enough of themselves to put a stop to it, set their wits to work, to spirit up the idolatrous Gentiles, into an opposition against it; and by injurious and malicious suggestions, prejudiced their minds, not only against the apostles and their doctrine, but likewise against all those, whether Jews or Greeks, and especially the latter, that were newly converted, and become brethren in the household of faith.

3 Long time therefore abode they, speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the

3 The apostles therefore * spent a considerable time at this city, to take off, and confute the prejudices that had been raised against the glorious truths which God had so abundantly owned; and they spoke publicly and openly with great liberty of spirit, undaunted courage, and holy confidence, in the cause of the Lord Jesus, and by his powerful assistance, as persons united to him; who strengthened them with might by his Spirit in the inward man; and bore witness of the divine authority of

NOTES.

* Some critics observe, that the particles (αὐτοὶ) may be rendered *for indeed*, instead of *therefore*; and so think that this refers to the time which the apostles had spent at Iconium, before the Jews stirred up the Gentiles against them, and gives the reason of their

rage: But as I cannot bring both senses into a consistent paraphrase, and this rendering seems not to be the most genuine and usual, I rather prefer that which our translation has given us with undoubted propriety.

the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

4 But the multitude of the city was divide^d: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

5 And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews, with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them,

6 They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about.

7 And there they preached the gospel.

8 And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked.

9 The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and receiving that

of the gospel, which springs from, and contains the richest discoveries of his own, as well as the Father's free and undeserved grace, by enabling them to perform such wonderful miracles of various kinds, as could be no less than an attestation to it from God himself. (See the note on chap. ii. 22.)

4 And (31) notwithstanding the malicious endeavours of the unbelieving Jews to incense the citizens, who were chiefly Gentiles, so many were wrought upon by the apostles' ministrations, that there was a great division between them; one party siding with the obstinate Jews, and the other with Paul and Barnabas, which, for a while, restrained the persecution.

5 But (32) when, at length, the opposing party of both Jews and Gentiles, combined together with the magistrates, whom they had gained over, to make an open, violent attempt for running down and destroying the apostles, by reviling them, and stoning them to death, as blasphemers, (Deut. xiii. 6,—10.) in like manner, and for the same cause, as Paul himself in the days of his blind zeal and unbelief, had consented to the stoning of Stephen. (Chap. viii. 1.)

6 The apostles being informed of this barbarous conspiracy, in which the most inveterate enemies one to another were united, under Satan's influence, against Christ, and against his servants and gospel, hastened away with all speed from thence, and went to Lystra and Derbe, two other towns or cities of Lycaonia, and to the neighbouring villages, that they might spread the gospel in those places, according to our Lord's direction for improving such events. (Matth. x. 23.)

7 And they preached the glad tidings of salvation with good success, (ver. 21, 22.) in these cities, and in all parts of the country round about.

8 And while they were one day preaching at Lystra, the inhabitants of which were mostly heathens, there sat in the assembly a certain man, who was lame in his feet, and had been so great a cripple from his very birth, that he had never been able to walk; the wisdom of Providence having brought him thither, that the apostles might have an opportunity of working a public miracle, to confirm their doctrine, at their first coming among this idolatrous people.

9, 10 This man was very attentive to Paul's discourse, who fixing his eyes stedfastly upon him, and perceiving, partly by his serious countenance and behaviour, but principally by an extraordinary spirit of discerning, that he believed and hoped in the power of Christ for a cure,

he had faith to be healed,

10 Said with a loud voice, Stand up right on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lift up their voices, saying in the speech of Lyconia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter, and Paul, Mercurius, because

cure, was filled with compassion toward him, and said with a loud voice, that all the people might hear, and the work of God might be made manifest, I command you * in the name of the Lord Jesus, whom I preach, and in whom you believe, to rise up immediately, and stand on your feet: And he no-sooner spake, than the man nimbly sprung up with abundance of joy; and, to shew that he was perfectly recovered to the use of his limbs, walked about in the presence of all the company, which he had never been capable of doing before: And so the gospel, soon after it was first preached to the *idolatrous Gentiles*, was confirmed with just the same sort of miracle, by the apostle *Paul*, as it had been by the apostle *Peter*, quickly after it began to be published to the *Jews*, in his healing one at the gate of the temple, who had likewise been born a cripple, (*chap. iii. 1, &c.*) both of which were lively emblems of the spiritual impotence of all mankind, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, from their birth, and of the power of divine grace to put strength into them, for walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

11 And when the *idolatrous Gentile* part of the auditory saw what an undoubtedly miraculous cure was wrought, in an instant, at *Paul's* only speaking a few words, they were exceedingly astonished; and, in an ecstacy of joy, cried out aloud, as with one voice, in their own *Lycaonian* language, which was a dialect of the *Greek* tongue, These are certainly two of our gods, whom we worship, that are come down from heaven †, as we have heard they sometimes do, in the shape of men, to make a kind visit to us.

12 And as *Barnabas* seemed to be a person of the most venerable aspect, and advanced age and stature, and most upon the reserve of the two; they imagined and pronounced him to be *Jupiter*, their chief god: And as they accounted *Mercury*, to be the messenger, and interpreter of the mind and will of their superior deities,

N O T E S.

* Several copies and versions, mention *Paul's* speaking these words to the cripple, in the name of the Lord Jesus: (*vid. Mill. in loc.*) And we may be sure that this was implied, and some way intimated, and can scarce doubt but that it was expressed in so plain words, on such a remarkable occasion, as the first introduction of the gospel to the *idolatrous Gentiles*; since this was the usual way in which he and the other apostles worked their miracles. (See the note on *chap. iii. 6.*)

† It was a common notion among the heathens, which they had taken from the

philosophers as well as poets, that their gods were in shape like men, and never appeared in any other form. See *Græciæ* and *Whisky*. But how amazingly did the prince of darkness blind the minds of them who believed not; that though, under his influence, the *Jews* would not own Christ's Godhead, but sacrificed him to their rage, while they saw him work innumerable miracles; yet the heathens were so stupid, as, on seeing mere mortal men perform our wonderful work, to deify them, and go about to treat them with answerable homage.

cause he was the chief speaker.

13 Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

14 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto

deities, and the attendant of Jupiter, whenever he descended to this lower world; they agreed that it was he who appeared in the form of Paul, because this apostle was the most free and forward in discourse and action.

13 Then the priest of Jupiter, hearing how the people cried them up for gods, and spoke of one of them as the deity, to whom he used to officiate before his image in the temple, which stood in the suburbs of the city, as its patron and guardian, thought it his duty to pay religious homage to them; and therefore he, attended with a vast multitude of the idolatrous inhabitants, went in solemn procession to the gates of the house where the apostles lodged, and brought with them oxen, crowned with garlands of flowers and ribbons, to intimate that they were dedicated to the honour of their idols; and they designed to offer the oxen in sacrifice to Barnabas and Paul, and to place the garlands upon their heads, in like manner as they were used to crown the statutes of their fictitious deities:

14 But the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, perceiving their idolatrous intent, were so far from allowing of it, and being pleased with it, as some of the heathen emperors were with the divine honours that were paid to them, or as Herod was with the blasphemous shouts of the people, when, in applauses of his oration, they cried out, *It is the voice of a god, and not of a man*, (chap. xii. 21, 22.) that, on the contrary, they were extremely shocked at it; and, in zeal for the glory of God, rent their garments, in testimony of their indignation, grief, and abhorrence, and immediately rushed into the croud, calling out to them with the greatest vehemence to forbear.

16 And they reasoned with them, saying, Sirs, what do ye mean by this impious and absurd attempt? Tho' we are messengers sent with a divine commission to you, who have us in so high admiration, we can by no means admit of your invading the prerogative of God in worshipping us: For so far are we from being gods in human shape, that we are mere mortal men, who have our natural and sinful infirmities, and have human bodies and souls, of the very same frailty and affections with your own: And the great design of our doctrine, is to bring you off from all vain imaginations of deity in those whom ye call gods, but who really are not so; and to turn you from all your idols, which are either lifeless things, or dying, impotent, and unprofitable creatures, or rather mere vanities and nothing, (Jer.

to the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

17 Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

xiv. 22. and 1 Cor. viii. 4.) to that God, who has life in himself, and is the fountain of life to all others, and is indeed the only true God, who created the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and all things contained therein, whether visible or invisible, that are, or ever were made.

16 Who, as the great Governor of the world, has for many ages past, in his wise and holy, sovereign and righteous judgment, left all the nations of the *Gentiles* to the dim light of nature, as a just punishment for their iniquities, without any express revelation of his will, like that made to the *Jews*, or any other guide than their own consciences, to accuse or excuse them; (*Rom. ii. 15.*) and who, in his wonderful long-suffering and patience, has for many generations bore with them, while they walked in the perverse ways, which their own vain imaginations and foolish hearts invented and chose. (*Rom. i. 21.*)

17 And yet, all that time, he gave them plain evidences of his infinite wisdom and goodness, eternal power, and Godhead, (*Rom. i. 20.*) which were sufficient to teach them, that he alone ought to have been worshipped; inasmuch as he not only created them, but, in the course of his kind and all-disposing providence, constantly bestowed abundance of temporal mercies upon them; and this, among innumerable other instances, appears in that he has caused the clouds of heaven to water the earth with seasonable rains, and thereby fed its springs, and made it fruitful for a supply, not only of the necessities of mankind, both of the good and evil, but likewise of the conveniencies and comforts of life, that they might have a fullness of proper and delightful provisions, and be capable of eating them with pleasure: And so they were very criminal in abusing the light and mercies they enjoyed, by giving the glory to others which was due to him alone; and your guilt will be still more exceedingly aggravated, if, now the gospel of the grace of God is sent to you, ye should persist in paying idolatrous worship to us, or to any other creature whatsoever.

18 And with these sayings, scarce restrained they the people that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

18 And it was with much ado, that the apostles, by all these earnest intreaties, moving exhortations, and solid reasonings, prevailed upon those poor heathens to desist from their abominable attempt of offering sacrifice to them: So fond were they of these heavenly messengers, and yet so loth to be convinced of their own error.

19 And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch.

22 Confirming the

19 But when the unbelieving Jews, who had been so inveterate against the apostles at Antioch and Iconium, (ver. 2, 5. and chap. xiii. 45, 50.) heard what an interest they had, and what progress the gospel was like to make, among these Gentiles, they came with all haste from those cities hither, on purpose to incense the people, and raise the mob upon them, as ill-designing, turbulent, blasphemous, and seditious men: And they found means to give such a turn to their corrupt and fickle minds, that as the multitude formerly sang *Hosanna to the Son of David* one day, and within less than a week afterwards, under the influence of the chief priests and rulers, cried out, *Crucify him*, (Matt. xxi. 9. and xxvii. 22, 23.) so this people, who but a little before had adored the apostles, as gods, now by the instigation of the Jews, who had the greatest spleen against Paul, stoned him in a riotous manner, as though he had been the worst of men; and then dragged him with barbarous indignity out of the city, under an apprehension that they had certainly killed him*.

20 However, while the Christians, that had been converted in those parts, got about him, with tender and affectionate concern to mourn over him, and to bury him, in case he were dead; or to perform the best offices of kindness and respect they were capable of toward him, as occasions might require; he, by the miraculous power and goodness of God, revived; and getting up, to their great surprize and joy, returned privately into the city: and, to escape the further fury of his enemies, he went with Barnabas, on the morrow, from thence to Derby, a neighbouring city in the same province.

21 And, wounded and bruised as his body was, he and Barnabas improved their time in preaching the gospel to the inhabitants of that city; and so effectual was the grace of God which accompanied it, that they, as instruments in his hand, made a considerable number of disciples, (*κατασκευαστες μαθητας*) who believed in Christ, yielded themselves up to his conduct and government, and professed his name: After this, the apostles proceeded no further in their journey, but returned back to water the good seed they had sown, at Lystra, and Iconium, and at the Pisidian-Antioch.

22 At all which places, they laid themselves out in establishing

N O T E.

* The apostle evidently referred to these troubles, when he said to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. xi. 25.) *Once was I stoned*; and to Timothy, *thou hast fully known my doctrine—*

persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, what persecutions I endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me. (2 Tim. iii. 10, 11.)

the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith; and saying that we must thro' much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

establishing and settling (*ἐκτίθεσθαι*) the souls of the late converts, on the foundation of their most holy faith; exciting them, by all manner of arguments taken from duty, gratitude and love, necessity and delight, the honour of Christ, and their own spiritual and eternal welfare, to abide by, and stedfastly persevere in the belief, profession, and practice of those great and glorious doctrines which had been delivered to them, and which they had received by faith. And to fortify them against discouragement, on account of the late inhuman treatment *Paul* had met with, as also to let them know the worst, as well as the best, that might be expected, they told them, That from the holy appointment of God, the enmity of Satan and the world to the purity and spirituality of the gospel, and the present imperfect state of things, they must unavoidably pass through great trials and afflictions, persecutions, and reproaches, into the heavenly kingdom, which God has prepared for them that love him, and which will richly make amends for all the difficulties that lye in the way to it.

23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

23 And when, to bring things into a proper order in the several churches, which had been gathered in all those towns or cities, the apostles, with the concurring approbation, choice, and vote of each church, testified by the lifting up of hands, (*ἑγχεσθῆναι* *) had publicly appointed some of the graver and elder, most judicious and experienced converts among them respectively, to the pastoral office, for stately labouring in the word and doctrine, and administering the gospel-seals of the covenant, and for presiding and watching over the particular flocks, of which the Holy Ghost in this manner made them overseers, (*chap. xx. 28.*); they, by solemn prayer, attended with fasting, suitable to the great importance of this religious work, committed those pastors to the grace and care, guidance and blessing of the Lord Jesus,

N O T E.

* It must indeed be allowed, that the word *ἑγχεσθῆναι* is sometimes used by Greek writers, as signifying barely to appoint or constitute, whether by one person or more; and yet it cannot be denied, but that its proper signification is to lift up the hand; and that, in this sense, it was commonly used by the Greeks, to express their way of giving votes in public elections; and as the simple verb, as far as I find, is but once more used in the New Testament, viz. in 2 Cor. viii. 19. it there evidently signifies, the suffrage of the churches in their choice: And though it is used in composition, Acts x. 41. to signify the apostles being fore-chosen of God, (*ἡμεῖς ἑγχεσθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ*) to be

Christ's witnesses; the nature of the thing so plainly determines its particular meaning there, as puts it past danger of being mistaken. But when the choice of officers in churches is expressed by this word, one would think its original, grammatical, and most usual sense should be intended, as suitable to the rights of Christian societies; and it seems an exceeding strain upon the word, to suppose that it is here used in the same signification with *ἑγχεσθῆναι*, to lay on hands. But the reader may consult for one side of the argument Dr Hammond on the place: and for the other, Dr. Owen's true nature of a gospel-church, p. 68. &c.

Jesus, in whom they had believed, that they might be more and more furnished for, protected, assisted, and succeeded in, all their holy ministrations; and so set them apart to their respective charges.

24 And, after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

24 Then Paul and Barnabas, taking their leave of Antioch, and returning through the rest of Pisidia, came back again to Pamphylia, both which were provinces of the Lesser Asia.

25 And, when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:

25 And arriving at Perga in that country, where they had been before, (*chap. xiii. 13.*) they preached the gospel again to the people of that city, making a second trial of them; without any remarkable success in either of those attempts: After this, they went down to Attalia, another city of Pamphylia, and a sea-port.

26 And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

26 And from thence, going a ship-board, they sailed over the eastern part of the Mediterranean, which is called the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, (*chap. xxvii. 5.*) to the famous Antioch in Syria; from whence they first set out on this glorious expedition among the Gentiles, after they had been solemnly recommended in the church there, by fasting and prayer, to the grace and blessing of God for that service, (*chap. xiii. 1, 2.*) which they had now abundantly laboured in, and performed with wonderful success, in answer to those prayers.

27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened to them the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

27 And when, on their arrival again at that city, they had called the church together, they gave a distinct and particular account to them, from whom they had been sent by the special direction of the Holy Ghost, (*chap. xiii. 3, 4.*) of all their travels, labours, and sufferings, preservations, and encouragements; what God's ways had been with them; what amazing things he had wrought by their preaching and miracles for the propagation of the gospel, and conversion of multitudes among the idolatrous heathens, as well as Jews and proselytes; and how, in many places, the believers were established in Christ, formed into churches, and furnished with suitable pastors; and especially that God had, in this manner, opened a wide and effectual door, even to the worst of the Gentiles themselves, to bring great numbers of them into a state of salvation, through faith in the Lord Jesus.

28 And there they abode long time with the disciples.

28 And the apostles continued a considerable time with the Christians there to comfort them, and be comforted by them, and to help forward their further settlement, edification, and increase.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How plainly does the only living and true God testify his being and providence, patience and goodness, even to heathen nations, as he is the Creator of the

the heavens, the earth and sea, and of all things therein; as he bears with the perverse manners of those that abuse the light of their own consciences; and as he orders fruitful seasons, and gives them the necessaries and the delights of life! But with how much brighter, and more endearing glory, does he make himself known in the testimonies he has given us by the word of revelation! He thereby calls us off from all idolatries, and makes known the gospel of his grace, in and through the only Saviour of lost sinners; and so opens a door of faith to them. But how amazingly different is the reception that this blessed gospel meets with, where it comes! Some side with it, others set themselves against it; some are enraged at it, others believe it: and, alas! how fickle and inconsistent are the thoughts of carnal, unrenowned men about it! At one time they take up a good opinion of it, and admire Christ's ministering servants as if they were gods; and soon afterwards they are turned against it, and exercise the most inhuman barbarities upon the preachers of it. But God's own testimony to his word, by its external and internal credentials, bears down all opposition before it; and by the attending power of his Spirit, wins over the worst of sinners to Christ: and when they are brought to believe in him, how do his infinite wisdom, love, and care, manifest themselves, in his appointing them to be formed into churches, and furnished with pastors after his own heart, for their further edification and establishment! And O, with what pleasure and hope, labour and diligence, should his ministering servants lay themselves out, not in seeking their own glory, or admitting of honours that belong to God only; but in the conversion of sinners, and confirmation of believers; and in all the services to which Christ calls them, notwithstanding the severest persecutions they may meet with for his sake; and yet sufferings, even on his account, are not to be courted, or desired; but are to be carefully avoided, as far as may be with a good conscience, and that for the furtherance of the gospel.

C H A P. XV.

A dispute is raised at Antioch, by Judaizing teachers, about circumcising the Gentile converts; and Paul and Barnabas are sent by the church to Jerusalem for a decision of that point, 1,—5. The debates and conclusion of the council at Jerusalem, and their circular letter to the Gentile believers concerning it, 6,—29. Paul and Barnabas carry it to Antioch, where it is received with great joy, 30,—35. After which they propose a second joint apostolic journey; but fall into such a warm contention about John Mark, that they part, and take different routs, 36,—41.

TEXT.

AN certain men, which came down from Judea, taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised, after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER Paul and Barnabas had made their report to the church at Antioch, how God had opened a door of faith, even to the idolatrous Gentiles, (chap. xiv. 27, 28.) some judaizing Christians, that came thither from Judea, and pretended to have authority from the apostles and church at Jerusalem, (ver. 24.) endeavoured to enslave the minds and consciences of the Gentile-converts, who were brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, saying, Circumcision is of such absolute necessity, that unless ye submit to that divine ordinance, and so oblige yourselves to an observation of the whole law, according to Moses's constitution. (See the

the note on *ver. 5.*) all your faith in Christ will be utterly ineffectual to your salvation.

2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.

2 The two apostles therefore, being deeply concerned for the liberty and free course of the gospel, and for its great doctrine of justification, alone through faith in Christ, which such notions were subversive of, thought it their duty vigorously to oppose, and with holy zeal to dispute against these corrupters of Christianity: And when their debates with them rose so high, that all things seemed to be running into confusion, the *Antiochan* church, (*ver. 3.*) agreed to depute Paul and Barnabas*, and some other faithful brethren, that were members in communion with themselves, to such apostles and elders, (see the note on *chap. xi. 30.*) as might then be at *Jerusalem*, and to the whole church there, (*ver. 4.*) to ask their judgment upon this important point, that it might be determined in the most unexceptionable manner by those very persons from whom the disturbers of the church's faith and peace pretended to come, and by the most eminent church of the circumcision, as also by such ministers, as all true believers owned to be inspired men.

3 And, being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice, and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they

3 Hereupon a considerable number of the *Antiochian* church attended these deputies, part of their way, to bear their charges, and enjoy the pleasure of their company; and to testify their respect to them, and approbation of the design of their journey, who travelled through the countries of *Phenicia* and *Samaria*, publishing, as they went along, to the believers they met with, what a glorious work God had wrought in the conversion (*εὐαγγελισμῶν*)* of idolatrous, as well as other Gentiles,

N O T E S.

* This was the third time of Paul's going to *Jerusalem*, which he refers to *Gal. ii. 1, 2, 3.* where he says, that it was fourteen years after his conversion, and that he then took *Titus* with him; and went by revelation, either to himself, whereby, as well as by the choice of the church at *Antioch*, he was directed to go thither; or by revelation to the prophets of that church, who now again, by an immediate suggestion of the Holy Spirit, appointed these messengers, in concurrence with the whole church, as they at first had sent forth Paul and Barnabas to minister to the *Gentiles*, *chap. xiii. 2.* See Dr. *Whitby* on *Gal. ii. 1. 2.*

† What is here said about the apostles declaring the conversion of the *Gentiles*, seems to me to relate to the conversion of the idolatrous *Gentiles*, which was spoken of at the close of the last chapter, (*ver. 27.*) For the conversion of the *proselytes of the gate at An-*

tiach, could not but be well known long ere this, as it had been about eight or nine years before, and had made a great noise in all those parts, and been carried as far as *Jerusalem*. This, among other things, restrains my full assent, which I would willingly have given, if I could, to the plausible and labour'd attempt of the learned author of *Miscellanea Sacra*, essay iv. and of others after him, to prove that the following decree related only to the *proselytes of the gate*; for it can scarcely be thought, as he pleads, and seems with most assurance to depend upon, for the support of his hypothesis, that so surprising, important, and notorious a fact, as the conversion of the idolatrous heathens, which was not wrought in a corner, nor in one place only, but in the chief cities of several provinces, and made a great bulle there, and that all following instances of it would be so long collected from the church at *Jerusalem*,

they caused great joy unto all the brethren.

Gentiles, from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God. (*Chap. xxvi. 18.*) And as out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks; so the hearts of all the faithful brethren were warmed, and comforted

at

N O T E.

as till about nine years after this decree, as he represents it; And we are expressly told, *ver. 4.* that when Paul and Barnabas came to Jerusalem, they declared all things that God had done with them, (*αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἠρῶντες ὡς θεός, μὴ ἀνθρώπων*) which is the very same expression that is used in *chap. xiv. 27.* when they declared at Antioch, how God had opened the door of Faith to the idolatrous Gentiles. It is likewise said of these Gentiles, that they were turned to God, (*ver. 19.*) which answers very nearly to what is said of the Thessalonians, that they were turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, (*1 Thess. i. 9.*) and an attempt to oblige them to be circumcised and keep the law, is called *subverting their souls*, (*ver. 24.*) which is of much the same import with what the apostle said to the Galatians, who had been converted from heathenism, that if they were circumcised, Christ would profit them nothing, and would be of no effect to them, (*Gal. v. 2, 4.*) And these I take to be the residue of men, who, as the apostle James observed, (*ver. 17.*) it was prophesied should seek after the Lord, in distinction from the proselytes of the gate, who seem there to be described as those on whom his name was called. And in the Hebrew, *Ames ix. 12.* the place here quoted, instead of the residue of men, it is the remnant of Edom, which was one of the nations that were notorious idolaters. Accordingly the council's recommending Paul and Barnabas, as men that had hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, (*ver. 26.*) seems to refer to the account these apostles had given of their dangers and sufferings, when they preached the gospel to the idolatrous Gentiles, and were assaulted, and stoned for it, at Iconium and Lystra, (*chap. xiv. 5, 19.*) at the last of which places Paul was left for dead; and this apostle, in his next journey among the Gentiles, delivered this decree of the council to the churches in Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycania, (*chap. xvi. 1, — 4.*) where he and Barnabas had been before, and converted idolatrous Gentiles, and formed churches, partly at least, of them, (*chap. xiv. 20, — 23.*) which shews that they understood all sorts of Gentiles to be concerned in the design of this decree. But I own there is a considerable difficulty in reconciling all this with the apostle Paul's saying, (*Gal. ii. 2.*) that he communicated the gospel, which he preached among the Gentiles, privately to them which were of reputation; meaning, as is generally supposed, to the apostles James, Pe-

ter, and John: However, it is not said that he communicated it to them only; and the chief men, or men of reputation there mentioned, might probably include other eminent men, such as the superior prophets and elders that were there as well as the apostles; and Paul might first privately acquaint these with his preaching among the idolatrous Gentiles, to take off their prejudices, and engage them to support and countenance him in the more public report he was to make of it, lest the most zealous and prejudiced part of the judaizing brethren, finding nose to back him, should refuse to hear, or should rashly run down, what he had to say about it: So that this is no proof that he did not afterwards communicate it to the council at Jerusalem; and perhaps it is hinted that he did, in the former part of that verse, where the apostle, having spoke of the church there, says, he communicated that gospel to them; for they are the antecedent to this relative. And whereas it has been said that the apostle James spoke of this decree, as the only thing that the church of Jerusalem had known, relating to the Gentile converts, till Paul, about nine years afterward, declared to them what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry, (*chap. xxi. 17, — 25.*) I should rather think that he spoke of it, as the only restraint that had been laid upon believers from among them, of what character soever they had been before: For he, or rather he and the elders, (*ver. 18.*) say nothing about the church's ignorance of any such conversion; and all that may be supposed to carry such an aspect, related as much to themselves, as to the church: But they stood to it, that, according to that decree, believing Gentiles of all sorts were only obliged to abstain from the things therein mentioned. And it is indeed astonishing to me, that the conversion of the idolatrous Gentiles should be supposed to be so long a secret to the church at Jerusalem: Since the authors of this opinion themselves (though as far as I find, they slip over the thought, when they come to answer objections against their scheme) have placed the apostle Paul's epistles to the churches of Galatia, Corinth, Thessalonica, and Rome, before this time, which were Gentile churches, and consisted some, if not all of them, mostly of converts from heathen idolatry: Nor can I easily imagine, that, if this was privately communicated to the apostles at Jerusalem, they would have concealed it from the church there.

at the hearing of such good news ; and, instead of envying and murmuring, they exceedingly rejoiced in the grace of God, which had taken so wide a spread, and gave him the glory.

4 And, when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

4 And when these messengers arrived at *Jerusalem*, they were readily and affectionately received, with great esteem, by the church, and by *Peter, James, and John*, who were the only apostles they found there, (*Gal. ii. 9.*) as also by the stated officers of that church : And *Paul and Barnabas* related, at large, first privately to the chief of them, (*Gal. ii. 2.*) and afterwards in a full assembly, (*ver. 12.*) all the great things which God had done by their means, not only at *Antioch*, but in other *Gentile* towns and cities where they had preached, (*chap. xiv.*) and what sufferings they had endured, and testimonies the Lord had given, in the gracious and miraculous way, to his acceptance of the heathen through faith in the great Redeemer.

5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of *Moses*.

5 But here, as well as at *Antioch*, some *Jewish* Christians, who were converted from among the Pharisees, a sect that were most zealous for the rites of their law, vehemently opposed the two apostles, and all that had shewn their approbation of the account they had given ; these men warmly insisted upon it, That there was an absolute necessity for *Gentile* believers to be circumcised *, and thereby obliged to observe the whole law, given by *Moses*, in order to their admission into the church, and partaking of that salvation which was brought in by Jesus Christ.

6 And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

6 And as this was like to create further trouble, and the point itself was of too great importance to be neglected, the apostles and elders, by joint agreement, (*ver. 25.*) assembled together without delay, not by themselves, but with the whole church, (*ver. 4, 22.*) to take it into serious consideration.

7 And, when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said,

7 And, after long and close debates on both sides of the question, the apostle Peter, to bring things to an issue, got up and spake to the whole assembly in the following

N O T E.

* This plainly shews that it was not barely circumcision, but a compliance with the whole law of *Moses*, which circumcision obliged to, that the Judaizing Christians aimed at, as necessary to salvation : And it was under this notion of it, that they were so zealous to impose it, and the apostle *Paul* was so zealous in setting himself against it, as a most dangerous error, subversive to the truth of the gospel, and of God's way of justifying, alone through faith in Christ, without the deeds of the law : Accordingly

he represents it in this light, saying, (*Gal. v. 2, 3, 4.*) *If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing : For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become unto you ; whosoever of you are seeking to be justified by the law, ye are fallen from the doctrine of grace. And this I take to be the key to what he means, whenever he inveighs against circumcision, as inconsistent with a state of pardon, and acceptance to eternal life.*

said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

lowing manner, Ye men of *Israel*, and my dearly beloved brethren, ye all well know, and cannot but own, that some years ago, God was pleased to choose me, from among the rest of us the apostles of the Lord Jesus, as was intimated by Christ himself, in the days of his flesh, (*Matth. xvi. 19.* see the Paraphrase there) and was afterwards more expressly revealed with regard to *Cornelius*, (*Acts x.*) all which was according to God's purpose, in the antient days of eternity, (*αὐτὸς ἀρχαίως*) that the *Gentiles* should have the gospel preached to them first of all, by my ministrations; and that, by the power of his grace attending his own word and appointment, they should be brought to believe in Jesus Christ for eternal life, which was but the first fruits and earnest of his further calling others from among them.

8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us:

8 And God, who is perfectly acquainted with the inmost dispositions of the heart, and with the thorough change which his own work had made in theirs, clearly testified his acceptance of them, not only by giving them the graces and joys of his Spirit, whereby they magnified his name, but also by a visible effusion of the Holy Ghost, in an immediate and miraculous way upon them (*chap. x. 44, 45, 46.*) just after the same manner as he openly bore witness of his accepting us his first *Jewish* disciples, on the famous day of *Pentecost*. (*Chap. ii.*)

9 And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

9 And this was an evident demonstration, that he as readily received them, as he did us *Jews*, to his special favour, without making the least difference in this respect, between us and them, though they were not circumcised, and thereby obliged to keep the whole law of *Moses*; he having made them clean, without any of these external rites, in that he cleansed their souls from the guilt, pollution, and power of sin, through faith in his Son, by whose blood and Spirit they are justified and sanctified.

10 Now therefore fore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples

10 Since therefore God has so plainly declared himself in their favour, how durst any of you disbelieve it, or quarrel at it, or arraign his infinite wisdom and authority in it; or go about to prescribe to him, and try whether he will retract what he has done? And why should ye attempt to put a yoke of bondage upon *Gentile* believers and their seed, by obliging them to be circumcised, who, under the gospel-state, are to be considered as disciples of Christ, in like manner as children were reckoned with their parents, to belong to the church of *Israel*, under the *Mosaic* economy:

how

riples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

How perverse is it to insist, in defiance of this new dispensation of God's grace toward them, that they should be subjected to circumcision, and thereby to all the legal institutions, which are so numerous and costly, painful and difficult; and so entangling to conscience, and incapable of satisfying it, or of taking away sin, that neither our holy ancestors, nor we ourselves, could tell how to bear them, without the greatest incumbrance and anxiety of mind; nor should ever have willingly submitted to them, unless he had commanded it?

21 But we believe, that, thro' the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they.

21 But there is evidently now no need of this, since, though those *Gentiles* were uncircumcised, we are firmly persuaded, considering the great things which God himself has freely done for them, that it is by the mere grace and favour of Jesus Christ, the only Lord and Saviour of both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and by the favour of God through him, that we and they *, as well as our fathers; believe unto, (*πιστεύουσιν ὅτι*) and are made partakers of salvation, without any respect to the one or the other's being circumcised, or not; for in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which works by love. (*Gal. v. 6.*)

22 Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the *Gentiles* by them.

22 When Peter had finished this pertinent and moving discourse, there was a profound silence in the whole church, to hear what might be further offered upon the argument before them; whereupon Paul and Barnabas standing up to speak, they attentively listened to them, who gave a distinct account of the various steps they had taken in their late journey, not only with the *Jews* and proselytes of the gate, but likewise with the idolatrous *Gentiles*, and of what wonderful miracles God had wrought by their means, to confirm the gospel, which they had preached to the last of these as well as the others, and to testify his acceptance of them, according to what has been already related at large. (*Chap. xiv.*)

23 And, after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren,

23 And when they had gone through their narrative, and made proper reflections upon it, the apostle James, the son of Alphaeus, (see the note on *Matth. x. 3.*) summed up the debate on the following pacific and judicious manner, saying, Ye men of *Israel*, and my dear brethren

N O T E.

* It seems most directly suitable to the apostle's design to refer these words, even as they, to the *Gentiles*, rather than to the fathers; and yet as both admit of a good sense, and the last may not be entirely foreign to the apostle's argument against imposing the

law of Moses upon the *Gentiles*, since the fathers were saved, not by the law, but merely by the grace of Christ, through faith in him, who was to come, I have likewise taken that into the paraphrase.

thren, hearken
unto me.

14 Simeon hath
declared how God
at the first did vi-
sit the Gentiles,
to take out of
them a people
for his name.

brethren in the Lord, let me beg your patience, and your favourable attention to my sentiments on this important point.

14 Our worthy brother, *Simon Peter*, has just now informed us, how God at first began his great and good work of graciously visiting the *Gentiles*, by making him their appy instrument of conveying the light of salvation to them, which ye hear has been carried on still further in a glorious manner, and with divine attestations, by the ministry of our beloved brethren, *Barnabas* and *Paul*, to the conversion of multitudes of heathen idolaters, as well as proselytes of the gate, to separate a peculiar people from among all sorts of *Gentiles* to himself, in a way of sovereign mercy, to the praise of the glory of his grace, that they might profess and call upon his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

15 And to this
agree the words
of the prophets;
as it is written;

16 After this I
will return, and
will build again
the tabernacle of
David which is
fallen down; and
I will build again
the ruins thereof,
and I will set it
up:

15, 16 And if we compare facts with former prophecies of these days, we shall find that all this is perfectly agreeable to, and an exact accomplishment of, antient predictions of inspired men, according to what is recorded in many of their writings, and particularly in *Amos ix. 11.* where, after God had promised that he would not utterly destroy the house of *Jacob*, but would separate the corn from the chaff, wherever they are scattered among all nations, that not a grain of it might be lost, *ver. 8, 9.* he says, I will return in the greatness of my mercy to them, and will rebuild the house of *David*, which, by its own iniquities, and the oppression of its enemies, is like a tabernacle fallen into contempt, and brought to desolation; and I will raise it again out of its ruins, and exalt it to higher glory than ever, by the coming of the Messiah, who shall spring out of that decayed family, and by setting up a spiritual and everlasting kingdom under him, with wide extent, of whom and of whose church, *David* and his house were types;

17 That the
residue of men
might seek after
the Lord, and all
the Gentiles, upon
whom my name is
called, saith the
Lord, who doth
all these things.

17 That not the *Jews* only, but likewise men of other nations, who have hitherto been left and neglected of God, (see the note on *ver. 3.*) may inquire after him, and the way of finding favour with him; and so may seek and serve the Lord their God and *David* their King, as was prophesied of both these sorts of people, (*Hos. iii. 5.* and *Jer. xxx. 9.*); and that particularly all the devout *Gentiles*, who, as religious proselytes, profess and call upon my name, and shall be converted to the faith of the Messiah, may lead the way herein, saith the Lord *Jehovah*, who performs all these great and

marvellous

marvellous works, to unite *Jews* and *Gentiles* in one church under Christ their Head.

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

18 This, my brethren, plainly shews, that as God has, and ever had, a comprehensive, distinct, and unerring view and fore-knowledge of all his works, from the beginning of the world, and before the foundation of it; so his calling the *Gentiles* now, in accomplishment of prophecies, that were delivered many ages ago, was foreseen and predetermined from all eternity by him, and is brought to pass by his gracious and effectual operation, according to his purpose, who *worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*, (*Eph. i. 11.*)

19 Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them which from among the *Gentiles* are turned to God:

19 My opinion and advice therefore, upon the whole, is, that we should take heed of burthens and distressing the consciences, and disturbing the peace of these among the *Gentiles*, or of loading them with a yoke of bondage; who are turned to God from their iniquities, and even from heathenish idols, to serve the living and true God, (*1 Thes. i. 9.*) by obliging, or so much as desiring them to be circumcised; and so bound to observe the whole *Jewish* law.

20 But that we write unto them that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled

20 But as the civil polity of the common-wealth of *Israel*, still, in measure, subsists; and as the utmost care should be taken to keep the converted *Gentiles* at the greatest distance from every thing that looks like favouring the idolatrous worship which they have renounced, and to prevent their giving offence to the believing *Jews*; it may be very necessary, for uniting both parties into one civil society, and one Christian church, in the present circumstances of things, that we write a letter to our *Gentile* brethren, to recommend their abstaining from such things as the proselytes of the gate have hitherto been obliged to, by the law of *Moses*, in order to their enjoying civil and religious privileges among the *Jews*; as particularly, That they abstain from eating or drinking any thing that is offered or devoted to idols; and from all impute embraces, that are condemned by *Moses's* law, and have been used in the heathen temples before their gods; as also from eating the flesh of such beasts or fowls as were strangled, to prevent the separation of the blood from their flesh*; and from

N O T E.

* The author of *Miscellaneous Sacra*, (see *Essay iv.*) has, I think, made it out, with a good deal of evidence, in concurrence with Dr. *Spencer*, that things strangled are to be distinguished from things that were torn, or died of themselves, and that all the particulars of the prohibitions mentioned here; and

in the following decree, *Act. 29.* were laid upon the believing *Gentiles*, because they had been forbidden by the law of *Moses*, (*Lev. xvii. and xviii. 1.—16.*) to the proselytes of the gate, on account of their having been the chief inducements to, and concomitants or symptoms of idolatry. in

strangled, and
from blood.

from eating or drinking the blood itself, that has been taken from any animal: For as fornication is in itself sinful, so abstaining from the other things, as well as that, is needful to prevent offence to the Christian *Jews*, and secure a quiet enjoyment of privileges to the converted *Gentiles*; and so to promote mutual love and communion between both.

21 For Moses
of old time hath
in every city them
that preach him,
being read in the
synagogues every
sabbath-day.

21 For the law of *Moses*, which forbids these things even to the proselytes of the gate, is still, according to ancient custom, explained in every city where there are religious assemblies of *Jews*; his writings being constantly read in their synagogues, at their times of public worship, every sabbath-day: And therefore as they have been brought up, all their lives long, in a reverence of this law, and will still frequently hear it read, they will be exceedingly offended to find, that the things there expressly prohibited, should nevertheless be practised by the uncircumcised *Gentile* converts, who, by the gospel, are brought unto the same church and communion with themselves, and who, upon abstaining from these things, will have as good a claim to civil privileges, that are allowed by the law to strangers of the gate, as if they had been all devout *Gentiles* before.

22 Then pleaf-
ed it the apostles
and elders, with
the

22 This proposal, which was made, not in a way of authoritative imposition, but of candid advice, appeared so very fit and reasonable to the rest of the apostles, *Peter* and *John*, *Paul* and *Barnabas*, as also to the elders then present,

N O T E.

order to their enjoying the civil and religious privileges that were allowed to them among the *Jews*. But this does not, in my opinion, necessarily infer, as that learned author contends, that the following decree related only to proselytes of the gate: (See the note on ver. 3.) For, upon the conversion of the idolatrous *Gentiles*, why might not they be admitted to all these privileges, upon the same terms with the proselytes of the gate, since they renounced idolatry as much as these? And this makes the decree to be only temporary, with respect to those things that merely related to the Jewish constitution, as much as if we were to confine it to the proselytes of the gate; and consequently none of these particulars, except fornication, which is often expressly forbid in the New Testament, as in itself sinful, can be any longer obligatory upon us, who have no concern with the national constitution of the *Jews*, either as to church or state, which is now utterly destroyed. As to the eating of blood, Mr. *Stuckford* has, as I apprehend, justly observed, that the principal reason for the prohibition of eating it

was, because God appointed the blood of beasts to make atonement for the soul of man, (*Lev. xvii. 10, 11.*) and therefore required, that it should be religiously set apart for that purpose: But if this were a moral thing, God would not have permitted the *Israelites* to give, or sell a creature that died of itself, and so in its blood, to a stranger that he might eat it: (*Deut. xiv. 21.*) And therefore though the apostles, at the council of *Jerusalem*, that offence might not be given to the *Jews*, advised the *Gentiles*, at that season, to abstain from it; yet the eating it, or not eating it, is no part of our religion, but we are at perfect liberty in this matter. See *Stuckford*, vol. I. part i. book ii. pag. 94.—97. And as to things offered to idols, the apostle *Paul* afterwards speaks of eating them, not as absolutely unlawful in itself, but only so far as it might countenance idolatry, and give offence to weak and tender consciences, (*Rom. xiv. 14, 15, 17. 1 Cor. viii. 1.—10. and x. 23.—31.*) And this agrees with our Lord's own determination about meat defilement, *Mat. vii. 15.—23.*

the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch: with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren,

present, and to the whole church, that they all united in choosing certain persons from among themselves, to go to Antioch, together with Paul and Barnabas, and carry their answer to the question which had been sent from the church there, (ver. 2.): And that they might in the best manner testify their respect to them, and their readiness to keep up brotherly communion with them, and might add the greater weight to their message, the men they pitched upon to accompany these two apostles, were Judas, whose surname was Barsabas; and Silas, who was likewise called Silvanus, (2 Cor. i. 19.) * both of which were noted, eminent and leading men among the brethren of the church at Jerusalem.

23 And that the Antiochian brethren, and other Gentile churches might be fully satisfied that what these messengers had in commission to report to them, was the true and unanimous sense of the whole assembly, they wrote a letter, and sent it by them †, exactly answerable to the apostle James's advice, the contents of which were to this effect ‡: The apostles, and elders, and brethren at Jerusalem, send their Christian salutations in the Lord, wishing all prosperity, peace, and joy unto the Gentile brethren of the churches that commonly reside and assemble at Antioch, and in other parts of the provinces of Syria and Cilicia §, or wherever they are scattered abroad.

24 In-

NOTES.

* As Judas's surname is the same with that of Joseph, who was called Barsabas, and was a candidate for the apostleship, (chap. i. 23.) some have thought that they were brethren. Silas was the Jewish name of the other of these messengers, and it seems from his being called a Roman, (chap. xvi. 37.) that he was a free-man of Rome, and that Silvanus was his Roman name, by which he was usually called, after he became the companion of the apostle Paul, in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.

† The whole conduct of this affair plainly shews, that the church in those days had no notion of Peter's primacy, or of his being the chief judge of controversies: For the decree is drawn up, not according to his, but the apostle James's proposal and direction about the point in dispute; and that in the name, not of the apostle Peter, but of all the apostles and elders then present, and of the whole church, to whom the message was sent. Nay, Peter's name is not so much as mentioned at all, either in the order for sending to Jerusalem, (ver. 2.) upon the question, or in the messengers' address relating to it, (ver. 4.) or in the letter that was wrote in answer to it: And this likewise shews that the seat of judgment was then placed in the whole church,

as well as in its officers, or together with them; and that even extraordinary officers themselves would not take upon them to determine this important point, without the concurrence of the brethren; and that their determination was according to the word of God, (ver. 15, &c.) the only rule of faith, and infallible judge of controversies. How unlike was all this to the proceedings of Popes, and famous councils, in after ages!

‡ I take the following words, to the end of ver. 29. to be an exact copy of the council's letter; but as the nature of a paraphrase requires the use of different terms, to explain and enlarge upon the text, it is necessary to say, in representing its sense, that it was to this effect, or to this purpose, or the like.

§ That this decree related to other churches of the Gentiles, besides those in Syria and Cilicia, appears from the apostle Paul's delivering it to the churches of the several towns and cities in other provinces to which he afterwards went, (chap. xvi. 4.) and where he had before preached the gospel, and been owned of God in the conversion of many idolatrous, as well as devout Gentiles. (See the note on ver. 3.)

24 Forasmuch as we have heard that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law; to whom we gave no such commandment;*

25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you, *Barnabas and Paul;*

26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27 We have sent therefore *Judas and Silas*, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to

24 Inasmuch as, to our extreme grief, we have been informed, that some persons, who went from these parts, and, pretending to be countenanced and authorized by us, have given you a great deal of disturbance, by their deceiving words and fierce disputations, even to the perverting of your souls, in the great article of justification alone through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and turning them aside from the liberty of the gospel, by insisting on the necessity of your being circumcised, and submitting to the whole law of *Moses*, in order to your acceptance with God, and being admitted to all the privileges and blessings of his covenant, we in reality never said a word to those men, or to any others, that looked like a commission from us, to suggest any thing of that kind.

25 We therefore being met together with one mind and heart, in one and the same spirit, and having maturely deliberated upon the matter, have thought it highly expedient, and accordingly have unanimously agreed, to send to you, with this our letter, men of unexceptionable character, chosen out of the church which ordinarily assembles here; and have sent, together with them, the two apostles, *Barnabas and Paul*, who are deservedly exceeding dear to us, as well as to yourselves, for their eminent gifts and graces, labours and sufferings;

26 Men, who have given the strongest proofs of their sincerity and zeal, in that they have freely exposed themselves to the utmost hardships, and run the risk of their own lives, by preaching the gospel, in obedience to the authority, and for promoting the glory of Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. But lest the false teachers should make ill impressions on some minds, as if, because these apostles have been chief instruments in converting the *Gentiles*, they are so prepossessed in their favour, as to misrepresent our sense about them.

27 We have therefore, to take off all suspicion of that nature, deputed *Judas and Silas* to attend them, in bringing this letter to you, who will likewise more fully satisfy you, by word of mouth, about our sentiments, proceedings, and determination in this affair, according to what we have here written.

18 For, to come to the main point, it has pleased the Holy Ghost, as appears by the intimations he has given in ancient prophecies of the calling of the *Gentiles*, and by his extraordinary descent on *Cornelius* and his friends at *Cæsarea*, (*chap. x. 44, &c.*) and afterwards on the idolatrous *Gentiles*, (*see the note on chap. xiii. 52.*) though neither of them were circumcised; and it has

to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things:

has accordingly been judged fit and proper by us, under his direction and influence, to injoin your observation of nothing further, that might be looked upon as of a burdensome nature, than the few following things, which, considering all circumstances in the present state of the Jewish constitution, and of the gospel-church, are necessary * to set you upon good terms with your believing brethren of the circumcision; and they are,

29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

29 That ye refrain from meats and drinks offered to idols, as partaking of them would be construed a countenancing of the idol itself, in opposition to the only true God; that ye forbear eating or drinking of blood, that has been taken from any animal; and from eating the flesh of any fowl or beast, that has been strangled to prevent the taking away its blood, as seeding upon either of these would be deemed symbolizing with idolatry, and would give such offence, as to prevent all free correspondence and brotherly communion with Christian Jews; and that ye never defile yourselves with any kind of unlawful use of women, as that is not only abominable on account of the impurities of that kind which have been practised before the heathen idols in their temples, but is likewise destructive of God's ordinance of marriage, and of the peace, harmony, and welfare of families, and is directly contrary to the express command of our Saviour. (*Matth. xix. 3,—9.*) If ye carefully avoid these four things, ye will do all that is needful, on your part, to take off exceptions against you, merely because ye are not circumcised, and do not think yourselves bound by the *Mosaic law*; and ye will commendably pursue the things that make for the glory of God, the tranquility and comfort of the church, and the furtherance of the gospel. We add no more, than our hearty prayers, that your souls may abundantly prosper in light and grace, holiness, love, and peace, and may be saved for ever.

N O T E.

* Though all these particulars were at that time necessary for avoiding offence, and promoting civil and sacred harmony, love, and peace, as things were then circumstanced between the believing Jews and Gentiles, who were to be incorporated into one church; they were not said to be absolutely or alike necessary in themselves: And therefore it cannot be concluded from thence, that eating of blood, as well as fornication, is in its own nature sinful; or that abstaining from the rest of these is at all necessary, now the reasons of the prohibition are ceased; though avoiding fornication will always be so, as long as God's ordinance for marriage, the laws of

society, and the New Testament-dispensation last. For if these things were necessary at all, on any account whatsoever, and particularly with relation to the case which occasioned the writing of this letter; that is enough to answer the force of the expression, which calls them in this view, *necessary things*. See *Leland's Dis. Author of the Old and New Test.* vol. i. p. 415,—419. And as it is certain that many other things, besides these, were necessary to the Christian character, it appears that when these only were spoken of as *necessary things*, it relates not to Christians as such, but merely to the then profane state of the church.

30 So, when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and, when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle.

31 Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.

32 And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.

33 And after they had tarried there a space, they were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles.

34 Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.

35 Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord,

30, 31 Then Paul and Barnabas, and the other messengers that attended them, being in this manner sent away, proceeded, in pursuance of their orders, directly to Antioch in Syria, from whence the question had been sent, relating to the necessity of the believing Gentiles being circumcised. And there, calling the church together, they delivered to them the letter from the apostles, elders and brethren at Jerusalem. Which being read to the whole assembly, by their own order, they exceedingly rejoiced in the comfort of such a reasonable and amicable settlement of the late troublesome controversy, and in the friendly exhortation (ἐκ τῆς παρακλῆς) that was given them to comply with these injunctions, which were indeed no other than the proselytes of the gate had always been under; and to stand fast in their Christian liberty from the yoke of bondage, which their enemies would have laid upon them.

32 Hereupon Judas and Silas, who were themselves superior prophets, joined with the apostles, and took abundance of pains, in persuading and intreating the Christian brethren, by many arguments, to practise according to this excellent plan for peace; and to persevere in the pure doctrines of Christ, and in a close adherence to him for justification in God's sight: And by this means they greatly strengthened, and settled them in the faith, holiness, and liberty of the gospel.

33 And when they had spent a considerable time in this useful manner at Antioch, their good services were thankfully owned by the church there, who being at peace among themselves, and wishing all blessings to them, agreed to give them all proper assistances and testimonies of respect, in their journey, whenever they should please to return to such of the apostles as might be still at Jerusalem, who would be glad to hear of the happy effects of the epistle and deputation which had been sent from thence.

34 But Silas rather chose to let Judas go back alone, and to continue himself still a while longer with the brethren at this city, that he might be of further use to them; and might have the pleasure and advantage of their Christian conversation, and of seeing how the work of the Lord went forwards among them.

35 Paul and Barnabas likewise tarried at Antioch for some time after this, laying themselves out with great zeal and assiduity, in private discourses, and public preaching on the great doctrines of Christ, for the conversion of sinners, as many people used to come from all parts to that great metropolis; and for the increase

Lord, with many others also.

36 And, some days after, Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

37 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

39 And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed

and edification of the church; and there were several other men of eminent gifts and graces, that were, assistant to them therein *.

36 But after the two apostles had stayed there as long as they thought convenient, Paul said to Barnabas, his fellow-labourer, Come, let us now return, and make a joint visit to our dear brethren that have been brought over to the faith of Christ, and formed into churches, (*chap. xiv. 23.*) in all the towns and cities where we have been preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus, which he committed to our trust, and which derives all its efficacy from him, who is its author, subject, and glory; that we ourselves may see how it fares with them; whether they continue and go forwards in the faith and order of the gospel, or decline and go backwards; whether they have rest and peace, or are involved in troubles and dangers; and what further assistances may be needful for them, or further work is to be done among them.

37 And Barnabas, approving of this good motion, was desirous to take his nephew John Mark along with them in their second progress; he having still an affection for him, as his near kinsman after the flesh, and brother in Christ, though he had deserted them in their former journey. (*Chap. xiii. 13.*)

38 But Paul did not think him worthy of this honour; and therefore would by no means agree to take him for their assistant again, who, under the influence of some worldly and carnal motive, had left their company at Perga in Pamphylia, and declined venturing any farther with them in the noble, though perilous enterprise to which the Holy Spirit had called them, (*chap. xiii. 2.*); and so left them to go on alone in that important service.

39 And as the best of men are but men at the best, and have remainders of weakness and corruption in them, for their humbling and caution, and to keep them self-diffident and dependent on the merit and grace of the Redeemer; each of these eminent saints and servants of Christ was so stiff, and unyielding to the other on this head, that neither of them would make such allowances to his brother, as humility, love, and meekness called for; but they fell into such warm disputes, as too much inflamed each other's passions, and

issued

N O T E.

* It appears pretty plain from *Gal. ii. 11*; &c. that Peter came down from Jerusalem to Antioch, before Paul and Barnabas had left it; and that this was the time when the con-

tention happened between him and the apostle Paul, about eating with the Gentiles: For this seems to be the only time when Peter saw these two apostles of the Gentiles at Antioch.

departed afunder
one from the o-
ther: and so Bar-
nabas took Mark,
and sailed unto
Cyprus:

issued in their parting company: And yet as their hearts were invariably set on their main design, and God knows how to over-rule the intemperate heats and quarrels of his own people, as well as the cruel persecutions of their enemies, for the furtherance of the gospel; *Barnabas*, who would not give up *Mark*, as a vessel where-in is no pleasure, (*Hab. viii. 8.*) went away with him, and set sail for his native country, the isle of *Cyprus*, (*chap. iv. 36.*) to visit the brethren, and to help their faith and joy there, where the two apostles of the *Gentiles* had begun their work in their first journey. (*Chap. xiii. 4.*)

40 And Paul
chose Silas, and
departed, being
recommended by
the brethren un-
to the grace of
God.

40 And *Paul*, who was afterwards reconciled to *Barnabas* and *Mark*, and spoke honourably and affectionately of them, (*1 Cor. ix. 6. Col. iv. 10. and 2 Tim. iv. 11.*) chose *Silas* for his assistant, instead of *Mark*; and though there might be some fault in both the apostles way of managing their hot contests about him, yet the church seeming to think *Paul* most in the right, and approving of his choice of *Silas**, he set out with him upon the wings of their prayers, who solemnly recommended him to the favour and blessing of God, for all assistance and success in this his second apostolic journey; which, together with what was afterwards done by him, will be the principal subject of the remaining part of this history.

41 And he went
through Syria and
Cilicia, confirm-
ing the churches.

41 And he travelled, first of all, through part of *Syria*, till he came to *Cilicia*, which was his own country, (*chap. xxi. 39.*) in both of which provinces he visited the churches that had been planted in their several cities †; and, leaving with them the articles agreed on by the council at *Jerusalem*, and directed to them, (*ver. 23.*) he chiefly applied himself to the good work of establishing them in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.

R E C O L -

N O T E S.

* It seems as if *Barnabas* went away abruptly, without waiting for the prayers of the church, which he might think the less necessary, because he had been before set out, and recommended by them to the grace of God, together with the apostle *Paul*, for preaching the gospel to the *Gentiles*, (*chap. xiii. 3.*) Or, perhaps, he had their prayers now again, before he set out, as well as *Paul*, though *Luke* passed it over in silence, as designing to give no further account of him; but to proceed immediately to the history of the other great apostle of the *Gentiles*, after this separation.

† There is no reason to doubt but that, as

this decree was directed to these churches as well as to that at *Antioch*, *Paul* and *Silas* left it with them; and therefore some have thought that this verse is to be connected with *chap. xvi. 4.* and that the three first verses of that chapter are to be considered as a parenthesis. But there is no necessity for this supposition, which seems to be made to serve an hypothesis; for that fact might be taken for granted, and therefore needed not to be particularly mentioned, because it had just before been said, that the decree was expressly addressed to the churches of these provinces, *ver. 23.* of this chapter.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How injurious is a spirit of bigotry for the law of *Moses* to the pure doctrine of salvation alone by Jesus Christ, through faith in him ! But how happy is it to be freed from a law, the observation of which was like a galling yoke of bondage to the flesh and conscience, and never could procure the benefit which the gospel brings to those whose hearts are purified by faith ! They are saved, not by any works of their own, but merely by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, how infamous soever their characters were before ! When attempts are made, and that under pretence of apostolic authority, to corrupt the distinguishing peculiarities of the gospel, and to pervert the souls of Christ's disciples ; it is high time to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints : But what pity is it, and what a humbling proof of the remainder of corruption in the best of men upon earth, that angry contentions would ever arise among such as are heartily agreed in the same common cause, about matters of little moment, and about the prudential rules and methods of carrying on the work of the Lord ! And to what confusion, trouble, and danger, do warm controversies expose the churches of Christ ! It is matter of great consolation when they are happily adjusted ; and the wisdom of God is to be adored, which overrules them, for the clearing up of truth, and the establishment of believers, as it did the issue of the disputations between the apostles and the false teachers ; and for propagating the cause of Christ, as the contention between *Barnabas* and *Paul* turned to the wider spread of the gospel. But it is the duty of the churches themselves, as well as of their pastors and teachers, to interpose for the settling of such controversies, as affect their peace, harmony, and communion one with another ; and yet this is by no means to be attempted in a way of arbitrary imposition, but of prudent, brotherly advice, which they should be ready to ask, receive, and give, with a deep concern for important doctrines and Christian liberty on one hand, and for tenderness and condescension to weak and scrupulous consciences on the other ; and none should ever go into a way of authoritative determination, any farther than they can make it appear, that the Holy Ghost has decided the point which lies before them. And how careful should we be, that we do not misconstrue God's own injunctions, and make such of them perpetually binding upon conscience, which he designed only to suit some temporary occasions ; and that we do not confound things necessary in themselves, like that of flying from the sin of fornication, with things that are so only in some peculiar circumstances, like those of abstaining from meats and drinks offered to idols, and from things strangled, and from blood !— When any are brought to the true faith of Christ, it is matter of great joy to all serious Christians that hear of it ; but the ministry of the gospel is as needful for confirming and establishing them that believe, as for the conversion of a sinner from the error of his ways : and whatever success his servants have, in either of these parts of their work, it is only what God has done by them, and they should speak of it in that manner, that he may have all the glory.

C H A P. XVI.

Paul, finding Timothy at Lystra, circumcises him, and takes him to be his assistant, 1,—3. Visits several churches, 4, 5. Is prevented going to some places, and directed to Macedonia, by the Spirit, 6,—12. Lydia is converted by his ministry near Philippi, 13,—15. He afterwards casts out a spirit of divination from a young woman there, 16,—18. For this he and Silas are scourged and imprisoned, 19,—24. The jailor is converted, 25,—34. And Paul and Silas are publicly and honourably set at liberty by the magistrates, 35,—40.

TEXT.

THEN came he to Derby and Lystra: and behold a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

PARAPHRASE.

THE apostle *Paul*, leaving *Cilicia*, went in company with *Silas* to *Derbe* and *Lystra*, cities of *Lycaonia*; where he and *Barnabas* had preached, and planted churches before, (*chap. xiv. 6, 20,—23.*) And observe how happily God supplied his want of *John Mark*, by providing him another most agreeable assistant in his stead. At the last of these cities, he met with a certain disciple of Jesus, *Timothy* by name, the son of the noted *Eunice*, who was a Jewess, and a sincere believer in Christ, (*2 Tim. i. 5.*); but his father was a Gentile of Grecian extract; and so he was the properest person that could be met with, to engage in ministrations both to Jews and Gentiles.

2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

2 This young man had an excellent character for his religion, morals, and superior gifts and graces, among all the Christian brethren, that were acquainted with him at *Lystra*, and the neighbouring city of *Iconium*; and some of the inspired prophets, in those days, had foretold his future eminent services in the church of Christ, (*1 Tim. i. 18. and iv. 14.*)

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him, because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for

3 *Paul* therefore was desirous to take this extraordinary youth to travel with him, and to be assistant to him in his work: And though this apostle had lately appeared with great zeal against imposing circumcision on Gentile converts, either as necessary to salvation, or as a religious bond to observe the ceremonial law, (*chap. xv. 1, 2.*) and had opposed the circumcising of *Titus*, both his parents being Gentiles, who were under no manner of obligation to regard the Mosaic constitution, (*Gal. ii. 3.*): Yet as the Jewish ceremonies were national rites, which belonged to their civil, as well as ecclesiastical state, and were to be gradually laid aside among them, till their civil constitution should be utterly destroyed; and as he was willing, as far as he could with a safe conscience, to become a Jew to the Jews, and to be made all things to all men, that he might gain over the more to Christ and the gospel, for his glory and their own salvation, (*1 Cor. ix. 19,—23.*): So, in condescension to Jewish prejudices, and in compliance with their civil polity, he, with *Timothy's* own consent, circumcised him, because he was a Jew by his mother's side, and there were a great many of that countrymen in those parts, who were zealous for their antient rites, and would make his want of circumcision a strong objection against his ministry, and against conversing with him, and so obstruct his usefulness.

for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

4 And, as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.

5 And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased

fulness among them *; for they all knew that his father was a *Gentile*, and had not allowed him to be circumcised in his infancy.

4 But (δὲ) that this might not be made a precedent against Christian liberty, as *Paul* and his company passed through the various cities, where *Gentile* churches were already planted, they left with them copies of all the articles of the resolutions, (*δευτάρια*) which had been agreed upon by the apostles and elders, together with the whole church at *Jerusalem*, to be observed by *Gentile* converts, who were thereby discharged from all obligations to be circumcised, (*chap. xv. 22, &c.*) exhorting them, at the same time, to continue in the faith, and to study the things that make for love and peace, by a compliance with that plan, as long as the necessity of affairs might require it.

5 And this proved such a satisfactory and uniting scheme, that the churches were thereby confirmed and settled in the great doctrines of faith, with respect to their

N O T E.

* Circumcision, and all the rites of the ceremonial law, were, *de jure*, in the design of God, and in the nature of things, abolished by the death of Christ; and yet it pleased God, in his infinite wisdom and gracious condescension to the infirmities and prepossessions of the *Jewish* converts, to defer the revelation of this doctrine for many years, and then to spread the knowledge of it among them in a very slow and gradual manner, as they were able to bear it; lest an earlier and more open discovery of it, all at once, should be too shocking to them who were so fond of those ordinances which he himself had formerly instituted, and which they could not easily, on a sudden, be brought to believe were repealed: And therefore they were left, for the present, as indifferent things to be observed by *Jewish* believers, or not, as might be most unto edification, till the whole frame of that constitution should be demolished in the destruction of *Jerusalem* and the temple, when they, in fact, would mostly cease of course. In the mean while, the apostle, speaking of such sort of things, referred them to the judgment of the Christian's own mind, provided it were without offence to his brethren, (*Rom. xiv. 5, 24, 23.*) and said, as to himself, that *all things were lawful to him, but all things were not expedient, nor would he be brought under the power of any*, (*1 Cor. vi. 12. and x. 23.*) and particularly insisted, that in Christ Jesus, *neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, and faith which works by love*, (*Gal. v. 6. and vi. 15.*) Accordingly no notice is taken in the decree of the council about what the *Jewish* Christians should do, relating to circum-

cision, and keeping the law of *Moses*; but only about what might be proper for those of the *Gentiles*: For the apostles, elders, and church at *Jerusalem*, seemed to have no notion as yet, nor for many years afterwards, of the abolition of the law, as to *Jewish* converts; and therefore, especially considering that circumcision might be regarded in a civil view relating to the state, as well as in a religious view relating to the church of *Israel*, the apostle *Paul* saw fit, for reasons expressed in the Paraphrase, that *Timothy*, who was a Jew by his mother's side, should be circumcised. And for like reasons he afterwards took upon himself a vow of *Nazaritism*, and consented to purify himself, and be at charges with others that had done the same, (*Acts xviii. 18. and xxi. 23.—26.*) And though he intimated the abolition of the ceremonial law in some of his epistles to *Gentile* churches, as particularly in *Gal. iv. 9, 10.* and *Col. ii. 16.—23.* yet, as he knew that the prejudices of the *Jewish* converts were too strong to bear with that sort of doctrine, it does not appear that he ever delivered it in his preaching, or in any of his writings to the Jews, except in the epistle to the *Hebrews*, which I take to be his, and to have been wrote toward the close of his life. Hence, when they first heard as if he taught the Jews that were among the *Gentiles*, to forsake *Moses*, saying, that they ought not to circumcise their children, nor to walk after the customs, they were exceedingly offended at him for it; and yet that was a mere aspersions upon him, as appears from *Acts xxi. 20, 21, 24.* (See the note there.)

sed in number
daily.

their Christian liberty, and their dependence on Christ alone for justification, and acceptance with God to eternal life : And as jars and discords were hereby removed, and *Gentile* converts were excused from submitting to the burdensome yoke of the ceremonial law; which they had always been prejudiced against, their number daily increased, to the honour of Christ, the enlargement of the church, and the salvation of many souls.

4 Now when they had gone throughout *Phrygia*, and the region of *Galatia*, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in *Asia*,

6 Now the apostle and his associates, having visited the several churches, where they had formerly preached, were minded to proceed to other parts, where they never had been before : Accordingly they travelled through *Phrygia* and *Galatia*, two provinces of the *Lesser Asia*; and there they preached the gospel, with good success, to the conversion of idolatrous *Gentile* sinners : (*Chap. xviii. 23. compared with Gal. iv. 8, 9.*) And when after this, they would have gone into the proconsular *Asia*, which is but a small part of what is called the *Lesser Asia*, in distinction from the whole *Asiatic continent*, the Holy Spirit, by secret suggestion to one or more of their minds, prevented their going, for the present, to preach in that country; God thereby intimating, that he, in a sovereign way and manner, sends his gospel, and orders and disposes of his servants and their labours, how, when, and where he pleases, for accomplishing the purposes of his grace in their proper season.

7 After they were come to *Myſia*, they assayed to go into *Bithynia*: but the Spirit suffered them not.

7 Then, being diverted from thence, they came to another adjoining province, called *Myſia*, intending to go from thence to the region of *Bithynia*, both which were also in the *Lesser Asia* : But here the Spirit of God interposed again, and did not permit them to bend their course at this time thither, he having work for them first to do in other parts, (*ver. 12. &c.*)

8 And they passing by *Myſia*, came down to *Troas*.

8 Leaving therefore *Myſia* and *Bythynia*, (*ver. 7.*) without exercising their ministry in either of those countries, they went forwards, under divine direction; to the city of *Troas*, which was near the place where the antient famous *Troy* had stood, and lay upon the coast of the *Ægean sea*.

9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night : There stood a man of *Macedonia*, and prayed him, saying, Come over into *Ma-*

9 And while they were there, the apostle *Paul* had a supernatural vision in the night-season to direct his way : There stood by him an angel, who appeared in the form of a man, dressed after the fashion of the *Macedonians*; and speaking in their dialect, earnestly intreated his assistance, saying, Be pleased to come over into our *European country*, and, by your prayers and preaching,

Macedonia, and help us.

preaching, to do what in you lyes, to recover us from our ignorance and errors, idolatry and slavery, under the power of sin and Satan, and to lead us into the knowledge of salvation, which we need as much as any people whatsoever, and which it is your office and delight to communicate: O come and help us, as you have many others.

10 And, after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

10 And after he had been favoured with this heavenly vision, and communicated it to his companions at *Troas*, where the writer of this history joined him*, we immediately prepared to set out with all possible speed for *Macedonia*, being all of us, in concurrence with him, fully satisfied from what he had told us, that the Lord Jesus had hereby intimated his will, that we should think of no other place for the present, but go without delay, and publish the glad tidings of salvation, and propose them to the acceptance of the people of that *Grecian* province.

11 Therefore, looking from *Troas*, we came with a straight course to *Samothracia*, and the next day to *Neapolis*;

11 Going therefore abroad, and setting sail by the very first opportunity from *Troas*, we steered directly for, and had a prosperous voyage, by the will of God, to *Samothracia*, a small island lying off the western coast of *Thrace*; and, on the morrow, we sailed from thence to *Neapolis*, a sea-port on the *European* continent, which was formerly reckoned to *Thrace*, and afterwards to *Macedonia*.

12 And from thence to *Philippi*, which is the chief city of that part of *Macedonia*, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

12 And continuing our course from thence, through the gulph of *Strymon*, we arrived at *Philippi*, so called from *Philip* king of *Macedon*, which is, in the way from *Neapolis*†, the first town or city one comes to in that part of *Macedonia*, and a *Roman* colony; its inhabitants chiefly consisted of that sort of people, and being governed by *Roman* laws and magistrates: (*ver.* 21.) And there, God having work for us to do, (*ver.* 14; 25, &c.) we continued a considerable time preaching Christ to them.

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a ri-

14 And when the sabbath-day came on, after our arrival thither, we went out of the city, to the side of a river,

N O T E S.

* As here *Luke*, the writer of this history, alters his stile, beginning to speak, as he afterwards frequently does, in the *first person plural*; it is the common opinion of expositors, that it was at *Troas* that he met with the apostle *Paul*, and first came to be a fellow-traveller with, and assistant to him; and, from that time forward, most commonly attended him, and was an eye and ear-witness of many things hereafter related.

† *Thessalonica*, was the metropolis of *Macedonia*, and therefore *Philippi* was not the chief city of that province, but was (*ver.*

ang. p. 100) the first city of that part of *Macedonia* that the apostle and his company arrived at, after their passing by *Neapolis*, in the course they had taken from *Troas*. See my sermon at the ordination of Mr *Gibbons*. Nevertheless, Dr *Hells*, tells us, that it was the chief city of that part of *Macedonia*, which being formerly reckoned to *Thrace*, as lying east of the river *Strymon*, the old middle boundary, was therefore more distinctly stiled *Macedonia-Thracia*, or *Thracia Macedonia*. *Geogr. of the New Test.* part ii. p. 6p.

a river-side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.

a river, where was (* προσυχη) a house of prayer, to which both Jews and proselytes were allowed, even in this Roman colony, and were accustomed to resort, for addressing the Divine Majesty: and the apostle Paul, with the rest of us, sitting down at this place, took an opportunity of talking to the people, which were mostly religious women, that were wont to assemble there for exercises of devotion; and to lead them into the knowledge of Christ, and the way of salvation through faith in him.

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

14 And while Paul, particularly, was opening and recommending the gospel to the whole assembly, there was among them an industrious woman, Lydia by name, who was a dealer in the purple trade, and a native of Thyatira, a city of Asia the Less, (Rev. i. 11.) but was brought by Providence to settle with her family, (ver. 15.) at Philippi, and was a devout Gentile, who worshipped the God of Israel, though she did not conform to the whole of the Mosaic law: This woman, being present, heard the blessed tidings of salvation; and the Lord Jesus, by an internal, secret, gracious operation of his Spirit, so effectually opened the eyes of her understanding, and all the powers of her soul, (προσυχου) that she seriously and closely attended to, reflected upon, applied to herself, and obediently received with faith and love, the suitable and important truths that were delivered with great perspicuity and fervour by that eminent apostle of the Gentiles.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into

15 And when, having believed with the heart unto righteousness, and confessed with her mouth to salvation, she and her family, (see the note on ver. 33.) were baptized, on the foot of the covenant made with Abraham, and his spiritual as well as natural seed, (Gen. xvii. 7. compared with Gal. iii. 27,—29.) she was so affected with the mercy shewn to her and hers, and so very desirous of testifying her respect to us, and of being further instructed in the great doctrines of the gospel, that she earnestly intreated us, saying, If ye count me to have received the grace of God in truth, and to be a faithful

N O T E.

* The Jews had their προσευχα, or oratories, or places of prayer, as well as συναγωγαι; the difference between which was, that their προσευχα were without their towns or cities, and were places compassed with a wall, or some other inclosure, and open above, like our courts, and were principally used for prayer; whereas their συναγωγαι were within their cities or towns, and were covered houses, where not only prayers to God, but the law and the prophets were also read

and expounded; and as there were but few Jews at Philippi, they seem to have had only one of these houses of prayer, which was chiefly resorted to by the good women, but was well known to be there, and was allowed of by the law of the Romans, to be used according to the custom of the Jews and proselytes. (ὡς ἐπιμνησκόμενοι προσευχῇ καὶ μαζῇ) See Dr Hammond and Wistby on the place, and Mr Jof. Mede's Works, p. 35,—92.

into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

faithful believer in Christ, I beg you would favour me so far, as to come and make my house your home: And she was so exceeding importunate, that she prevailed with us to take up our abode with her, as Lot over-persuaded the angels at *Sodom*, (*Gen. xix. 31*) and as the disciples constrained our Lord at *Emmaus*, (*Luke xxiv. 29*. see the note there.)

16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel, possessed with a spirit of divination, met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying:

16 And while we resided there, as we were one day going (*ἵνα προσεύχημεν*) to the house of prayer for religious exercises, a certain young servant-maid (*παῖς*) met us in the way, who was possessed with an evil spirit, pretending to foretell future events, like those women that delivered the ambiguous oracles of *Apollo* at *Delphos*, by the artifice of the devil, and his agents the priests; and the people were so deluded with a notion of her extraordinary skill in fortune-telling, that they frequently consulted, and rewarded her, for the intelligence they wanted on divers occasions; and so she brought abundance of wealth, by her diabolical art, to her masters that kept her.

17 The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.

17 This woman turning back and following *Paul* and the rest of us, cried out with a loud voice, (like the possessed man in the days of our Saviour on earth, *Luke iv. 33, 34*. see the note there,) saying, These strangers are sent and commissioned by, and are devoted to, the supreme and only true God, who is far exalted above all gods; they are to be esteemed and received as his faithful servants, who by their doctrine make known to us, that sit in darkness, the only true way of deliverance from all our sin and misery, and of obtaining eternal happiness.

18 And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned, and said to the spirit,

18 And she, to ingratiate herself with us, took opportunities of repeating this encomium, time after time, for several days successively, without our taking any public notice of it; we being desirous to wait the event, and see how God might over-rule this surprising occurrence: But, at length, when there was reason to fear that some might take it to proceed from a confederacy between the devil and us, and others might look upon it to be all banter and ridicule, and so, one way or other, there might be danger of its turning to the discredit and hinderance of the gospel; the apostle was extremely troubled to think how the devil, who reigned among these heathens, abused this poor woman, and deceived the people by her, and was like to prejudice them against the truth: And therefore, to shew that we needed not, and would not rest the credit of our cause upon, but would reject her testimony, and that

spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

the divine Saviour, whom we served and preached, is indeed, together with the Father and Spirit, the most high God, infinitely superior to all demons, *Paul*, by an impulse of the Spirit of God, turned himself about, and, said, with holy zeal and indignation, to the evil spirit that possessed her, I solemnly charge you, not from any virtue or excellency in me, but in the name of my great Lord and Master Jesus Christ, and by his authority, whose power will make my words effectual, to depart from the young woman: And, according to his word, the evil spirit immediately quitted his possession, and left her.

18 And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught *Paul* and *Silas*, and drew them into the marketplace, unto the rulers,

19 But (*ἵ*) when her masters, who used to reap the profits of her divinations, saw, that by this miracle performed upon her, they had lost all farther means and hopes of getting any secular advantage by her, as formerly; they, instead of rejoicing, and blessing God for the mercy and power shewn in her deliverance, or of embracing the gospel which was thus evidently confirmed, were so exasperated against us, that they, in a riotous manner, seized *Paul* and *Silas*, the two chief and most active men of our company; and dragged them away by main force to the *Forum*, or court of judicature, (*εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν*) where the civil magistrates (*ἀρχόντες*) were then sitting on the bench.

20 And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city.

20 And having in this manner brought them before their * rulers, they, concealing their own private resentments, under a pretence of zeal for the public welfare, endeavoured to stir up enemies against them, by spiteful accusations, saying, These men, who are a parcel of *Jewish* foreigners, contemptible fellows, and exceeding odious to our nation, are the pest of the city, having raised sedition and tumults, and thrown all things into confusion amongst us.

21 And teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.

21 Yea (*καὶ*) by their pestilent discourses and preachments, they publish, and would introduce amongst us such strange pernicious doctrines and customs, in opposition to our gods, and the religion and manners of our country, as we, who are a *Roman* colony, are obliged, by the very laws of the empire itself, neither to admit of, nor (*ποιεῖν*) to put in practice.

22 And

N O T E.

* Some think that the word (*ἀρχόντες*) rendered rulers, ver. 19, were the civil powers; and that the word (*ἐπαγγέλαι*) here rendered magistrates, were the military officers, or the captains of the *Roman* garrison. But as these terms are sometimes promiscuously used in a lax sense for civil as well as military officers, and the cognizance of this cause was

brought before the magistrates (*ἐπαγγέλαι*); and they were the persons who afterwards, acknowledged their error, and set *Paul* and *Silas* at liberty, desiring them to depart out of the city, (ver. 35,—39.) I rather take them to be only different names, as the *duumviri* and *prætores* also were, of the civil magistrates.

21 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*.

23 And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jaylor to keep them safely.

24 Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

26 And suddenly there was a great

22 And this invidious charge and outcry so incensed all ranks of people against *Paul* and *Silas*, that the mob rose upon them with great fury, as though they would have torn them to pieces; and the magistrates, without any formal trial, or so much as hearing what these men of God had to say for themselves, ordered their officers, the *licitors*, to strip their clothes off from their backs, and to scourge them severely with their rods; so shamefully were they treated at *Philippi*, as though they had been the most infamous malefactors, (1 *Thess.* ii 2.)

23 And when their unrighteous commands had been executed, by cruelly lashing their bodies with many smart and repeated strokes above measure, (2 *Cor.* xi. 23.) they committed them to the common jail, with a strict charge to the keeper of the prison, to take all possible care in securing them, that they might by no means make their escape.

24 Accordingly he having received such particular orders, and being as unmerciful in his temper as his masters could wish him to be, clapt up the prisoners in a dark and filthy dungeon, in the inmost and safest part of the jail; and for further security, as well as annoyance to them, he fastened their legs in a pair of stocks.

25 But (2.) in the dead of that very night, *Paul* and *Silas*, though so full of sores, by the inhuman stripes that had been laid upon them, and though shut up in a noisome dungeon, and placed in a most uneasy situation in the stocks, were so lifted above the terrors of their enemies, and the hardships they endured, and so abundantly filled with the joys of the Holy Ghost in their own souls, that they spent their time in committing themselves and their cause to God by prayer, and in as chearfully singing hymns of praise to him, (*vers.*) for the honour he had put upon them, in counting them worthy to suffer shame on Christ's account, and for their hopes of still further glorifying him on the earth, and being, at length, glorified with him in heaven, as if they had been in the most easy circumstances, and surrounded with all the pomp and delights of a palace. And in the fervour of their spirits they exalted their voices to such a degree, that the rest of the prisoners heard the sound of their heavenly songs.

26 And, that God might give a miraculous testimony of his graciously owning them, and of his sore displeasure against their enemies for so shamefully abusing them, there was, all on a sudden, an awful and exceed-

great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's hands were loosed.

ing great earthquake, insomuch that the foundation of the prison was sensibly shaken by it: And, at the same time, all the doors flew open, as it were of their own accord, in an instant, and all the bonds and setters that had been put upon them and the rest of the prisoners, dropped off at once; thereby intimating, that God's terrors need not make his people afraid, how much soever others may be justly dismayed at them; and that Christ, by the gospel which his servants preached, *proclaims liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.* (Isa. lxi. 1.)

27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison-doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.

27 Hereupon the jailor being awaked out of his sleep by the surprizing shock of the earthquake, and by the clattering and noise that attended it; and rising, and seeing that the doors of the prison, though so carefully shut over-night, were all thrown open; he, in the terror of his mind, and under fearful apprehensions of being charged with a most criminal breach of trust, and being also a man of a rash temper, immediately drew his sword: And a self-murder was allowed of by many heathen philosophers, as the last remedy in distress, he was going to stab himself; concluding that the prisoners had all made their escape, and that he, according to the *Roman* law, should be forced to suffer the worst of punishment that was designed for any of them; especially considering the strict charge that had been given him but the day before to secure *Paul* and *Silas*, (ver. 23.)

28 But *Paul* cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here.

28 But *Paul* perceiving his wicked design, and what pur him upon it; and being moved with a noble Christian compassion toward the man who had despitefully used him, and with a holy indignation at such a criminal attempt, cried out aloud, and with great earnestness, saying, Do not offer to commit any act of violence upon yourself, which would be sinning against your own life and soul too; for, though we have had opportunity enough to have run away, we are all still here; I and my companion having no inclination, and the rest of the prisoners no power, to fly, God so ordering it for your safety.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling

29 Then the jailor, calling for lights, that he might look about him, ran with all speed into the inner prison; and being full of dread and horror at such an awful appearance of God, in favour of these his servants, and against the unrighteous proceedings of their enemies; and being at the same time struck by an inward work of the Holy Spirit, with a deep conviction of his own heinous guilt, as a sinner against God, he came shuddering

bling, and fell down before Paul and Silas ;

shuddering all over, through a sense of his danger of divine wrath ; and, with hurry and confusion, threw himself down at the feet of *Paul and Silas*, as one that would beg their pardon for his ill-usage of them, and would now treat them with the utmost reverence, and resign himself up to their direction, for the relief of his distressed and sinful soul.

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved ?

30 And when he had led them in a respectful-manner out of the dungeon, he, amazed to think of the sad condition he was in, earnestly intreated them, saying, Sirs, as I have heard, (*ver. 17.*) and a divine power has now miraculously bore witness to it, that ye are the servants of the most high God, to shew unto men the way of salvation, I beg that, notwithstanding all my unworthiness, and provocations to God and you, ye would have compassion upon such a miserable, guilty, ignorant, helpless wretch as I am, and would tell me, whether there may be any hope for me ; and if so, what I must do to obtain the forgiveness of all my sins, and deliverance from the dreadful wrath which I have deserved, and which, as my conscience now tells me, I am in the utmost danger of.

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

31 And as they rejoiced to find that his conscience was awakened, and that his chief concern was about the salvation of his soul ; and as they were as willing to preach the gospel to this *idolatrous Gentile*, as they had been before to proselytes of the gate, (*ver. 13, 14.*) so they readily replied, The sum of our answer to your important question is, that, under all your affecting sense of ignorance, guilt, and danger, you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we preach, as the only Saviour of lost sinners ; and receive our testimony concerning him with full assent and consent to it, as divine, and suitable to your own wants and miseries, accepting of him, and depending upon him, as your prophet, to enlighten you by his word and Spirit ; as your priest, to reconcile you to God by his atoning death ; and as your King, to subdue your soul to himself, by his victorious grace : And in this way, not only you yourself, vile as you have been, shall have all the salvation that you need, and are so desirous of, even unto eternal life ; but your family also shall be partakers of the means ; and be brought into the way, and under the promise of salvation *.

32 Accor-

N O T E.

* It is not to be supposed, that, by virtue of the jailor's own faith, all that were in his house should be effectually and eternally sa-

ved ; and therefore the apostle here seems to intend, that as the jailor would by faith become a true son of *Abraham*, so God would bring

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized,

32 Accordingly they preached the Lord Jesus, and salvation through him, not to the jailor only, but likewise to all his family, whom he had brought together, in the greatness of his concern for their eternal welfare, that they, as well as he himself, might hear, and that all their souls might live, by means of the religious instructions that should be given them.

33 And his own heart was, through divine grace, so powerfully impressed with these blessed tidings, that, in love and gratitude to the heavenly messengers who brought them, he, with all speed, though it was so late in the night, suppled, cleansed, and dressed their sores and festering wounds, which had been made by the severe whipping the day before, (ver. 23.) And then, declaring that he unfeignedly believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation †, he and his whole family were immediately

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bring him into his covenant, in which he promised to be a God to him and to his seed, (Gen. xvii. 7.) ; but it was not proper for the apostle to mention this privilege in those terms whilst he was speaking to a heathen, who was a stranger to the Old Testament, as he afterwards did to a Gentile church, (Gal. iii. 7, 9, 29.) and as our Lord had intimated it concerning *Zaccheus*, when he said at his conversion, *This day is salvation come to this house, for as much as he also is the son of Abraham*, (Luke xix. 9.)

† There is no room to doubt, considering *Abraham's* character, but that when God first made his covenant with him and his seed, and ordered every male in his house to be circumcised, all the adult males of his family were instructed in the knowledge of God, and of his covenant, in order to their having the token of it applied to them, as well as to the children and himself, according to God's appointment, (Gen. xvii. 7, — 14. and xviii. 19.) And the same may be said with respect to the Jewish proselytes and their families; since, as to this point, there was one law to the Israelites and the strangers, (Exod. xii. 48, 49.) and, if we may depend on the Jewish doctors, adult proselytes, and their houses were to be baptised by their own consent: (see *Ainsworth* on Gen. xvii. 12.) And therefore its being said, that *Paul* and *Silas* spoke the word of the Lord to the jailor, and all that were in his house, (ver. 32.) when the gospel-seal of the covenant was to be applied to him and all his, is no more an argument against his having had children that were baptised, than it is that there were no male infants in *Abraham's* family to be circumcised; nor any infants in the families of proselytes to be baptised, as well as circumcised; because the grown persons in both

were to be instructed, before either of those rites were to be applied to them, as the grown persons in the jailor's house were first to be taught, that they might be baptised upon their own personal profession of faith, and by their own consent. And if any suppose that there were no children in his house, nor in *Lydia's*, (ver. 15.) they take that for granted, which it is impossible to prove; but it is certain, that the terms *household*, and *a man's house*, all along in the Old Testament, generally include the children of the family; and if, as it is thought by many, it had been a well-known, and long continued custom among the Jews, to admit proselytes into the church of Israel, by baptising them and their whole families, inclusive of their infants, (see *Lightf. Harm.* on John i. 25.) there is a plain reference to that custom, when in this chapter it is said, that *Lydia* and her house, and the jailor and all his were baptised: And it is very remarkable in my account, that in this history of the Acts of the apostles, God's covenant with his people and their seed, and the applications of the New Testament-seal of it to children, as well as grown persons, is strongly intimated, first with respect to the converted Jews, afterwards to the proselytes of the gate, and then again to the idolatrous Gentiles, in some of the first openings of the gospel-dispensation among them respectively: As in the Jews, the apostle *Peter* called them to repent and be baptised, because the promise was to them and to their children, and ran in the like strain to such as should be called from among the Gentiles; (Acts ii. 38, 39.) As to the proselytes of the gate, *Lydia* and her household, ver. 15. or, as the Syriac has it, the children of her house were baptised; which shews at least, that in those early times, children were deemed such parts

baptized, he and all his, straight-way.

immediately baptized; and so were admitted to all the privileges of the gospel, and came under the strongest engagements to be the Lord's, according to the tenor of God's covenant with *Abraham* and his seed; in token of which, both *Abraham* himself, and all the males, whether elder or younger, in his house, were circumcised. (*Gen. xvii. 7, 9, &c.*)

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

34 After this, in further testimony of his respect to these ambassadors of peace, he brought them into his dwelling house, and set before them the best provisions he had, to refresh them, after their great fatigues and sufferings; and (παραλαβὼν) having believed in Christ as a divine Mediator, and in God as the Father of mercies through him, according to the apostle's direction, (*ver. 31.*) he * exceedingly rejoiced, with his whole family, running about, and expressing his ecstasy in every part of his house, like one that leaped for joy.

35 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let those men go.

35 Now on the next morning, as soon as it was well day, the rulers reflecting on, and seeing their error, in their rash and illegal proceedings, which they had been guilty of against *Paul* and *Silas*, (*ver. 22, 23.*) privately sent some of their under-officers, called *libtors*, with a message to the jailor, ordering him to discharge the men without any more ado, that had been the day before committed to his custody; hoping thereby to smother their male-administration, and to escape the vengeance of God and man which they had reason to fear on this account †.

36 And the keeper of the prison

36 The jailor, extremely pleased at such an uncommon turn in favour of those who had been so signally kind

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of the household as were baptized: As to idolatrous Gentiles, the jailor and all his were baptized. And it seems highly improbable, that the jailor and his house were baptized by immersion; since, as far as appears, that ordinance was all on a sudden administered to them severally, while they were in the prison; and since the mangled condition of *Paul* and *Silas*'s bodies, by means of their being severely scourged the day before, made it very improper, not to say unsafe, for them to go at midnight into the water so deep, as that mode of baptizing would oblige them to do.

* One sense that I have given of this passage, is according to Mr Henry's observation that it may be read, "He believing in God, rejoiced all the house over; (παύσας) he went to every apartment expressing his joy." And it is evident that the words ἐκπαισάμενος πάντας (παύσας) he having believed, rejoiced, expresses only his own, and not his family's faith and joy.

† As they had doubtless heard of the miraculous cure of the possessed damsel, (*ver. 18.*) and had probably felt the shock of the earthquake, (*ver. 26.*) and perhaps had received some account of the extraordinary transaction that ensued upon it in the prison, (*ver. 27,—34.*) they might justly fear that God would punish them for the injuries they had done to his servants, whom he had so remarkably owned. And as they had certainly abused their authority, in ordering them to be whipped and imprisoned, without a legal trial and uncondemned, and that on account of their religion, which, being deemed to be Jewish, (*ver. 20, 21.*) was under the protection of the Roman laws, they had reason to expect the severest animadversions from the superior powers; and so might well be afraid of the vengeance both of God and man, unless they retract what they had done.

prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart and go in peace.

37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay, verily; but let them come themselves, and fetch us out.

38 And the sergeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared when they heard that they were Romans.

39 And they came and brought them, and

kind and serviceable to him, and whom he now so affectionately loved, immediately acquainted the apostle Paul with the message he had received, saying, Our magistrates, that were so severe upon you, have now be-thought themselves, and sent me orders to dismiss you; let me therefore beg of you to get away as quietly, and as fast as you can, that ye may improve your liberty while ye have it, lest their minds should soon alter again; and may all the blessings of heaven attend your persons and labours wherever ye go!

37 But Paul, thinking that the credit of Christianity, and the safety of the disciples in those parts, required his asserting and vindicating his own innocence, and his civil as well as religious rights, said to the officers that brought the message, and were standing by, Your masters have, in an arbitrary, cruel, and opprobrious manner, publicly ordered us to be beaten with rods, and committed us to jail, as if we had been the vilest of slaves and malefactors, and that without so much as hearing the merits of the cause, and what we had to say for ourselves, in direct violation of all law and justice, and of our privileges as we are freemen of Rome, (see the note on chap. xv. 22.); and do they now pretend in a clandestine way, (*εὐλαβήσαντες*) to turn us out, as if we had broke prison, and to expel us their territories, without any open acknowledgment of their fault, and of our innocence? No, truly we shall not accept of our liberty upon such inglorious terms, as would leave a reproach upon our characters, and a veil upon their tyranny; but if they would acquit themselves with honour and equity, let them come in person, and discharge us in a legal manner, by as public an act of their own as that whereby they have so unlawfully abused us; that all the people may know the wrong they have done us.

38 Then (*αὐτοὶ*) the officers, returning, reported these complaints and claims of right to the magistrates; and when they understood that the prisoners, whom they had abused, were citizens of Rome, they were terribly frightened, lest the indignities they had put upon them should come to the ears of their superiors, and they should be punished for transgressing the Porcian law, then in force, which expressly forbids a Roman citizen's being whipped with rods.

39 And as they feared the wrath of man more than the wrath of God, they immediately, coming to Paul and Silas, intreated them, in a civil and courteous manner, not to take the advantage of law against them, but to pass by the injuries they had done them; and, conducting

and desired them to depart out of the city.

conducting them publicly and respectfully out of prison, they begged that they would please quietly to accept of their liberty, and withdraw from their city and jurisdiction, that there might be no further disturbance among them.

40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

40 And as these noble confessors were thus honourably discharged, and were men of a forgiving spirit, far from seeking revenge, they put up the affront that had been offered to them; and peaceably departing from the prison, returned to their lodging at *Lydia's* house: And when they had seen their Christian companions, and the disciples that had been made at *Philippi*, and had told them, for their comfort and encouragement, how wonderfully the Lord had appeared for them since their confinement; and when (*παρηγορεῖν*) they had furthermore exhorted the new converts to go on in his ways, trusting in him to carry them through all difficulties and dangers, and to preserve them to his heavenly kingdom, they took their leave of them, and proceeded to other places, where he had further work for them to do.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What need have we of wisdom from above, to direct us when to condescend to the infirmities of the weak, as the great apostle of the *Gentiles* did in circumcising *Timothy*, and delivering the decrees to be kept; and when to assert our just rights and privileges, civil as well as religious, in imitation of his noble remonstrance against the arbitrary and tyrannical proceedings of the magistrates, who, contrary to all law and justice, had scourged and imprisoned him and *Silas* for their religion, though they were *Romans*! And where such meek and courageous, prudent and Christian-like conduct is joined with a plain and faithful preaching of salvation, alone through the Lord Jesus, how remarkably does God own it, to the credit and propagation of the gospel, the increase of converts, the comfort, edification, and peace of the church, and their establishment in the faith! But with what sovereignty does he dispose of the ministrations of his servants! He suffers them not to go to some places to which their own inclinations would have led them, and sends them to others, where he has more work for them to do; and when by plain hints of his Providence and Spirit, agreeable to the design of his word, he points out their way to one and another town or city, they may assuredly conclude, that he has called them to preach the gospel there, and that it shall not be in vain, though many adversaries may be raised against them: But how different is the manner of his gracious operation in the conversion of sinners! He sweetly and gently opens some hearts, as he did *Lydia's*; and makes his way to others, as he did to the jailor's; through such terrors as thoroughly awaken their consciences, and, like the earthquake, shake the foundation of their carnal peace and confidence, and make them tremble and cry out in deep distress, *what shall we do to be saved?* And, *O what rich encouragements* is there to souls that, under a moving sense of their guilt and danger, are earnest in inquiries of this sort! Christ and his salvation are brought nigh to them, that, through faith in him, they may be delivered from sin and wrath; and that their horror may be turned into joy. And when God is at work upon heads of families, as they would fain have all under their care partakers of the benefit with themselves; so the promises of Salvation are brought to their seed, that

that they, and all theirs, may be baptised; and the heart, that is opened to receive the gospel, opens again in love, respect, and kindness to the servants of Christ, and opens the house to entertain and lodge them, and the hand to wash their stripes, if there be occasion for it. O blessed gospel, which has such excellent effects, when it comes with power! It is designed to bring help to them that are perishing in their sins; and lyes directly contrary to all the interests of the devil, though he is sometimes forced to own that it is of God; but as it needs no testimony from that deceiver of souls, so his power is defeated, and his captives are set free by its means: And yet, alas! how does a worldly, selfish spirit oppose its great and glorious design; and its faithful preachers, under pretence of maintaining the public peace! And with what fury does a persecuting temper run out against them, till either the fear of man restrains it, or the fear of God changes it! But Christ will support and honour his suffering servants; he will give them such inward consolations, as shall make them sing for joy, even in dungeons and the stocks, and under wounds and reproaches for his Name's sake; and he will vindicate their character; and bring about their deliverance in an honourable way, that they may be at liberty to go on with the work he further calls them to, and that his people may be comforted.

C H A P. XVII.

Paul arrives, and preaches at Thessalonica, where some believe, and others persecute him, 1,—9. He goes to Berea, and preaches with good success there, till the persecuting Jews follow him, and drive him from thence, 10,—14. He is conducted to Athens, where he preaches Jesus and the resurrection, and disputes with the heathen philosophers against idolatry, and several persons are converted, 15,—34.

TEXT.

NOW, when they had passed through Amphipolis, and Appollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews.

PARAPHRASE.

NOW when Paul *, with Silas and Timothy, (ver. 15.) had travelled from Philippi through the Grecian cities of Amphipolis † and Appollonia, they arrived at Thessalonica, which, according to the signification of its name, was so called on account of the victory obtained by Philip of Macedon over the Thessalians, and was the metropolis of the province of Macedonia, (see the note on chap. xvi. 12.) where the Jews were very numerous, and had synagogues, at which they used to assemble for religious worship.

2. And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them,

2. And that they might not complain of being neglected, or of the Gentiles being preferred before them, the apostle Paul, according to his constant custom, where there were Jewish synagogues, first of all repaired thither; and because on their sabbaths there was the great-
est

NOTES.

* Luke seems to have been at Philippi, and to have continued in those parts, travelling about from place to place among the churches, till the apostle returned to this city again; for here he leaves off speaking of himself as one of Paul's company, and does not resume that title till we find them together there;

(chap. xx. 5, 6.) After which he constantly uses it at the end of the history.

† Amphipolis is supposed to be so called, because, as *Thucydides* tells us, (*lib. iv. p. 321.*) the river Strymon, on which it was situated, ran round that city. (αμφὶ τὴν πόλιν)

them, and three sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.

3 Opening and alledging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead: and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

est concourse of people, he, for three of those days successively, took abundance of pains in discoursing and arguing with them from the scriptures of the Old Testament, for which they professed to have the highest veneration.

3 The main scope of his preaching among them, was to explain those inspired and prophetic writings in their reference to Christ, and to shew from thence, that the Messiah, promised to the Jews, was not to be a temporal prince, as they fondly expected, but a crucified Saviour, how much soever they might be prejudiced against him on that account; and that, according to those antient predictions, it was necessary that the Messiah should undergo the severest sufferings, even unto death, for the expiation of sin, and should rise again with triumph from the dead, for the vindication of his character, and the advancement of his person to his throne and kingdom at the Father's right hand, as he himself had declared, (*Luke xxiv. 26, 27.*) and for the justification of them that believe in him, (*Rom. iv. 25.*) And then the apostle demonstrated, that all these things had been punctually fulfilled in that very Jesus, and in no other, whom, said he, I preach to you as the only Saviour; and that therefore he must needs be the true Messiah.

4 And some of them believed, and comforted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

4 And these discourses were delivered and attended with such evidence and power of the Spirit, that some of the Jews were persuaded and enabled, by divine grace, to receive the gospel, *not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which worked so effectually in them*, that they believed in the Lord Jesus, as the Christ of God, (*1 Thess. ii. 13.*); and thereupon adhered to Paul and Silas, embracing the doctrine they preached, and associating with them, (*προσσηλωσάντες*) as persons that were joined to them by a gracious lot, under the disposal of a divine choice, (*1 Thess. i. 4, 5.*) The like happy change was also wrought upon a great multitude of religious Greeks, and on no small number of women of distinction among them, who, as proselytes of the gate, attended synagogue-worship*.

5 But

N O T E.

* Though our historian, who aimed at brevity, and not at ostentation, speaks only of Paul's preaching to the Jews for three Sabbath days, and of the conversion of many of them, and of the proselytes of the gate, (see the note on chap. xiii. 17.) and takes no notice of conversions from among the idolatrous Gentiles at *Thessalonica*, as having recorded facts of that sort in several other pla-

ces, especially where he himself was present as an eye-witness, which he was not here; yet it seems evident, that the apostle staid a considerable time longer at this city, and that he preached abundantly to the idolatrous Gentiles, many of which were converted likewise by that means: For he speaks of the *Philippians*, as having *sent once and again to his necessity*, during his abode at *Thessalonica*, *Phil.*

5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uprore, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.

6 And when they found them not, they drew Jason, and certain brethren, unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;

7 Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying,

5 But those Jews, who, being left to themselves, obstinately persisted in their unbelief, were filled with envious indignation at the success of Paul's preaching, when they saw so many embrace the gospel, and some of their own countrymen among them; and therefore consulting with, and getting together, a company of rude, profligate, and vulgar fellows, the very scum of the mob, that were the fittest of all others to serve their vile and malicious purposes, they made a riot in the city, to the great disturbance and terror of its inhabitants; and going to the house of Jason, where the apostle and his companions lodged, (*ver. 7.*) they beset it in a mutinous manner, and demanded his delivering them up, that they might pull them out, and expose them to the fury of all the populace.

6 But (he) missing of them, who had withdrawn to some other place, they seized upon Jason, the master of the family, and some others of his brethren in Christ that were with him, and dragged them away to the Roman magistrates, who had the government of the city in their hands; and, to make the Christians appear as odious and obnoxious as possible, they cried out, with rage and clamour, against the apostle and his associates, who were, in reality, the great instruments of reforming mankind, The men that have been so infamous for stirring up sedition, destroying all peace and order, and throwing the world into dreadful confusion, by pretending to set up a new religion, wherever they have been; these notorious incendiaries are now so bold and daring, as to come even to this great metropolis, to spread their pestilential heresies, and make the like disturbance among us here.

7 These dangerous men has Jason encouraged and countenanced, entertained and harboured at his house: And all their followers, some of which are now brought before you, are so disaffected to the government, that they go into treasonable principles and practices against the emperor; and in direct contradiction to his laws, which forbid any one's taking the title of king without his leave, they preach up, and profess to own another person under that royal character, that has no legal pretensions

N O T E.

(*Phil. iv. 16.*) and in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, which was wrote within about a year after he had been with them, and was the first epistle that he sent to any church, it appears that he laboured night and day among them, (*chap. ii. 9.*) and that the members of that church mostly consisted of such Gentiles, as turned to God from idols to serve the

living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead; and that the number of these was so great, as to occasion the spreading abroad of their faith God ward in every place, *chap. i. 8, 10.* [See Dr Benson's history of the first planting of the Christian religion, vol. ii. p. 94, 96.]

saying, That there is another king, our Jesus.

8 And they troubled the people, and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things.

9 And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go.

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.

11 These were more

tensions to it; even one Jesus, whom they first set up for king of the Jews, and afterwards proclaimed him Lord of all, (*chap. x. 36.*) in opposition to *Cæsar*, to whom alone our allegiance is due.

8 This accusation of such high crimes and misdemeanours alarmed the common people and the magistrates, who were exceedingly concerned at the hearing of those suggestions; some being afraid lest the good men should be suppressed; others, lest a rebellion should be somented; and others being in great perplexity of mind, as not knowing what to make of these things, or what they might come to.

9 And the magistrates thinking it their duty to examine more closely into the matter, and finding that the Christians spoke of Jesus as their Lord and King, who was gone to heaven, and exalted on his throne there, which no way threatened *Cæsar's* rights and dominion, they only bound Jason and his brethren over to their good behaviour, and took bail for their appearance, if called for; and then dismissed them, as apprehending no danger from them.

10 But (*8c.*) the Christian brethren, that had been converted at that place, were so affectionately concerned for the safety of Paul and Silas, and so apprehensive of their coming into trouble, that they sent them away with all speed, and, for the better concealment, in the night, to a neighbouring town or city, called Berea; who, upon getting thither, were so far from being disheartened by the spiteful treatment of the Jews at *Thessalonica*, or from refusing to have any thing more to do with that sort of people, either through resentment, or through fear of meeting with the like ill usage from them again, that they went, as usual, to the synagogue, to preach Christ to the Jews and proselytes (*ver. 12.*) that met there.

11 These Jews were (*1671111111111111*) of more sublime and noble birth, as being born of God *; and so were of a more

N O T E.

* As there were doubtless some good people among the Jews of this age: I see no reason to apprehend, but that these noble Bereans were of a truly religious spirit, according to their light, before Paul preached to them; and therefore, by the concurring illumination and influence of the Holy Ghost, they cheerfully embraced Christ, as soon as he was revealed to them. For I think we no where meet with a set of Jews, that were so well affected to the gospel, at its first proposal to them as these. They seemed to be well acquainted with the scriptures, and to pay a conscientious regard to their divine authority,

and to be deeply concerned, that they might not be mistaken, or imposed upon, in the most important points, relating to the Messiah, and the salvation of their souls, and yet heartily willing to receive Christ, upon finding that the characters, under which the Messiah was set forth in ancient prophecy, were verified in him; and the whole account, here given of them, is such as might be expected from persons, whose hearts were already turned to God, through the promised Messiah, and now rejoiced to find that Jesus was the Christ, and accordingly were converted to him.

more noble than those in *Thessalonica*, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.

more open, frank, and generous spirit, than those at *Thessalonica*, who were indeed the children of the devil, while they boasted of having *Abraham* for their father: For the Lord opening their hearts, as he did the heart of *Lydia*, (*chap. xvi. 14.*) they laid aside all prejudices, and attended with uprightness, diligence, and candour, to that gospel which was preached to them, and embraced it with all eagerness and cheerfulness of mind: (*μετα πασης προθυμίας*) And that they might not take things upon trust, by an implicit faith, and be deceived in matters of the utmost consequence, they carefully and frequently, not only on the sabbath-days, but likewise on other days all the week long, read, examined, and studied the meaning of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the expected Messiah; and compared what they found there, with *Paul's* doctrine concerning Jesus Christ, and salvation alone by him; that they might judge whether the things he declared to them were of divine authority, answerable to former revelations of God's mind and will, or not.

11 Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few.

12 And many of them, being satisfied by the light and grace of the blessed Spirit, who assisted their inquiries, that what *Paul* delivered harmonized with antient predictions, they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only true Messiah, and Saviour of sinners; as did also several ladies of quality, that were devout *Gentiles* by religion, as well as *Greeks* by birth, and a considerable number of men of some note, who were likewise profelytes of the gate.

13 But when the Jews of *Thessalonica* had knowledge that the word of God was preached of *Paul* at *Berea*, they came thither also, and stirred up the people.

13 But (*31*) when the unbelieving and inveterate *Jews* at *Thessalonica* were informed that the gospel of the grace of God was preached by the apostle *Paul*, with great success, at *Berea*, as it had been at their own city, their vexation and envy rose to such a degree, that they pursued him thither; and, like the unwearied and spiteful agents of the devil, who is an implacable enemy to the kingdom and glory of Christ, and the good of immortal souls, used all possible methods of calumny and falsehood, to incense the mob, and stir up an insurrection against the apostle.

14 And then immediately the brethren sent away *Paul*, to go as it were to the sea:

14 Then the Christian converts, who loved as brethren, apprehending danger of an assault upon *Paul*, under the management of those furious *Jewish* zealots, immediately conveyed him out of the city, advising him to take the road that led to the sea-side, as though he designed to get out of their way, by going a ship-board, to prevent their further searching and inquiring after

tes: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.

after him: But *Silas* and *Timothy* staid behind at *Berea*, as persons that were less obnoxious than the apostle, and might be serviceable for confirming the disciples that had been made there, till they should receive orders to follow him to some other place.

15 And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens: and, receiving a commandment unto *Silas* and *Timotheus* for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

15 And as *Paul* sooned quitted that road, under the direction of Providence, the brethren, that set out with him, accompanied and assisted him in his long journey of between two and three hundred miles to *Athens*, the most renowned city of *Greece*, and the chief seat of learning in the famous university there, to which multitudes resorted from all countries for education in the liberal arts and sciences: And then these brethren took their leave of him, and returned to *Berea*, with orders to *Silas* and *Timothy* to follow him, as soon as possible thither.

16 Now, while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry:

16 Now while *Paul* was waiting at *Athens* for the arrival of his fellow-labourers, and whilst he was narrowly inspecting the religion and manners of the people, that he might the better adapt his discourses to their peculiar circumstances, his soul within him was thrown into a strong commotion (ταράχυντο) between compassionate grief, holy indignation, and fervent zeal for the glory of God, when he observed how entirely the inhabitants of the city in general, under all their high pretences to wisdom and learning, were addicted to the worshipping of idols; their being more statues of various heathen gods here, than in all *Greece* besides.

17 Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

17 Therefore, in the greatness of his concern, and yet with meekness of wisdom, he beginning, as usual, first with the *Jews* and proselytes of the gate, went to the synagogue, where they met for the worship of God, renouncing the idolatry which reigned in that city; and there he preached to them the gospel of salvation alone by *Jesus Christ*, explained this glorious and important doctrine, proved its divine authority, recommended it to their acceptance, and answered their objections against it: And afterwards he took daily opportunities of discoursing about a risen Saviour, (ver. 18.) to any that he could meet with, in places of the greatest concourse for civil commerce.

18 Then certain philosophers of

18 Hereupon, several of the heathen philosophers of two famous sects, whose tenets in various particulars were contrary to each other, and who, notwithstanding all their pretences to wisdom, knew not God, united in their opposition to the apostle, and to his doctrine: Some of these were *Epicureans*, so called from *Epicu-*

of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him: and some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

rus their founder*: And others were *Stoicks*, so called from their meeting in the *Stoa*, which signifies the porch or portico, in which they had their school at *Athens*†: Among these, some said of *Paul*, in a way of derision, contempt, and scorn, What would this little despicable animal‡, this trifling, empty, and prating dealer in vain words pretend to? What would he say to us, or have us believe? and others of them cried out with indignation, He appears to us to have no other view, than to introduce some foreign demons (*δαίμονες*) amongst us, which we have never received, nor heard of before: And the reason of their so thinking was, because he preached Jesus the Saviour to them under divine characters; and spoke of his resurrection as a divine attestation to him, by the last of which, (*ἀναστήσις*) their foolish minds being darkened as to spiritual things, they seemed to understand him to-mean such a sort of goddesses, as they themselves reckoned *Modesty*, *Fame*, and the like to be, which they owned for deities, and erected altars to, as such.

19 And they took him, and brought him unto *Areopagus*, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, where-
of

19 And that the apostle might have a full hearing, and things might be brought to some issue, they took him along with them to their supreme court of judicature, in the *forum*, called *Areopagus*§, which was situated on an eminence, and in which the senators, who from thence were called *Areopagites*, sat and judged of all matters, relating to religion and their gods, as well as to civil concerns: And a great number of philosophers having gathered about him there, they examined him, saying, If the novel tenets, which you go about to introduce and propagate among the people, are not to be kept as secrets, like the mysteries of our gods, will

N O T E S.

* *Epicurus* held that the world was made by a casual concurrence of atoms; that God neither created nor governs it, nor concerns himself about the affairs of mankind; that their gods were of human shape; that pleasure is the chief good; and that there are no rewards or punishments after death.

† The *Stoicks* were most proudly proud and self-conceited, as thinking their wise men equal to God himself, and held that matter was eternal, and that the world was God; that a man's chief happiness lay in living according to nature and reason; that all things were subject to blind and irresistible fate; and that there possibly might be a future state of rewards and punishments, though their notions were exceedingly absurd, confused, and unsettled about it.

‡ This babbler (*ὁ σαρματικός*) is observed by the critics to be a term of the utmost con-

tempt, in allusion to a little worthless chattering bird, that used to pick up the seeds which were scattered in the market-place.

§ *Areopagus*, says Mr *Shuckford*, was an *Athenian* court, consisting, according to the different circumstances of their government, sometimes of more, and at others of fewer judges: Its original number was twelve; but afterwards it increased to three hundred: It had the cognizance of all causes that more particularly concerned the welfare of the state; and under this head all innovations in religion were, in time, brought before the judges of it. *Socrates*, was condemned by them for holding opinions contrary to the religion of his country; and the apostle *Paul* seems to have been questioned before them about his doctrines, being thought to be a setter forth of strange gods. *Connell. of sacr. and prof. hist.* vol. II. p. 266, 267.

of them speaketh, is?

20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean.

21 (For all the Athenians, and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)

21 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars-hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.

23 For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD, whom

will you be so frank as to acquaint us plainly, and without disguise, what they are, that we may form some judgment about them?

20 For you have vented such surprisingly odd and unaccountable notions in our hearing, as we are utter strangers to, and never met with in all our conversation, or reading, before; nor do we know what to make of them: We therefore would fain have you further explain yourself, and tell us freely what you mean by them.

21 This they said, not from a desire of getting any good by his doctrine, but to gratify their vain curiosity; for the natives of Athens in general, and the foreigners that came thither for learning, were mighty news-mongers, exceeding fond of new stories and new schemes; and so trifling were they in their tempers, and in their pursuits of knowledge, that they usually wasted their precious time in mere novelties, that did not concern themselves; some in telling, and others in listening to things, that were never heard of among them before; as if true wisdom and understanding consisted in nothing else, and were to be obtained and propagated by no other means.

22 Then Paul standing up in the midst of the court of the *Areopagites*, surrounded with senators, philosophers, and numerous spectators, on the top of *Mars-hill*, addressed them, with a noble freedom and courage, in an admirable speech of the following purport, O ye *Athenians*, of all ranks and degrees, who are so highly celebrated for wisdom and learning, since I have had the privilege of being in your famous city, I cannot but observe that ye are greater devotionists*, more addicted to the worship of demons, who are by nature no gods, and (*δαιμονιστρικος*) more inclined to superstition, than any other people that I ever met with, as appears by the vast multitude of idolatrous statues which are to be seen every where among you, and from your own confessed ignorance, at the same time, of the God who alone ought to be worshipped.

23 For as I passed along in your streets, and took notice of what deities ye adore; I spied an altar, which bears an inscription, intimating that it was dedicated to the unknown God†, which is a practical acknowledgment

N O T E 8.

* I have taken in both Mr *Joseph Mede's* sense of the word *δαιμονιστρικος*, as signifying demon-worship; and Dr *Lardner's* sense of it, as signifying disposed to religion. See *Mede's* works, b. iii. chap. vi. p. 783. and

Lardner's credibility of the gosp. hist. chap. viii. p. 412, 413.

† Some suppose that the altar with this inscription was set up by *Socrates*, to express, in a covert way, his devotion to the only true

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.

ment of your ignorance of the true God, and that ye ought to revere him, and would do so, if ye really knew him, who is indeed invisible and incomprehensible: Him therefore, whom ye, notwithstanding all your wisdom and learning, are such utter strangers to, and so stupidly pretend to worship, I am come hither to preach and make known to you, in his being and perfections, will and works, and how he may be acceptably served, glorified, and enjoyed.

24 God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

24 Even that only living and true God, who, contrary to the corrupt notions of some of you, is in reality the infinitely wise and almighty Creator of the universe, and of all things therein, whether they be animate or inanimate, visible or invisible; and is the sovereign Lord, proprietor, possessor, and governor of the upper and lower worlds, and of all the creatures which he has made in both; and so fills all places with his immense presence, and cannot be circumscribed in, or confined to, any particular habitation, not even to the heaven of heavens, which cannot contain him, much less to any temples of wood or stone, that are the work of men's hands, as though he dwelt in them as your demon-gods do.

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life and breath, and all things;

25 Nor can he be fitly worshipped or ministered to, (*ὡς θιγαμεύται*) agreeable to his spiritual nature and holy will, by any shrines, images, or offerings, or any manual art or labour of men; nor indeed can he be in the least profited by any services of such little, mean, contemptible creatures, as we of the human race are; as if this great and all-sufficient Being, who is infinitely above us, could stand in need of any thing that we can do to increase his felicity*: For he is so far from receiving the least addition to his own perfections, glory, and blessedness, from any other, that he is the sole author, the continual, free, and bounteous giver and maintainer of the lives of all the children of men, and of all inferior animals in which is the breath of life; from him likewise proceeds every good thing that is necessary to their support and comfort, or that they enjoy.

26 And hath made

26 And that none might pride themselves in their pedigree,

N O T E S.

God, whilst he derided the plurality of the heathen gods, for which he was condemned to death: And others, that, whoever erected this altar, it was done in honour to the God of the Jews, of whom there was no image, and whose name *Jehovah*, as ineffable, was never pronounced by the Jews, and never made known to the idolatrous Gentiles; him

therefore the apostle took this opportunity to declare unto them.

* Some critics observe, that *δεομαι* signifies simply to want, and *ἵδομαι* to be totally indigent; but *ὑποδομαι*, the word here used, signifies to want something to make up the perfection of what one already has.

made of one blood,
all nations of
men, for to dwell
on all the face of
the earth, and
hath determined
the times before
appointed, and
the bounds of
their habitation;

pedigree, or be unkind and cruel to any of their fellow creatures, or despair of finding favour with God; he has made all mankind, in every nation under heaven, of one and the same human nature, and originally near a-kin in blood, as he causes every individual of them to descend from the same common parents; whom he at first created, and to whom he has given an innumerable offspring, that they, in their proper seasons, might inhabit the several climates of the earth, and might use and enjoy its various riches and products; he having determinately settled (*οριστας*) in his eternal purpose, the special periods of time, laid out before-hand, for their existence, (*χρονισταγμεναι καιρου*) and the boundaries of their several dwellings, in what nation soever their lot be cast.

27 That they
should seek the
Lord, if haply
they might feel
after him, and
find him, though
he be not far from
every one of us:

27 Now the great end for which God, in his wise and holy providence, thus gives them a being upon earth, according to the counsel of his own will, is, that when, or wheresoever it be, they might inquire after him, in order to their knowing, loving, and serving him, and placing their happiness in him; and that notwithstanding all the blindness and depravity, which besides what is natural in their present state, have been wilfully contracted upon the human mind, they might try, at least, like persons groping in the dark, whether they might not possibly hit upon some discoveries of his eternal power and Godhead, by means of the visible things which he has made, though he himself be an invisible Spirit, and an unknown God to *Athenian* wise men: And yet such is his omnipresence and perpetual agency in all places, that he is intimately near to every one of us, to observe, uphold, protect, and supply us, and to approve or disapprove of our behaviour, in thought, word, and deed.

28 For in him
we live, and move,
and have our
being: as certain
also of your own
poets

28 For in him, as every-where present; all-powerful and active, wise and good, and as the source of all vital influence, we possess our lives, from first to last, even by the uninterrupted emanations and concurrence of his effective and governing providence, who is our life, and the length of our days: In him, after the same ineffable manner, we have all our powers and activity of motion in soul and body, whereby we are enabled to think and act in our state of living existence: And in him, as the Creator and preserver of all, we have the being, which we at first received, and still continue to enjoy, with all its supports and comforts, endowments and advantages of the rational and animal kind, whereby it is distinguished from creatures of lower rank: We owe all these to him, even as some of your own *Greek* poets

poets have said,
For we are also
his offspring.

29 Forasmuch
then as we are the
offspring of God,
we ought not to
think that the
Godhead is like
unto gold, or sil-
ver, or stone gra-
ven by art and
man's device.

30 And the
times of this
ignorance God
winked at; but
now commandeth
all men every
where to repent:

have suggested; for not only *Homer*, *Hesiod*, and others of them, commonly called their *Jove the Father of men*; but *Aratus*, in one of his *hemiſticks*, or half verses, says, *We are his offspring*, which intimates, that he made us for himself, and takes a tender care of us.

29 Since therefore (v) we derive our life and breath, motion and being, and our all, from this great God, who is the common Father, that created us after his own image; the Father of *spirits*, as well as *the God of all flesh*; we ought by no means to take up so low and false an idea of him, or put such a gross affront upon him, as to think, according to your vain imaginations, that the only true Deity bears any kind of resemblance to statues of silver, or gold, or stone, of human, or other shape, that are cut out and formed by the art, and devised by the fancy of men, how costly soever their materials, and exquisitely fine and curious their carvings and paintings be.

30 But (vv) God has hitherto bore with, and in a manner connived at, and yet despised this amazing stupidity and folly, amidst all the improvements of human learning; insomuch that, on one hand, he, in his great long-suffering and patience, has refrained cutting you off, as he justly might have done for all these idolatries; because, though very provoking, they are not so highly aggravated as *Israel's* were, who sinned against greater knowledge: And, on the other hand, he has not heretofore seen fit, in his infinitely wise, sovereign, and holy Providence, to send his prophets among you, to re-monstrate against these abominations, but in his awful righteousness let you alone; because ye have willingly shut your eyes against such light as he had given you by tradition, and by the works of his hands: But now, in the riches of his own free mercy and grace, he (vv) over-looking those days of ignorance and error, makes a clear revelation of himself and of a future judgment, (ver. 31.); and, wherever this revelation comes, he authoritatively requires all men, upon pain of his sorest displeasure, to change their minds and ways, and with contrition, shame, and sorrow of heart, under apprehensions of his endearing goodness, to turn, without delay, from all their idols, and from all their other iniquities to him, through that Jesus, the great and only Mediator, whom I preach. (ver. 18.)

31 Because he
hath appointed a
day, in the which
he

31 For the God who made and rules over them, and to whom they are all accountable, has, in his own eternal counsels, fixed a certain and solemn time, in which, as he has declared by the gospel, he will summon all the
inhabitants

he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead:

inhabitants of this world to appear, in a future state, before his strict and awful tribunal, from whence there is no appeal; and will pass a decisive sentence of happiness or misery, for eternity, upon every one of them, according to rules of impartial righteousness: This he will do, not indeed immediately by himself, but mediately by his own Son, who, though a divine person, is in a wonderful manner truly man, having really taken our nature into a personal union with himself on earth, and carried it to heaven; and whom God his Father has appointed, in that nature, to sustain the character, and do the work of the sovereign Judge of the whole race of mankind: And he has given the utmost proof and evidence of this, to induce the belief of it in all men that hear our gospel concerning him; in that, as it declares, and many of his disciples are witnesses, God has actually raised him from the dead, in testimony of his owning, accepting, and enthroning him, after he had been crucified to make expiation for the sins of *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*.

31 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.

32 And as the apostle was thus leading the company on to the doctrine of a crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour, some of the *Epicurian* philosophers especially, (*ver.* 18.) upon hearing him mention the resurrection of the dead, which was contrary to all their principles, ridiculed and laughed at him for it, as a whimsical notion of what they took to be an impossibility: But others, particularly those of the *Stoick* sect, who had some confused apprehensions of a future state of rewards and punishments for *souls*, but never thought of the resurrection of the *body*, said with a graver air, We should be glad to hear you again more distinctly, and at large, about a doctrine so novel, but, if true, so important, as this of the body's rising from the dead.

33 So Paul departed from among them.

33 And so the assembly broke up, divided in their sentiments about these matters which *Paul* had discoursed on with little effect, as to most of them; and leaving what he had said to their consideration, and the blessing of God, he went out of court.

34 Howbeit, certain men clave unto him, and believed

34 But (*3^d*) though the generality of these learned philosophers and senators, being left to the ignorance, pride, and perverseness of their own hearts, rejected his testimony; yet, through grace, it was not altogether ineffectual: For there were a few that followed him with great affection, and desire to be let still further into the gospel; and that received Jesus Christ by faith, trusting in him, and in God through him, whom he has ordained to be the Saviour of all that believe, and the Judge of the

lieved : among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

the whole world : Among these were two persons of eminence ; one was the learned *Dionysius*, a member of this supreme court of judicature that sat at *Areopagus* ; and the other was a woman of considerable rank, whose name was *Damaris* ; and there were several others of less note, who, together with these, *turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come.* (1 *Thes.* i. 9, 10.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How excellent is the preaching of a crucified and risen Jesus in a scripture way, as deriving light from the Old and New Testament, to explain, confirm, and apply every doctrine concerning him ! And yet how necessary is it, that principles of natural religion be established, with regard to the being, perfections, and providence of God, and a future judgment, to make way for the peculiar and distinguishing truths of the gospel ! Ah ! how are the poor heathens to be pitied : and how would it move the spirit of a good man, to reflect on the blindness and corruption, in religious concerns, even of the most learned of them ! They ignorantly worshipped an unknown god, set up innumerable idols of their own inventing, and stupidly imagine that their gods are confined to their temples, statues, and altars ; that they are pleased with the works of men's hands ; and that the Deity is like their carved images of gold, silver, and stone ; and, at best, they do but grope in the dark after him, if possibly they might find him ! But how different is the only living and true God, from all their gross conceptions of him ; and what a noble and exalted representation have the scriptures given of him ! There we are assured, with the clearest evidence, that he is the God who made and governs the world, and all things therein ; who is always intimately near to us, wherever we are ; has no need of any of us, and cannot be profited by us ; but who himself gives life, and breath, and all good things : So that we are his offspring, that live, move, and have our beings in him, who has fore-appointed the times of our coming into, and continuing in the world, and the particular places of our residence in it, and will summon all mankind to a righteous judgment by his Son Jesus Christ, that glorious and divine Man, whom he has ordained to have the entire management of it, at his own prefixed day. How solemn are these thoughts ! And what strong inducements to repent, and turn to God from all our iniquities, and to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, for the remission of them, that we may find our Judge our friend, when we must appear before him ! Happy and truly noble souls are they that receive the word, which acquaints us with these important things, with all readiness of mind, and daily search the scripture, the only rule of faith, to see whether what any one says about them be agreeable to it, or not ? Multitudes of such religious inquirers are effectually wrought upon to believe in Christ ; and the gospel is the power of God to the salvation of others that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death before. And O how sovereign and victorious is the grace which makes the word effectual to all sorts of persons, to great numbers of the common people, and honourable women not a few, to *devout worshippers*, and *idolatrous Gentiles*, and to a learned *Areopagite* and a famous *Damaris*, as well as to people of less note ! So that neither great men, nor ladies of the highest quality, need be ashamed to own and believe in Christ, and receive the faithful saying of salvation alone by him, which is worthy of all acceptance : and surely none but the baser sort of men, or men of sensuality, pleasure, and trifling curiosity, that spend their time in telling and hearing some new thing to amuse them ; or the men of pride, prejudice, and error, through false philosophy and vain deceit, can find in their hearts to run down the glorious gospel of the blessed God. But from such as these, who are indeed the devil's zealots, the servants of Christ must expect the bitterest enmity, scoffs, and jeers, and persecutions,

entions, under pretence of their preaching strange and mysterious doctrines, and of their turning the world upside down, while they do this only in the best sense, to reform it, and their enemies do it in the worst, to throw it into confusion, and set the people in an uproar against they know not what. But they that believe, through grace, and know the truth as it is in Jesus, will cleave to his faithful messengers, and concern themselves for their safety and comfort; and, which is best of all, God himself will own and succeed them, for bringing many souls to Christ, and to heaven through him.

C H A P. XVIII.

Paul goes from Athens to Corinth, works at his secular trade, and preaches first to the Jews, and then to the idolatrous Gentiles, 1,—6. His success, and his encouragement by a vision to continue there, 7,—11. His accusation by the Jews to Gallio, the Roman governor, who refuses to intermeddle in their affairs, 12,—17. His progress afterwards to Ephesus and Antioch, from whence he sets out on his third apostolick journey through several countries in his way to Jerusalem, 18,—23. Apollos, preaching the baptism of John at Ephesus, is further instructed by Aquila and Priscilla; and, going from thence to Achaia, preaches Christ to the Jews with scriptural evidence, 24,—28.

TEXT.

AFTER these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;

PARAPHRASE.

AFTER the things before mentioned, the apostle Paul, took his leave of Athens, as finding that little success was to be expected there; and went to the renowned city of Achaia, which was called Corinth, from one Corinthus, who rebuilt it, a city famous for trade and learning, riches and luxury. (See the note on 1 Cor. iv. 8, 10.)

2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome,) and came unto them.

2 And there he met with a certain converted Jew, (ver. 26.) a native of Pontus, in the province of Asia the less, whose name was Aquila, and who, together with Priscilla, his wife and fellow-Christian, had removed their habitation thither from Italy; being obliged to flee that country, where they had lately dwelt, by a severe edict of the emperor Claudius Caesar, who was a timorous and jealous prince, and had by his own authority banished all the Jews from Rome, the capital city of Italy, and of the whole empire, under pretence that they were a seditious sort of people. The apostle being acquainted with the religious character of this excellent pair, went and applied himself to them.

3 And, because he was of the

3 And as he had but a few friends in that strange place, and was unwilling to be burdensome to them, or to give his captious enemies an opportunity of reproaching him, as though he preached the gospel for secular advantage; and as, according to the Jewish custom of bringing

the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought, for by their occupation they were tent-makers:)

bringing up their youth of all ranks to some manual employment, he, though bred a scholar, had learnt *Aquila's* and *Priscilla's* trade, which was to make tents of cloth, or of skins, for soldiers, shepherds, and others, who in hot seasons lived much abroad; so he took up his lodging at their house, and laboured with his own hands in that business to earn his livelihood, though he had a just claim to a comfortable maintenance from those to whom he ministered in sacred things, (1 Cor. ix. 4,—18.)

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.

4 But, (*) on every returning sabbath, when the *Jews* * and *profelytes of the gate* used to meet in the synagogue, the apostle, according to his custom of beginning first with them, went to their religious assemblies, and publicly preached the gospel to them, confirming what he said with proper arguments, and answering objections against it; and then, having informed their judgment, he addressed himself to their consciences and affections, intreating both *Jews* and *profelytes*, in the most pathetic, tender, and moving manner, not to neglect so great salvation, as ever they would answer it to God, and escape his dreadful wrath another day: And by these means, as God's ordinance, which he owned and made effectual, some of them were prevailed upon to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

5 And when Silas and Timothy were come from Berea in Macedonia, Paul

5 And when both *Silas* and *Timothy* were come to the apostle from *Berea in Macedonia*, where he had left them †, with orders to follow him as soon as possible; (chap. xvii. 13, 14, 15.) and when, upon their arrival, he had not only the comfort of their joint company and assistance, but likewise received joyful tidings of the continuance and progress of the good work that had been begun in churches planted by him; he, through a warm impression of the Holy Spirit, (οὐκ ἔμελλεν στενάζειν) was more than ever grieved at heart for the obstinacy

N O T E S.

* Though these *Greeks* are not called *devout*, or *worshipping Greeks*, as in chap. xvii. 4. yet it is plain that they were *profelytes of the gate*, because they joined with the *Jews* in their synagogue-worship every sabbath-day; and *Justus*, who doubtless was one of them, is mentioned under that character, ver. 7. where he is spoken of as a *worshipper of God*, (σεβόμενος τὸν Θεόν) which is the usual description of a *profelyte of the gate*. See the note on chap. xiii. 43.

† *Silas* seems to have staid a considerable time at *Berea* after these orders, the necessity of affairs there requiring it: But *Timothy* had

come to the apostle while he was at *Athens*, and been sent by him from thence to *Thessalonica*, to establish and comfort the Christians under their difficulties and dangers there, as we find 1 *Thess.* iii. 1,—5. which epistle was wrote during the apostle's abode at *Corinth*. But now, at length, both *Silas* and *Timothy* came to the apostle at *Corinth*, when *Timothy* gave him such an account of the faith and love of the *Thessalonians*, as was to his abundant joy, 1 *Thess.* iii. 6,—10.; and, probably, *Silas* brought him comfortable tidings of the good state of things at *Berea*, since the apostle left that city.

Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

and unbelief of the generality of the *Jews at Corinth*, and was more than ever solicitous in his own mind about, and desirous still further to attempt their conversion; the love of Christ, and compassion to their souls, constraining him: And as now, by the concurrence of his companions and assistants, what he should say would be established in the mouth of two or three witnesses, he, with the greater freedom and encouragement, asserted in the strongest terms, and plainly proved to the *Jews*, from their own scriptures, that the Lord Jesus, whom their countrymen had shamefully crucified, but God the Father had honourably owned in raising him from the dead, is that very promised Messiah whom they had been expecting to come.

8 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the *Gentiles*,

6 But (4) when, upon finding themselves unable to answer his arguments, and the spirit by which he spake, they had recourse to rage and revilings, and (ἀντιτασσόμενοι) setting themselves, as it were, in battle-array against him, maliciously contradicted, and spoke reproachfully of him and of his doctrine, even to the blaspheming of the name of Christ, whom he preached to them; he thereupon shook the dust off from his garment, in token of his own holy grief and indignation, and of God's abhorring and casting them off, for their perverse infidelity; and said unto them, The guilt of your sins, and the ruin of your souls rest entirely upon your own heads, * as ye have wilfully brought them upon yourselves, while I have given you fair warning, and done all that duty and charity required to reclaim you, and so stand clear of your blood, (*Ezek. xxxiii. 4, 9.*) From this time forward I will take no more pains with you in this synagogue; but turning to the *idolaters*, as well as devout *Gentiles*, will preach the glad tidings of salvation to them, (see the note on *chap. xiii. 46.*) in hopes that they may give it better entertainment; and if any of you be offended at this, while ye perish in, and for your own desperate unbelief, ye may thank yourselves.

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named *Justus*, one that

7 Then, to exasperate them as little as possible, and to ingratiate himself with the *Gentiles*, and at the same time to give the *Jews* further opportunities to come and bear him still, if they be pleased, he went from their assembly to, and preached in, the house of one *Justus* by name ‖, who, being a proselyte of the gate, worship-

N O T E S.

* Their blood being upon their own heads, intimates, that their guilt should be charged upon them; and seems to allude to the rite of laying hands on the heads of sacrifices, in token of the offerer's guilt and punishment be-

ing laid upon them, *Exod. xxix.* and *Lev. i. 4.*

† It is uncertain whether the apostle removed his lodging from *Aquila's* house to that of *Justus*; or whether he only used this house for preaching to the people.

that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house: and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed, and were baptized.

9 Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

10 For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

worshipped the only true God of *Israel*, and whose house stood very near the synagogue; so that those, who were so disposed, might easily step into it, as they went to or from their own place of worship.

8 And though the apostle had but little success among the generality of the *Jews*, and many of them treated him in a most unworthy and opprobrious manner; yet his labour was far from being in vain: For even the chief man of the *Jews* there, *Crispus* by name, the president of the synagogue, (see the note on *Matth. ix. 18.*) believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour; and his whole family were brought over to the faith, and into God's gracious covenant, and were baptized, together with himself, (*1 Cor. i. 14.*); and a good number of the *Corinthian* people, *idolatrous Gentiles*, as well as others, in like manner, upon hearing the gospel preached to them, believed, and were baptized, and so came under all the privileges and obligations of the household of faith.

9 The unbelieving *Jews* being still more and more enraged at these things, insomuch that *Paul* began to think that God had no more work to do by him, at present, in this city, and that it was high time for him to flee for his own safety, and carry the gospel to some other parts: Then, to direct and encourage him, the Lord Jesus appeared to him one night in a divine vision, and spoke to him, to prevent his leaving the work begun, and his fainting under the difficulties and dangers he met with there, saying, with all the grace and majesty of a God, See that you be not discouraged at the terror of your enemies, nor afraid of their faces; but go on to preach the word with all plainness and boldness; be instant in season and out of season; and let none of their menaces or malicious treatment dishearten you, or put you to silence.

10 For as none can go one step further in their mischievous designs than they are permitted from above; so I am, and will be with you, by my supporting, and protecting, conducting, comforting, and efficacious presence, to preserve, own, and abundantly succeed you in your work; and if I am for you, who can be against you? Not one of your adversaries, be they ever so inveterate or powerful, shall be suffered to lay violent hands upon you, to beat or imprison you, as they have in other places: No, nor to do any injury to your person, or stop your mouth; For, besides those that are already

already called *; I have still many more chosen people, who are given to me of the Father, as my special property, care, and charge, whose names are written in my book of life from the foundation of the world, whom I have redeemed by my blood, and must bring home to myself, by means of your ministry, even in this vicious and profane *Gentile* city. (1 Cor. vi. 9, 11.)

11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

11 The apostle having received this encouraging and divine admonition from Christ himself, (*anathema*) sat down with a cheerful resolution to stand the brunt, how hot soever it might be, and to persist in his Lord's work: Accordingly he staid a year and a half in that city, dispensing the word of God's grace among them, with great zeal and labour, for the conversion of sinners, and edification of saints, and with eminent success, till a large church was gathered and settled there; for a *great door and effectual* was opened to him, though there were many *adversaries*, as he afterwards said of another place. (1 Cor. xvi. 9.)

12 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment-seat,

13 Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.

12, 13 During this time, while *Gallio*, elder brother to *Seneca*, the famous heathen moralist, was proconsul of the province of *Achaia*, (see the note on chap. xiii. 7.) a great multitude of the *Jews* rose tumultuously upon *Paul*, as with one consent, and hurried him away to that magistrate's tribunal, crying out against him, as though he had been a most dangerous incendiary, saying, 'This pernicious detestable wretch, though a *Jew*, makes it his business to preach up the religion of Jesus, and preach down the religion of our ancestors; and so to excite and encourage the people to worship God in a manner directly contrary to our divine law, which was antiently settled by *Moses*, and which we are allowed to observe by the edicts of the *Roman* emperor himself.'

14 And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If

14 And when the apostle *Paul* was going to plead his own cause, and shew the injustice and malice of their accusation, since in reality he only preached Christ, and salvation to persons of all nations through him, according to what had been foretold in the law and the prophets; *Gallio*, understanding that this was merely a religious affair, stopt him short †; and turning to the *Jews*,

N O T E.

* There were as yet but few converts at *Corinth*, compared with what were afterwards made in the following year and half of the apostle's ministry there; and therefore I take the *much people* to relate rather to them that should be effectually called afterwards, than to those that already were so.

† *Seneca* gave a great character of his brother *Gallio* for his ingenuity and sincerity,

and for his sweet, generous, and sedate temper; and he indeed appears to have been a very just and prudent magistrate, who judged well of the rights of civil government, and of the power of his office, and disesteemed civil punishments on religious accounts (See Dr. Lardner's *credibility of the gospel history*, vol. i. p. 47, 349, 354, and 408.) But he showed too much unconcernedness about

If it were a matter of wrong, or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:

Jews said, If the matter, for which ye have in a riotous manner accused this person, were really some unrighteous thing against the law of property and of the civil government; or if it were for iniquitous facts, such as rebellion, robbery, or murder, or any other crime that lyes under my cognizance, as a civil magistrate, there might indeed be some reason for me to overlook your disorderly and clamorous way of bringing him before me; and it would, by all means, be proper for me patiently to hear whatever ye have to say against him, in order to my judging of the true merits of the cause.

15 But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it: for I will be no judge of such matters.

15 But if, as I perceive, it relates only to points in debate between yourselves, about religious opinions and practices, and what names shall be given to the person whom *Paul* preaches, whether he shall be called the *Christ* or the *Messiah*, or not; and what your law of *Moses* says, about the privileges of the *Gentiles*, and their obligation to worship the God of *Israel* in your way; even adjust these things among yourselves, and do not trouble me with them: For I am resolved not to intermeddle with such affairs, to bear and try, and pass judgment upon them; they being foreign to my office, and not coming under my jurisdiction, as a *Roman* governor; and, as far as I see, one sect of you has as much right as another to propagate its own notions, provided it be without disturbing the public peace, which is most of all endangered by your tumultuous proceedings against this man.

16 And he drave them from the judgment-seat.

16 And with a good deal of sternness and resentment in his words and countenance, he ordered his officers to put them out of court; and commanded them to depart, and behave peaceably for time to come, that neither he, nor the community, might have any further occasion to complain of them; and so, according to *Christ's* promise to *Paul*, (*ver. 10.*) no man was suffered to hurt him.

17 Then all the *Greeks* took *Sosthenes*, the chief ruler of the synagogue,

17 But ⁽³¹⁾ the multitude of the unbelieving *Greeks* then present, being utter enemies to Christianity, were so provoked at *Gallio's* favouring *Paul*, and driving the *Jews* out of court because of their opposition to him, that, to shew their resentment, they, under *Jewish* influence, insolently and outrageously seized upon *Sosthenes* *, the president of the synagogue, and a friend of

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about his own being acquainted with those important things, which he so lightly spoke of, though with polite views, as a question of words and names, and of the Jewish law, *ver. 15.* and was too negligent of restraining the injuries that were offered to *Sosthenes*, *ver. 17.*

who, by *Gallio's* own principles, was an innocent man.

* Various are the opinions about *Sosthenes*. Some suppose him to have been made the chief ruler of the synagogue, in the room of *Crispus*, when he turned Christian, (*ver. 8.*) or

gogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat: and Gallio cared for none of those things.

18 And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

of Paul's, and beat him severely, even before the face of the governor, while he was sitting on the bench: And Gallio, not knowing what might be the consequence were he to interpose, took no notice of either this affront to himself, or of their abusing an innocent man, choosing rather to wink at, and give way to their present fury, than to attempt to suppress it, and embroil himself in their religious quarrels.

18 Paul, after all this bustle, continued at Corinth, under the protection and countenance of the governor, for a considerable time longer*, God having still more work for him to do at that place; and then he took a solemn farewell of the disciples that had been converted there, with Christian salutations, exhortations, and prayers; and went a ship-board from thence to the province of Syria, in company with † Priscilla and Aquila, he having shorn his head ‡ at Cenchrea, a sea-port of the Isthmus near Corinth: For in condescension to the Jews, that he might gain some of them, (1 Cor. ix. 20.) || he had taken a voluntary vow of Nazaritism upon himself for a time, at the expiration of which his head was to be shaved, according to the law. (Numb. vi. 1,—21.)

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or that he had been so before him, and still was known by this character; others, that he was chief ruler of another synagogue at Corinth; and others, that he was Crispus, who, bearing two names, is here called *Sophronus*. Accordingly some take him to have been an unconverted Jew, and a ring leader in this affair; and others, a Christian, or at least a friend of Paul, as I am inclined to think he was: For if, as is highly probable, this was the same *Sophronus*, whom the apostle calls his brother, 1 Cor. i. 1. it is certain that he was either now, or afterwards a Christian; and it seems to me, as if the Jews, being restrained from meddling with Paul, the Greeks, at their instigation, as they were going out of court, fell upon *Sophronus*, Paul's friend, to intimidate the governor, and provoke him to do something against the Christians, and to gratify the Jews, in like manner as the Jews dealt with Pilate, to bring him into their measures against our blessed Lord.

* His tarrying there yet a good while, seems to relate to the time he staid at Corinth, after the expiration of the year and six months mentioned ver. 11. and some suppose it was about half a year more.

† Aquila is mentioned ver. 2. and 16. before Priscilla; but here, and in Rom. xvi. 3. and 2 Tim. iv. 19. she is put first, to shew that in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female; and, perhaps, because she was first converted, or was the most zealous Christian

of the two. However, this shews how little dependence can be had on the Popish argument for Peter's supremacy, because his name is ordinarily mentioned before the other apostles, though Andrew stands before him in John i. 44.

‡ Those that lived at such a distance from the temple, that they could not reach it by the time their vow was expired, might shave their heads at what place soever they found themselves; at which time they set aside the price of their sacrifice, in order to bring or send it to the temple by the next opportunity. *Universal history*, vol. i. p. 631. and *vid. Grot. in loc.* But some think that Paul did not actually perform this service in the journey he was now taking to Jerusalem, where his stay was very short, ver. 21, 22. while others suppose that this was one motive to the journey itself.

|| As the Nazarite's vow included a moral obligation to purity, and self-dedication to God, it was, at least, as lawful for the apostles to use the ceremonial rites that attended it, as any others of the Mosaic law, when the circumstances of things made it expedient. 1 Cor. vi. 12. (See the notes on chap. xvi. 3. and xxi. 24.) But Grotius, Hammond, and some others, suppose, that it was Aquila, and not Paul, that had shorn his head; and by the construction it may be applied to either of them by leaving out, or placing the point after Aquila.

19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

20 When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not:

21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

22 And, when he had landed at Cesarea, and gone up and saluted the church, he went

19 In this voyage he came to *Ephesus*, the chief city of the *Proconsular Asia*; and there he left *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, those experienced and knowing Christians, to instil evangelical principles in private conversation, (*ver.* 26.) as they might have opportunity: But being still willing, according to his custom, to preach Christ first to the *Jews*, wherever he found them, he himself went into their synagogue at *Ephesus* before he departed, and gave them a sermon publicly upon the important doctrines of the gospel.

20 *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, being desirous of still more of his company and services, intreated him to continue with them a little longer; however, for special important reasons, which he acquainted them with, (*ver.* 21.) he could not tell how to comply with their request.

21 But he took his leave of them in an engaging Christian manner; and to excuse his not staying any longer with them, at present, he said, I must needs attend the approaching passover, which is by way of eminence called the feast, at *Jerusalem*; not that I think myself obliged in conscience to observe it, but that I may at once consult my brethren and salute the church there, (*ver.* 22.) and may take that opportunity of general discourse to try again what may yet be done by the blessing of God, for winning over *Jews* and religious profelytes to Christ, and taking off their prejudices against me and the gospel: But as my heart is with you, and is much set upon helping forward the good work, of which, through grace, there seem to be some hopeful beginnings here, I faithfully promise, God willing, to take the very first opportunity of returning to you, that I may more fully communicate the gospel of Christ, in humble dependence that he will make it his power to the salvation of many souls: And having given them this assurance to quiet and encourage them, he went aboard again, and sailed away from *Ephesus*.

22 And arriving by a direct course at *Cesarea* in *Palestine*, which was the most common and commodious port to land at in his way to *Jerusalem*, he went ashore; and, going up from thence to *Jerusalem*, he saluted the church there*, in the most affectionate expressions of his brotherly regard to them, asking how the work of the

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* That the church here meant was that at *Jerusalem*, which might be called by way of eminence the church, on account of its being the mother church of believers under the gospel state, is sufficiently evident, because going up, and going down, is the usual style for persons going to and from *Jerusalem*: and be-

cause we have otherwise no account of the apostle's journey thither, where he had said, he must needs be at the next feast, (*ver.* 21.); and not long after he had finished this journey, he, according to his promise, *ver.* 21. went again to *Ephesus*, as appears from chap. xix. 1. See Dr *Whitby's* note.

went down to
Antioch.

the Lord prospered among them, and telling them what great things God had done by his ministry among the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; And then, having answered the end of his journey thither, and found that no remarkable door was opened for any further service there, he soon left that city, and went down from thence to *Antioch* in *Syria*, to visit the famous church there, by which he was sent forth, in a solemn and public manner, to preach the gospel to the *Gentiles*, (*chap.* xiii. 1, &c.) and from which he had set out on this last expedition, (*chap.* xv. 40, 41.) and so he finished his second apostolick journey.

23 And after he had spent some time there he departed, and went over all the country of *Galatia* and *Phrygia* in order, strengthening all the disciples.

23 And when he had spent some time with these his old Christian friends and brethren, in rehearsing the praises of the Lord, and inquiring into the state of their affairs, and in conferring with them, to their mutual comfort and edification in love, he, taking his leave of them, set out a third time for another progress, and travelled through the provinces of *Galatia* and *Phrygia*; and taking every place in its course; (*καθ' ἑαυτὸν*) as it lay in his way, he gave such instructions and exhortations, as were suited and blessed of God, to encourage and strengthen the hearts of all the converts, that had been made in his last journey, (*chap.* xvi. 5, 6.) and to promote their faith, hope, and patience in the profession of the gospel.

24 And a certain Jew named *Apollos*, born at *Alexandria*, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to *Ephesus*.

24 Now (*δε*) after the apostle was gone from *Ephesus*, (*ver.* 19.) there came thither a certain Jew, *Apollos* by name, who was a native of *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, which abounded with *Jews*; and he was (*γεννητός*) an ingenious learned young man, exceeding fluent in speech, and expert in the knowledge and use of the Old Testament-scriptures, not only by means of his education and study, but also by a superior influence of the Spirit, which discovered itself with great power in his discourses.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord: and, being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

25 This admirably accomplished youth had been initiated, like a catechumen, (*κατηχούμενος*) in some principles of the doctrine of Christ, and of salvation by him; and his heart being warmly impressed with these things, and filled with a fervent zeal for the glory of God, and the good of souls, he, (*μετὰ πολλὰ*) with a great deal of accuracy, study, and pains, discoursed and preached concerning Christ and his kingdom, according to the best of his light, which indeed was but small and obscure, comparatively speaking *; he being acquainted with only

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* It is very probable that *Apollos* returned baptised with John's baptism; and so had no opportunity of being explicitly acquainted with

so much of these doctrines, as *John the Baptist* had taught, and signified by his baptism, relating to repentance, and faith in the then approaching Messiah for the remission of sins, who would baptize the believers in him with the Holy Ghost.

16 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. Whom when *Aquila* and *Priscilla* had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

26 And upon his arrival at *Ephesus*, he began to preach this doctrine publicly, and with great freedom and courage (*παρρησιαστικῶς*) to the Jews in their synagogue: But (*καὶ οὐκ ὀλίγοι*) when *Aquila* and *Priscilla*, who were more enlightened, experienced, and grown Christians, heard him, and perceived that, though he aimed well, and was an exceedingly promising youth, yet wanted still further insight into the gospel-dispensation, they took him to their own lodging; where they treated him with great tenderness and affection, and, according to their ability, talked very seriously and closely with him in private conversation, and led him into a still more accurate, (*ακριβεστέρας*) clear, and extensive view of God's way of salvation, through faith in a crucified, risen, and exalted Redeemer, as it was now further revealed to, and by his holy apostles: And *Apollas*, though a good scholar, and popular preacher, was so far from disdaining these instructions of poor mechanics, that he with all humbleness of mind readily hearkened to their discourse, and cheerfully receive the truth in the love of it, as a rich improvement of the slight and confused knowledge he had before of these important points.

27 And when he was disposed to pass into *Achaia*, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed thro' grace.

27 And when, for his own and others further edification, he was inclined to travel into the province of *Achaia*, that he might converse with other Christians and ministers, and preach the gospel there, and particularly at *Corinth*, (*chap. xix. 1.*) one of its chief cities, then *Aquila* and the rest of the believers, the brethren in Christ at *Ephesus*, wrote letters of recommendation to the disciples in those parts, earnestly intreating them to receive and encourage him, as a sound and able, faithful and zealous servant of the Lord Jesus; who, when he came among them, was, by the blessing of God, eminently useful to those that had before received Christ by faith, through the free and effectual operations of divine grace upon their hearts, in further enlightening, comforting, and establishing them, and in nobly defending the main articles of Christianity against the attacks of their adversaries; and so watered what the apostle

Paul

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with the doctrines of the gospel, as delivered by Christ and his apostles, till he came to *Ephesus*, and was taught them by these hospitable and eminent Christians, *Aquila* and

Priscilla, who, in all likelihood, lodged him in their own house, that they might the more familiarly and fully converse with him about them, ver. 26.

Paul had planted in that church, (*ver.* 8. compared with *1 Cor.* iii. 6.)

28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

28 For *Apollos*, with great judgment, earnestness, and power, reasoned with the Jews in their public assemblies before all the people, confuting their objections, and plainly demonstrating from Old Testament-prophecies, which he was familiarly acquainted with, (*ver.* 24.) that Jesus was indeed the promised, and only true Messiah, whom *John the Baptist* told them of, and they themselves had been expecting.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What an excellent spirit is it in gospel ministers not to seek their own things, but even to give up their just and reasonable claims of maintenance from the people, and labour with their own hands for a livelihood, when the necessity of affairs requires it! What need have they of wisdom from above, to know when, and how far, it may be expedient for them to condescend to the infirmities of the weak and prejudiced, for their good in things that are not in themselves sinful! And what pains should they take in promoting the knowledge of Christ, as the only Saviour; in persuading all sorts of sinners to accept of him; in confirming the churches, and saluting them with all affection in the Lord; and in defending the great truths of the gospel against all its adversaries, till they shew themselves to be incorrigibly wicked and obstinate in rejecting it! Such bring the heaviest destruction upon their own heads, while faithful ministers stand clear of their blood. But how much sorer multitudes may despise the gospel to their own perdition, God will make it effectual to others, and among them to some who, like *Corinthian* sinners, and chief rulers of synagogues, were most unlikely to receive it: He orders the stations of his servants, and sends them to one place and another, according to the good pleasure of his will, wherever he has a design of grace upon a chosen people to bring them in to Christ; and if God be with them, who can be against them? Great success shall crown their labours; and civil magistrates, though they have no sense of religion themselves, shall favour their righteous cause, and not be suffered to go beyond the proper sphere of their office, in taking cognizance of religious differences, any further than the way of managing them may disturb the public peace, and may call for protection to the innocent and injured, which ought to have been afforded to *Sosthenes*, as well as *Paul*. But how insolent and outrageous is a spirit of bigotry, which not only sets itself against the preachers and professors of Christ, but likewise against such just and prudent rulers, as discountenance its schemes of suppressing them! How opportunely doth the Lord himself often appear for his cause and interest! And how ready should enlightened Christians be to do what in them lies, with all tenderness, privacy, and love, to instruct such hopeful, serious, and zealous young ministers, as have good talents and mean well, instead of despising, ridiculing, and exposing them, because they have not so clear notions of the gospel as might be wished for! And how kindly should such young men accept of their friendly admonitions, though they may be in station, learning, and natural parts, much inferior to themselves! If they are modest, humble, and teachable, like *Apollos*, they may at length be exceeding useful to the churches, and deserve the highest recommendations to them; and, being mighty in the scriptures, how signally serviceable may they be for maintaining the truths of the gospel, confuting errors, and helping them that have believed through grace, and yet still need the ministrations of Christ's servants, as means of his appointment and blessing, for their furtherance and joy of faith!

C H A P. XIX.

Paul returns to Ephesus, and imparts the Holy Ghost to some that had known only John's baptism, 1,—7. Preaches the gospel three months in the synagogue, where meeting with great opposition, he removes to the school of Tyrannus, and preaches there two years, confirming his doctrine by miracles, 8,—12. Some Jewish exorcists that made use of Christ's name are confounded, and others of them converted, 13,—20. Paul purposes to go through Macedonia and Achaia to Jerusalem and Rome, but defers it for some time, 21, 22. The silver-smiths raise a mob to cry up Diana of the Ephesians, in opposition to him, 23,—34. But the town-clerk disperses and appeases them, 35,—41.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed thro' the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and, finding certain disciples,

1 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what

PARAPHRASE.

NOW while Apollos was labouring with great zeal at Corinth, to which city of Achaia he went, according to his desire, (chap. xviii. 27.) the apostle Paul, having passed through Galatia and Phrygia, (chap. xviii. 23.) known by the name of the upper parts of Asia the less, returned, according to his promise, (chap. xviii. 21.) to Ephesus; and there meeting with about twelve persons, (ver. 7.) that believed in Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, he said to them, Have ye received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, together with his gracious, sanctifying, and comforting influences, since ye embraced the faith of Christ? To this question they answered *, We are so great strangers to the state of the Messiah's kingdom, that we have not so much as heard that the Holy Spirit has ever worked, under this new dispensation, in an extraordinary manner upon any persons whatsoever †; or that he has ever yet returned as a spirit of prophecy, since he withdrew from the church of Israel many ages ago.

3 Hereupon the apostle said to them, What! not heard

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* These probably were either converts under John's ministry, that had left Judea before the effusion of the Spirit on the famous day of Pentecost, and had ever since lived in some obscure distant parts of Asia the less; or had been travelling about in places where the gospel had not been preached; or they were converted by Apollos's ministry, while he knew only the baptism of John, and were not perfectly acquainted with the way of the Lord, till he came to Ephesus, from whence, soon after he had received more light, he went to Achaia, (chap. xviii. 24,—27.) On either of these suppositions, it is no wonder, that they had heard nothing of the effusion of the Spirit; especially if we consider, that, when

Paul was at Ephesus before, his stay was very short, and seemed to have only awakened some, so far as to give promising hopes that they might be brought to the knowledge of Christ.

† These disciples, who had been baptised with John's baptism, could not be ignorant whether there were any such thing as the Holy Ghost; because John himself not only spoke of the Spirit's descending on Christ, but likewise of Christ's baptising with the Holy Ghost, Matth. iii. 11. and John i. 33. : But they had never heard, that this was actually come to pass, in any extraordinary effusion of his gifts, together with his graces.

what then were baptized? And he said, Upon John's baptism.

heard of the great effusion of the Holy Spirit from the crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour! Into what dispensation then, and to the sealing of what doctrine, and of your holy profession of it, were ye baptized? They replied again, We have been only partakers of John's baptism, for the purposes for which he administered it, with a reference to the approaching Messiah, who he said, and we believed, was then very soon to appear.

4 Then Paul, to lead them into the knowledge of Christ, said, The preaching, together with the baptism, of John was indeed, (*μὴν*) to call and oblige his disciples to repent of their sins, upon encouragements taken from the abundant grace of the gospel-kingdom, which was then just at hand; he telling them that it was their duty and interest, as ever they would escape the wrath to come, to believe in him, who would very soon appear in his public character after himself; by which John meant, that they should believe in Jesus Christ, as the only Saviour, whom God has anointed to that office.

5. And (*ἔτι*) when the people, (*ver. 4.*) heard, and believed this welcome news of the near approach of the promised and expected Messiah, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, as that Messiah *; and so were

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* These words are taken by many to be Luke's, and not Paul's: But I rather think them to be a continuation of the apostle's own words, which the historian recites to the end of this verse, and then goes on with the narrative of what followed on the apostle's discourse with them: For the most accurate grammatical construction of the words leads us thus to understand them; and several of the greatest critics, such as *Drusus*, *Beza*, and *Boxhart*, tell us that the particle *καί*, *ver. 5.* answers, as a reditive, to *μὴν*, *ver. 4.* and that a new sentence never begins, as it doth in this verse, with *καί* and a participle, where *μὴν* so immediately goes before it, as it doth here in *ver. 4.* Nor can we be sure that any of John's disciples, much less all of them, were ever rebaptized with water, upon their believing in Christ as that Messiah, into the faith of whom their master had baptized them: For as our Lord did not order the eleven apostles to be themselves baptized under the gospel-dispensation, but only to baptise others, *Matth. xxviii. 19.* it does not appear that they had any other baptism than that of John. The apostle Paul indeed was baptized after his conversion; but he probably never was one of John's disciples. The same may be said of the three thousand that were baptized on the remarkable day of Pentecost, who seem to have been mostly Jews that came

from distant nations. And it appears to me, that there was no need of rebaptizing John's disciples, since both baptisms were for substance the same, and into the faith of the same divine person, only one was in the name of him who was immediately to come, and the other of him who was already come; and so when Jesus was believed and owed to be the true Messiah, the faith of such persons, together with the truth of the doctrine they professed, was signified and sealed by the baptism which preceded, as well as by that which followed his actual appearing. And unless these baptisms were the same for substance, ours must be essentially different from that which Christ himself received; since he was baptized only by John: and consequently the New Testament-church has not that communion with him in baptism, as the Old Testament-church had in circumcision. But if after all, it should be supposed, that the difference between baptizing in the name of the Messiah, as *to come*, and as *already come*, was so material, as to make it requisite that the same persons, upon their believing in Jesus, as the Messiah, whom John spoke of, should be baptized again; this is no argument for rebaptizing any one in after ages, in which no such difference can be pretended; much less is it so, if Mr. Henry's thought be admitted, viz. That those persons were baptized, not by John

were turned over, and devoted to him, who, in fact, did come immediately afterwards; and, having finished the work of redemption, is now exalted, as Lord of all, at the Father's right hand, to baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost, according to the signification of *John's* baptizing them with water: (*Matth.* iii. 11.) And therefore whether ye had heard of the actual pouring out of the Spirit, or not, there was abundant reason for you to be looking and hoping for it.

6 And, when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

6 And when Paul had instructed these disciples, (*ver.* 1.) after this manner, about the nature, obligation, and design of *John's* baptism, which pointed to Christ, and superseded any necessity of their being baptized again with water, he laid his hands upon them, as a signal of what Christ would do for them; and the Holy Ghost came down in a gracious and miraculous way upon them; so that they were baptized with the Spirit: And, by his extraordinary gift, they immediately spoke in different sorts of languages, which they had never learnt before; and, by divine suggestion, they explained and applied Old Testament-prophecies, and spoke of the glorious things, that are still more clearly revealed under the New Testament-dispensations: God hereby giving a plain and visible testimony to the gospel, in its first plantation at *Ephesus*, and at the same time thoroughly qualifying these converts, in an instant, for preaching it, wheresoever Providence might call them.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

7 And the number of the men that were thus signally filled with the Holy Ghost, was about twelve, answerable to the number of the apostles on whom the Spirit descended, in like manner, at the feast of Pentecost. (*Chap.* ii. 3, 4. see the note there.)

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly, for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning

8 Then (*sc.*) Paul, being honoured with these incontestible credentials of a divine authority, which appeared in this effect of the laying on of his hands, went into the synagogue of the *Jews*, that he might, as usual, make the first offer of the gospel to them; and he preached publicly, with all freedom and holy boldness, as knowing what he affirmed, time after time, for about a quarter of a year; (*διαλεγόμενος*) reasoning with them, hearing and answering their objections, and earnestly intreating them, as they would value their own salvation, to embrace the great and glorious doctrines which he had published among them, pertaining to the kingdom

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John himself, but in his name, by some of his weak disciples, who were zealous for their Master's honour, and ignorantly baptised them into his doctrine, without looking any

further. Besides the authors above-mentioned, see Dr *Lightfoot's* harmony of the New Testament, vol. I. p. 297, 298.

concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick, handkerchiefs

dom of grace, which God, by his Son Jesus Christ, had set up in this world, and will maintain, till he shall advance its happy subjects to his kingdom of glory in the world to come.

9 But when, after this fair trial, some of them hardened their hearts against these important and concerning truths, and rejected them by unbelief, yea, and in the presence of all the people spoke reproachfully and bitterly against Jesus himself, who is the *Way, the Truth, and the Life*, (*John* xiv. 6.) and against God's gracious method of salvation by him, which the apostle preached, and true believers owned and professed; he then turning away from those despisers and revilers, as incorrigible enemies, went out of their synagogue; and, taking the believers in Christ along with him, he separated them from the society and communion of those obdurate infidels; and repairing to the * public school of one whose name was *Tyrannus*, he there preached daily to the people, explaining, proving, and defending, or answering cavils and objections against the great doctrine of salvation, through a crucified and risen Redeemer.

10 And this he continued to do with indefatigable labour, great diligence, and wonderful success, for the space of about † two years together; so that vast multitudes of the *lesser Asia*, who resorted on various occasions to this famous city, had not only opportunity of hearing, but many of them were brought to receive the gospel of the Lord Jesus, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, the politer sort of which are signified by the name of *Greeks*.

11 And for the abundant confirmation of these blessed tidings of a Saviour to all nations, and for engaging the people's attention to them, God was pleased to work divers miracles of an extraordinary nature, and in a very uncommon way, by the ministration of *Paul*, who, as Christ's servant, did greater works than himself, in the manner of performing them, because he was gone to the Father. (See the note on *John* xiv. 12.)

12 So that not only the sick that were brought to the

N O T E S.

* Some suppose that this was a *divinity* school of the *Jews*; and others, that it was a *philosophical* school of the *Greeks*. But, be that as it will, here was liberty, which there was not in the synagogue, for all sorts of persons, even *Gentile idolaters*, as well as others, to attend on the preaching of the gospel.

† These *two years* added to the *three months*, in which the apostle preached in the

synagogue, ver. 8. and the time he spent after all this at *Ephesus*, ver. 12. make up, in the whole, about *three years* of his abode there, according to the account he gave of it to the elders of the *Ephesian* church, chap. xx. 31. Or, as others think, it was three years from the time of his first coming to *Ephesus*, to the time of his taking his farewell of those brethren,

chiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

the apostle were cured; but handkerchiefs * or aprons, that had touched his body, were carried to diseased persons; and at this signal, though not from any virtue in the things themselves, they were instantly healed at a distance, whatever their distempers were; and, in like manner, such as were corporally possessed by wicked and malicious spirits, (see the note on *Matth. iv. 24.*) were relieved and delivered from them, which carried an intimation of the gracious design of the gospel, and of its efficacy, when attended with the power of the Holy Ghost, to heal spiritual maladies, and to set captive souls at liberty, from the power of sin and Satan.

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

13 This being observed with admiration and applause by the people, some strolling Jews, that went about as fortune tellers, and pretended to the art of exorcising or casting out devils by conjuration, (*ἐκχρισμῶν*) attempted to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus, and pronounce it, by way of charm, over some that were possessed with evil spirits, in hopes that it might be as effectual in their mouths as it had been in Paul's, and that they might thereby bring discredit on the gospel, and advantage to themselves, saying to the devils, that possessed several people, We command, and even bind you with the solemnity of an oath, (*ορκίζομαι*) to come out of these persons, by the authority of that Jesus whom Paul (*παῦλος*) proclaims, and calls upon, to expel you.

14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests which did so.

14 Among these vain pretenders, there were seven sons of one *Sceva*, a chief priest among the Jews, (see the note on *Matth. ii. 4.*) that joined together in trying this method upon a certain possessed man, though they themselves had no faith in Christ, as a divine person, or as the true Messiah.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul

15 But (*ὁ*) the wicked spirit, which possessed him, knowing that this was all a farce, despised and insulted them; and yet being at the same time constrained, by a divine power, to own the authority of Christ and of the apostle, as acting under him, cried out, saying, I too well know who *Jesus* is, and that his power is too hard for me; and I know that *Paul*, his servant, has authority from him against me, as he acts in his Lord and Master's name, by his commission, and by virtue derived from him: But as for you, Who gave you any right to command me? Shew your credentials if

N O T E.

* These aprons are thought by some to have been those that Paul himself wore when he worked at his tent-making trade; others take them to have been aprons, or other linen cloths, that were brought from sick persons, and being touched by Paul, were carried back

to them, and were the tokens of their miraculous cures. But whatever these cloths were, it is certain that no natural or artificial efficacy from themselves, could operate in such a miraculous way upon the diseased.

I know; but who are ye?

15 And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leapt on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house, naked and wounded.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus: and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

19 Many also of them which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men:

And

if ye can; your words are but empty sounds; I neither feel, nor fear any power attending them: Do your worst, I will not submit to you.

16 Immediately hereupon, the man who was under the power and possession of the devil flew upon them with prodigious force and fury, rending and tearing like a madman; and he so utterly defeated their exorcisms, and so terribly affrighted, beat, and overpowered them, that they ran out of the house where they were, with their clothes torn off from their backs, miserably bruised and wounded, and glad to escape with their lives.

17 And this was transacted in such a public manner, that the noise of it was soon spread abroad among all the Jews, and the most learned, as well as other Gentiles, that dwelt at Ephesus; the effect of which was, that they were universally seized with a dread of the power of infernal spirits, as superior to all human resistance, and of the danger of mocking God, and abusing the sacred name of the Lord Jesus: And he was thought, and spoken of, with the highest reverence and honour among the people, who were convinced by this, that his power was uncontrollable, and that he only was able to give an effectual commission to his servants, to subdue the powers of darkness; and that virtue was derived from him for that purpose, only through faith in his name.

18 And as the Ephesians were remarkably infamous for the abominable enchantments that were practised by them, abundance of those that had believed in Christ, (*πιστευοντες*) were so affected at this manifest and surprizing defeat of the exorcists, that, coming of their own accord to the apostle and his company, they frankly owned themselves to have been formerly guilty of attempting the like magical delusions; and publicly declared their wickedness and folly therein, with broken and contrite hearts, to the glory of God, and the caution of others.

19 Yea, a considerable number of those that had dealt in this black art, which was, at best, but the laborious and fallacious trifling of vain minds about curiosities, (*καυρυα*) that it did not concern them to pry into, brought along with them their books, by which they had learnt their conjuring methods, words, and charms; and publicly committed them to the flames, in the presence of all the people, that they might testify the sincerity of their repentance, and their utmost indignation against their former crimes, together with their full re-

solution

and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

solution never to practise them again; and that they might take a sort of holy revenge upon these pernicious and unlawful books, and prevent their falling into the hands of others to their hurt; and might shew how ready they were to sink the money they cost, rather than sell them, and how exceedingly they rejoiced in the grace, that had turned their hearts from Satan to God, and had given them good hopes of a better and more enduring substance: And these books which were thus freely sacrificed to the Redeemer's honour, were so very scarce, that, upon a moderate computation of the value at which they had been rated, and used to be sold, it was found to amount to the vast sum of fifty thousand pieces of silver *.

20 So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed.

20 So wonderfully and victoriously did the glorious gospel of the blessed God spread, and triumph in its reputation, and prevail in its visible effects upon the hearts and lives of a great many converts.

21 After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

21 When the fore-mentioned remarkable transactions were over, Paul determined in his own mind, by the suggestion of the Holy Spirit, (*17 to πνεύματι*) to visit the churches, after some little time, (*ver. 22.*) which he had planted in Macedonia and Achaia or Greece, that he might counsel, encourage, and establish them, and rectify disorders among them, (*chap. xx. 1, 2, 3.*); and from thence to go forward to Jerusalem, that he might give a further account of his successful labours to his brethren there: (*Chap. xxi. 17,—19.*) And he added, in an intimation of his thoughts to some of his friends, This will prove an occasion of my going forwards from thence to Rome likewise, that I may preach the gospel at that seat of the empire. (*Chap. xxiii. 11.*)

22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus: but he

22 Accordingly he dispatched into Macedonia two of his fellow-labourers, that had come to him, and assisted him at Ephesus, viz. his beloved Timothy, and Erastus, who had been the chamberlain of Corinth. (*Rom. xvi. 23.* See the note there.) These he sent before-hand to regulate some things that were amiss among those churches, and especially at Corinth, and to help forward their collections for the poor saints at Jerusalem †, (*1 Cor. xvi. 1,—4.*) as also to give notice of his intention to visit them,

NOTES.

* According to various computations of the learned, some make these fifty thousand pieces of silver amount to fifteen hundred pounds sterling, while others swell the account to seven thousand five hundred pounds. And, perhaps, as the Ephesians were so extravagantly addicted to the magic art, the magistrates had forbidd the use of those books that con-

tained its pretended mysteries; and this occasioned their being so excessively dear.

† It is generally agreed, that the apostle wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians, soon after he had sent these messengers to that and some other churches in those parts, and before the riot made by Demetrius, *ver. 24, &c.*

he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silver-smith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;

25 Whom he called together, with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth:

26 Moreover, ye see and hear, that, not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands:

27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but

them, as soon as conveniently might be, (1 Cor. iv. 17, 19.) but he found it necessary for him to continue some time longer at Ephesus, and parts adjacent, in the *Proconsular Asia*, where the Lord had still further work for him to do, though there were many adversaries. (1 Cor. xvi. 8, 9.)

23 And during his abode here, there arose a violent tumult among the people, in opposition to the only and eminent way of holiness and happiness through Jesus Christ, who is *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*. (John xiv. 6.)

24 For there was a noted silversmith, *Demetrius* by name, whose chief business was to make little models of the famous temple of *Diana*, in which the image of that heathen goddess was so placed, as to be seen by opening folding doors in the front; and by the sale of these trinkets, not only to the citizens, but also to strangers, that came from all parts to *Ephesus*, and used to buy and carry them home, either for curiosity, or for superstitious purposes, he had got abundance of riches, and maintained a great number of workmen under him.

25 These, and as many other artificers of the same trade as he could meet with, he summoned together as fit tools, and an interested party, for serving his mercenary design; and, to stir them up in the most touching manner to join with him in it, he made the following artful speech to them, saying, Gentlemen, ye all well know, and have found the sweet of it, that by our trade of making and selling silver models of *Diana's* temple, we not only get a comfortable subsistence for ourselves and families, but gain considerable riches;

26 And ye both see with your own eyes, and hear from others, that not only at our own populous city of *Ephesus*, but, in a manner, through the whole province of *Asia*, with which we have the greatest traffick, this dangerous fellow, one *Paul*, who sets up for a wonderful reformer, and broacher of a new and strange religion, has, by his plausible way of talking, perverted abundance of people, and prejudiced their minds against what has turned so much to our account, telling them that, notwithstanding all the veneration we and our ancestors have had for images, which are made by human art and labour, there is no such thing as any real divinity residing in them, and that they ought by no means to be worshipped in any view whatsoever. (Chap. xvii. 25.)

27 So that not only our profitable trade, by which we get our bread, and all the affluence that any of us have or hope for, must, in all likelihood, be utterly lost, and

but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

18 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

19 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

30 And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples

and is actually stigmatized as infamous to such a degree, that it would be dangerous for us to follow it: (*κινδυνώμενον*) but, which is most shocking and worst of all, even the sacred temple of the great goddess Diana itself, which has not its parallel for pomp and grandeur in all the world, is exposed to the utmost contempt; and her excellent majesty, whom not only all Asia, but even the whole Roman empire, religiously adore, and have in the highest honour, must of necessity be degraded, and disrobed of all her dignity and glory, which is by no means to be born.

28 And when the artificers heard this subtle insinuating harangue, which was calculated to fire their passions, and strike upon all the springs of superstition and self-interest, under pretence of religious zeal, they were filled with furious indignation against the apostle and his doctrine, and made an uproar in the streets, crying out, in a clamorous and tumultuous manner, Let Paul say never so much to the contrary, we will stand up for the religion of our country; we will live and die by our celebrated goddess, and her magnificent temple; Great is Diana of the Ephesians! She is a goddess of the first rank; none shall be suffered to despise her.

29 By this means they broke all peace and order, and soon threw the whole city into confusion, terror, and dismay: And when they could not meet with Paul, they seized upon two of his brethren and companions in journeying, labours, and sufferings; one of which was Gaius, a native of Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia, though descended from a family of Derbe, (*chap. xx. 4.*) and the other was Aristarchus of Thessalonica, who afterwards was a fellow-prisoner with Paul, (*Col. iv. 10.*) and so both of them were Macedonians: The mob, having light upon these, dragged them away, as with one accord, to the theatre, to seek their revenge upon them there*, where public games were wont to be celebrated in honour of Diana, and criminals used to be thrown to the wild beasts.

30 And when the apostle would have courageously and generously ventured into the theatre among the enraged people, to defend his noble cause, and his suffering

N O T E.

* There is no doubt but that this riotous company brought Gaius and Aristarchus to the theatre, to abuse and expose them, as a public spectacle to the people; and it is highly probable, that they hoped to oblige them to fight with the wild beasts, as was customary for criminals to do there, and, as it seems from 1 Cor. xv. 32. Paul had done before.

And Dr. Lightfoot thought that the apostle's having been preserved in some wonderful manner, when he was set to combat with the beasts, was the reason why the Aristarchus, ver. 31. had a respect for him, and dissuaded him from exposing himself to such dangers and abuses again. See Lightfoot on 1 Cor. xv. 32.

disciples suffered him not.

31 And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

32 Somewherefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused, and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

33 And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

34 But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice, about

ing friends, and to expose himself to danger, rather than leave them in it, the Christian converts were so tenderly concerned for his safety, and so apprehensive of the extreme hazard of this attempt, that they earnestly dissuaded him, and in a manner forced him to desist from it.

31 Yea, some of the *Asiarchs* themselves, (*Ἀσιαρχοι*) who were not only the chief rulers of *Asia*, but likewise had the direction and ordering of the theatre, and of the games that were celebrated there, in honour of *Diana*, and the rest of their deities; even some of these had such a respect and kindness for *Paul*, that they privately sent a message to him, desiring that he would by no means run the risk of going into the theatre, among such an exasperated and ungovernable rabble, who would scarcely be restrained, by all their authority, from the most outrageous acts of violence.

32 In the mean while, so great was the hurry and tumult of the populace, which, by this time, were increased to a prodigious number, that some bellowed out one thing, and some another, according to their own prejudices and passions; some clamoured against *Paul*, others against the *Jews*, and others against they knew not what: For the vast multitude *, that gathered together on this occasion, were in such confusion, that most of them could not tell what was the reason of their rising.

33 And some of them laying hold on a man of note, whose name was † *Alexander*, they singled him out, to call him to an account; the unbelieving *Jews* at the same time urging him to declaim against *Paul*, and excuse them, who were likewise in danger of being insulted as enemies to *Diana*. Accordingly *Alexander* waved his hand, in token of his desiring silence, and attempted to make an apology to the people, on behalf of himself and his countrymen, that he might screen them, and fix the odium entirely upon *Paul*.

34 But when the heathen *Ephesians* perceived that he was a *Jew*, who, as such, was a declared enemy to idol-worship, they all roared with a loud and clamorous cry,

28

N O T E S.

* The word (*ἐκκλησία*) used here, and ver. 29, 41. for a *ritus* or a *lawful* assembly, is that which, in the *religious* acceptance of it, is generally translated a *church*, as signifying a congregation of the faithful, that assemble together for the celebration of gospel-ordinances of worship, and the exercise of spiritual discipline.

† This was very probably *Alexander* the copper-smith, who was a warm judaizing Christian, and a great enemy to the apostle

Paul, 2 *Tim.* iv. 14. and afterwards turned apostate, 1 *Tim.* i. 19, 20. and so was a fit tool for the *Jews*, on this occasion, as his own character would incense the *Ephesians* against Christianity, and he himself was strongly inclined to fasten an odium upon *Paul*: And the *Jews* might hope by this means to gratify their own resentments against *Alexander* himself, in bringing him into trouble for turning Christian.

about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

35 And when the town-clerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?

36 Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

37 For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

as with one voice, for about two hours together, saying, Away with the Jews and Paul, and all their religion and parties: We are for the ancient religion of our country; Diana is our venerable deity; Great is this famous goddess of the Ephesians! We own and honour her, and are ready to stand by her with our lives and fortunes.

35 At length, when the register*, or president of the theatrical games, had repressed the noisy tumult of the people, he made a pacifick speech to them, saying to the following purport, O ye Ephesians, suffer me a little to reason with you about this unaccountable riot; What need is there of this loud outcry for our celebrated goddess? Is there a single man amongst us, who does not well know, that the inhabitants of Ephesus are universally devout worshippers of our magnificent goddess Diana, and that the city itself is, by its charter, concerned to take care of her temple, and her honour, and of the venerable image, which, as tradition tells us, was not made with men's hands†, but fell down immediately from our great god Jupiter himself, that it might be an unexceptionable object of our adoration, as being of higher original than those images made by the hands of men, which Paul declaimed against as no gods? And so all that he has said do not affect our religious regards to her.

36 Since therefore these are plain points, which cannot be denied, nor, as far as I hear, have ever been contradicted, it behoves you to be easy, and cease from this uproar, and not to attempt any thing precipitately, and in the heat of passion, against persons from whom ye have nothing to fear.

37 For as to these two men, Gaius and Aristarchus, (ver. 29.) whom ye have tumultuously seized, and dragged hither, to be exposed and punished; by what I can learn, they have offered no violence to this, or any other temple, nor sacrilegiously stolen any of its treasures; nor have they spoke opprobriously, or indecently, of your celebrated goddess Diana, nor indeed said any thing particularly against her, or her heavenly image in the temple, whatever they may have said against the gods that are made with hands. (ver. 26.)

38 If

NOTES.

* The word (*γραμματεως*) here rendered town clerk, properly signifies a scribe, who, among the Jews, was a learned man, expert in their laws; and, among the Romans, was a civil magistrate of considerable note, and is supposed to have been chief governor of the public games.

† The image of Diana is spoken of as falling down from Jupiter, by way of artful insinuation, as if it were not made with hands, and so were not of that sort of idols which Paul had said were no gods, ver. 26. though, in reality, he absolutely condemned all idols and image-worship, chap. xvii. 24.—25.

38 Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

39 But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40 For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

41 And, when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

38 If therefore Demetrius, and other silversmiths with him, that have fomented this disturbance for private ends of their own, are really aggrieved, or have matter of just complaint against any man for injuring their trade, there are civil court days frequently kept for hearing such causes; or if they have criminal matters to lay to any one's charge, there are *Proconsuls*, (*αὐτοκράτωρ*) * who are the proper appointed judges to try and determine about them. To one or other of these courts they should bring their action in a legal way, instead of appealing to the people; and, upon hearing the merits of the cause, no doubt but justice will be done them.

39 And (41) if ye have any questions in debate among yourselves about other concerns, of a public and religious nature that affect the peace and welfare of the community, or the honour of your temple, or of your goddess, they ought to be adjusted, not in a tumultuous manner by the populace, but in such a regular assembly as is authorized to take cognizance of them.

40 For truly we are in the utmost danger of being called to a strict account, and severely punished, by our superiors, for the seditious and riotous proceedings of this day; there being no sufficient reason to be alledged in justification or excuse of this tumultuous assembly, and of its outrageous behaviour, to the injury of some persons, and to the manifest terror of the whole city, and giving umbrage to the government.

41 And having said these things to sooth the passions and awe the minds of the people, he ordered all the company to disperse without delay, and every one to go peaceably about his business, and to his own home.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How glorious is the clear and full dispensation of the gospel, beyond all its dawnings under John the Baptist's ministry! And though its sacred ordinance are not to be neglected; yet how much better is it to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, than only with water in the name of the Lord Jesus!—How worthy is this glorious gospel to be preached with all boldness, even in the face of the greatest opposition? But if, after fair trial, any persist in obstinately rejecting and speaking evil of the only way of salvation by Jesus Christ, how reasonable is it for his servants to leave them to themselves, and for his people to separate from

N O T E.

* There was properly no more than one *proconsul* in a province at the same time. Therefore some suppose the meaning of, *there are deputies*, or *proconsuls*, to be, that there never is wanting a *proconsul*; others, that the *proconsul* and his *deputy* are here included in this appellation; and others, that the *proconsular* power was, at this time, exercised by two persons, viz, *Celer* and *Ascius*, whom the emperor had made *procurators*.

And by the *lawful assembly*, mentioned in the next verse, may be meant the assembly of the district of *Ephesus*, as there were several such in *Asia*, that were to judge of political and religious affairs, so far as the public was affected by them; and taking things in this view, there is a beautiful distinction and gradation in this part of the *town-clerk's* speech. See Mr Biscoe's *sermons at Boyle's lecture*, p. 309,—312.

from them ! God himself will own the word of his grace ; and those that are faithful to him ; their numbers shall increase by the conversion of sinners, that had before been the greatest tools and slaves of Satan ; and they shall be established in the faith of the gospel, which God has sealed with surprizing miracles. And, O how plainly are miraculous operations to be distinguished from all the juggle of sorcerers ; and how evidently were they wrought by the power of the Lord Jesus, through faith in him, to the confusion of devils, and of all unbelievers, that would prostitute his sacred name to their own vile and mercenary ends ! In the issue of all contests with the powers of darkness, he will overcome, his name shall be exalted, and the people filled with reverent awe. And O how excellent are the workings of sincere repentance ! It discovers itself in confessing and abhorring, in aggravating and retracting our most gainful and beloved sins, in renouncing all means of promoting them in ourselves or others, and in preferring a holy liberty in Christ, to all the service of Satan, that God in all things may be glorified. But carnal and worldly minds are too much in love with secular interests, to turn from idols to God : They are full of indignation, and make an uproar against the truth, and its preachers and professors, under pretence of zeal for the religion of their country, though it be the worshipping of images, that are made with the hands of men, and are indeed no gods. But how false and injurious is such zeal ! How is it made a cloke for private selfish designs ! How rashly doth it run into riot and confusion, and bear down all that is truly sacred, with noise and clamour, and wild imaginations, for want of arguments ! How ungovernable and unreasonable is its fury against persons that are chargeable with no crime ! And how dreadful is it to fall into the hands of a mob of zealots ! But how different is the holy zeal of Christ's servants, whose weapons are not carnal but spiritual, and mighty through God ! They only seek the dethroning of devils and all idols from men's hearts, but offer no violence to their persons, or their religion ; they raise no mobs, but are orderly subjects, that deserve the protection of the civil magistrate, whose office it is to keep the peace : And as they are often wonderfully preserved by providence from the rage of the populace ; so they themselves are deterred from inordinate passions, practices, and outrage, by the fear of God, more than by the fear of men, as knowing that they must give a stricter account to him than to them.

C H A P. XX.

Paul travels through Macedonia, Greece, and Asia, till he comes to Troas, 1,—6. Preaches, and administers the Lord's supper, and raises Eutychus from the dead there, 7,—12. Sets forward from thence in his way to Jerusalem, till he comes to Miletus, 13,—16. Sends for the elders of Ephesus, and preaches a farewell sermon to them there, 17,—35. And takes a solemn and most affectionate leave of them, 36,—38.

TEXT.

AND, after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and

PARAPHRASE.

SOON after the riot made by *Demetrius* and other silversmiths were suppressed, the apostle *Paul* being apprehensive, that to stay any longer at *Ephesus* might exasperate them afresh, and expose not only himself, but all the Christians there, to further danger, called the disciples together, that had been converted during his abode in that city ; and when he had taken his leave of them, by affectionately saluting them, and wishing grace and peace to be multiplied to them, he, accord-

ing

and departed for to go into Macedonia.

2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,

3 And there abode three months: and when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.

4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

5 These, going before, tarried

ing to his declared intention, (*chap. xix. 21, 22.*) followed Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, that he might visit the churches which he had planted in that province, and receive their collections for the poor saints at Jerusalem. (*2 Cor. viii. 1,—6. and ix. 1,—5.*)

2 And when he had been with all the churches in those parts, and taken a great deal of pains with them severally, in directing their faith and practice, worship and discipline; in exhorting them to persevere with patience and steadfastness in a holy profession of the gospel, notwithstanding all their trials and sufferings; and in speaking the most comfortable and encouraging things to them, suitable to their circumstances; he then proceeded to Achaia, or Greece strictly so called.

3 Here he spent a quarter of a year among the churches of that province, to counsel, caution, and establish them; and intended to have gone by sea from thence to some port in Syria, that lay directly in his way to Jerusalem: But as the restless infidel Jews, having failed in all their other attempts to destroy him, had privately contrived to way-lay and murder him, and to rob him of the collections of money he was entrusted with, before he could get aboard; when he understood this he altered his mind, and, to disappoint them, resolved to fetch a compass, and return through Macedonia, by the way he had come hither.

4 And this route to Jerusalem from Macedonia lying through the lesser Asia, Sopater or Sosipater, who was a kinsman of Paul's, (*Rom. xvi. 21.*) and a messenger of the Berean church, attended him, together with the writer of this history, (*see the note on ver. 5.*) in his journey to that province: But (*sc.*) the messengers of other churches, that were deputed to go with him to Jerusalem, (*1 Cor. xvi. 3, 4. and 2 Epist. viii. 19.*) did not keep him company in this part of his way; as particularly Aristarchus, and Secundus, and Gaius, who was descended from a family of Derbe, and the beloved Timothy, which were messengers of the church at Thessalonica; and Tychicus and Trophimus, the messengers of the Asiatic church at Ephesus*.

5 All these setting out by agreement a little before the apostle, and us † who accompanied him, went to Troas,

N O T E S.

* The Cambridge manuscript calls these messengers Ephesians. Vid. Mill. in loc. And Trophimus is called an Ephesian, *chap. xxi. 29.*

† Late, the writer of this history, had not spoke of himself as one of Paul's company till now, since they were first together at Troas

and Philippi, where, at the last of those cities, Lydia and the jailer were converted, *chap. xvi. 11, 12, &c.* It seems therefore, that this evangelist had continued, by the apostle's direction, to water the churches which he had planted, and still further to propagate the gospel

ried for us at Troas.

6 And we sailed away from Philippi, after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days, where we abode seven days.

7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight.

Troas, to give notice of, and prepare the way for his design of following them; and there they waited, with patience and hope, for our arrival.

6 And when we had took shipping at *Philippi*, we sailed down the river *Strymon* to the *Ægean* sea, immediately after the time of the passover; and, in a voyage of five days, got to our dear brethren, that waited for us at *Troas*, (*ver. 5.*) where we staid seven days * for an opportunity of meeting with the whole church at the time of their stated assembling together, according to the general custom of New Testament-churches, for celebrating the ordinances of Christian worship.

7 And when upon the first day of the week, commonly called, in New Testament-style, the *Lord's day*, (*Rev. i. 10.*) which, by divine authority, under apostolick direction, was set apart to his honour and service; these disciples assembled together in course, for all acts of public worship, in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, and of the eminent effusion of his Spirit at *Pentecost*, on that day of the week; and particularly for celebrating the Lord's supper, the whole of which ordinance is usually expressed by breaking of bread, in remembrance of his death, in which his body was broken as a sacrifice for sin, and spiritual food was prepared for believing souls: When, I say, the believers at *Troas* were assembled for these religious purposes, the apostle *Paul* delivered an excellent sermon to them, relating to evangelical doctrines, privileges, and duties; and being to go from thence on the morrow, after which he might never see them again, he, in his abundant zeal for the glory of Christ and their edification, continued his discourse till midnight.

8 And

N O T E S.

gospel in those parts; and that now, on the apostle's return to that neighbourhood, they met together again; and, probably, *Luke* was one of the messengers appointed by the church at *Philippi*, or, perhaps, by the common consent of the *Macedonian* churches, to attend *Paul* with their contributions to *Jerusalem*. And ever afterwards we find him speaking of himself, as present with the apostle, to the end of this history.

* No notice is taken of these disciples meeting, or of the apostle's preaching to them on the Jewish sabbath; and I think no sufficient reason can be given for this account of his staying *seven days*, till the return of the first day of the week, or of their coming, without being called, together on that day for religious worship, but on the supposition that this day was substituted in the room of

the seventh, to be kept holy to the Lord. When therefore the apostle went at other times into the Jewish synagogues on their sabbath, it was not, as I apprehend, from a sense of obligation to observe that day, but from a zealous disposition to take the opportunity of full assemblies, as he sometimes did of the great concourse of people at the passover and *Pentecost*, to preach to Jews and proselytes. But I cannot find one instance in all the New Testament of the apostles ever calling any one Christian church together, or of their ever meeting as such, on the seventh day; and though judaizing Christians, and, perhaps, some others, in tenderness to them, might observe both days for some time; yet Gentile churches constantly kept to the first day of the week, as appears from *1 Cor. xvi. 2.* See the note on *John ix. 16.*

8 And there were many lights in the upper-chamber, where they were gathered together.

9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and, as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him, said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while,

8 And to prevent any imagination, appearance, or scandalous report of their meeting together for indecent practices in the dark, as well as for the convenience of reading and turning to the holy scriptures, there were many lamps, or candles, to enlighten the room where they were assembled, which was a large upper chamber, or garret; such an apartment being often used in those days for religious exercises, and being most private, and secure from surprizes by the enemy.

9 Among this company, there was a certain youth, *Eutychus* by name, who sitting in the window, and nor being duly impressed with what he heard, nor with a reverence of God in his worship, fell fast asleep: And while *Paul*, being much enlarged in his own spirit, lengthened out his sermon to an uncommon degree, this *Eutychus* was so entirely overcome with sleep, that he fell directly down to the ground from the open window of the room, which was three stories high; and, when taken up, was found to be killed on the spot by the fall, which was an awful rebuke on him, and a loud warning to others, to take heed of giving way to sinful drowsiness in the worship of God.

10 But (*sc*) *Paul*, to shew how tenderly his compassion was moved, and to give an eminent and endearing confirmation of the gospel, which he then was preaching, immediately broke off his discourse; and, running down stairs, stretched himself upon the dead corpse, as *Elijah* and *Elisba* did, one on the body of the widow of *Sarepta's* son, (1 *Kings* xvii. 21.) and the other on the body of the son of the *Shunamite*, (2 *Kings* iv. 34.) which was a signal of power falling down from heaven to restore life: And when he had affectionately embraced the young man in his arms, and prayed over him, he said to his friends, and the rest of the people, Do not hurry yourselves, or be distressed any farther at this sad providence; for his soul is now come into him, and he is alive again. (See 1 *Kings* xvii. 21, 22.)

11 Then (*sc*) the apostle, returning to the upper room*, administering the Lord's supper to the church, himself partaking of the elements with them, which by a figure, that puts a part for the whole, may be expressed by his taking and eating bread: And afterwards, (*ομιλεσας*) having entered into a free conversation with them about their spiritual concerns, for a great while longer,

NOTE.

* Some think that the apostle's *breaking bread, and eating*, was merely a common meal for refreshment: But I take it to relate to his administering the Lord's supper, for the celebration of which the disciples came together, as we are told in these very terms of *breaking bread*, ver. 7.

long while, even till break of day, so he departed.

11 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul; for so had he appointed, miming himself to go a-foot.

14 And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene.

15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over-against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.

16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hastened, if it were possible for him, to beat Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

longer, even till day-light, he, (*vsaw*) in a manner like himself, quite friendly, heavenly, and beneficial to them, at length took his leave of them.

12 And some of the congregation brought the young man *Eutychus* into the room, that they might all be eye-witnesses of his being alive and well, notwithstanding his bruises and mortal wound by the fall; and the whole assembly greatly rejoiced, and were confirmed in the faith of the gospel, on seeing him raised from the dead; which not only took off all occasions of rash censure, as though the judgments of God had come upon them, as a superstitious and deluded people, but was a noble testimony of his owning them in their religious exercises.

13 After all this, we, who were of *Paul's* company, setting out before him, took shipping; and in a coasting voyage sailed to a neighbouring town called *Assos*, another seaport town in the province of *Troas*, where, by agreement, we were to take him aboard: For so it was ordered among us before-hand, (*vsaw*) he himself choosing, for the sake of a little retirement, or some other reasons, to travel so that place on foot by land.

14 And when he came up to us at *Assos*, we gladly took him into the vessel; and soon after arrived at *Mitylene*, one of the chief cities of the isle *Lesbos*, seated on the east side of that island, about seven miles distant from the *Asiatic* coast.

15 And setting sail from thence, we the next day reached as far as over-against the isle *Chios*, another considerable island, about four leagues off from the *Asiatic* coast in the *Ægean* sea: And the day after that, we touched at *Samos*, another island in the same sea; and then going to, and making a short stay at *Trogyllium*, a harbour in a promontory on the continent of the *lesser Asia*, over-against, and near two leagues distant from *Samos*, we, in one day more, landed at *Miletus*, a sea-port in that province, which lay * several leagues beyond *Ephesus*.

16 For *Paul* thought it best, and therefore concluded in his own mind, not to call at *Ephesus*, where his friends might be urgent to detain him, but to pass it in his voyage, that he might not wear away too much of his time in the *lesser Asia*; because, being bound for *Jerusalem*, he was very desirous to make all convenient haste, that if possible, by the will of God, he might get thither before the first day of Pentecost, which was then drawing on apace; and so might not only have an opportunity

N O T E.

* Some place *Miletus* about thirty, and others about fifty miles from *Ephesus*.

portunity of paying his Christian respects, and giving an account of his travels and success to the church there, but also of trying once more what might be done, thro' divine grace, among the unconverted Jews and professytes at that time of general concourse.

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

17 But, (*st*) in haste as he was, he stopped so long at *Miletus*, as to send from thence to *Ephesus*, to desire those officers of that large church to come and give him a meeting there *, who sometimes bear the title of *elders*, because they are usually grave ministers, of mature age and judgment; and at others, are called *overseers* or *bishops*, (*ver.* 28.) because the pastoral care of such churches, as they are peculiarly related to, is committed to them.

18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons,

18 And when they arrived, he addressed them in a solemn and affectionate speech, to the following effect, My dear brethren in the faith and service of the gospel, ye yourselves very well know how I have behaved among you all along, on every occasion, and in the variety of circumstances that have attended me, ever since the very first time of my coming to preach the gospel in this country of the *lesser Asia*, and ye cannot but be thoroughly acquainted with my trials and difficulties, and with the manner of my conduct, particularly toward you, and the church and people at *Ephesus*, the metropolis of that country.

19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations which befel me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

19 Ye have been eye and ear-witnesses, and must needs have observed, how constantly I have laboured in the work of the Lord Jesus, to promote his interest and glory, not with haughtiness, ostentation, and self-applause, but with all meekness and gentleness, condescension and low thoughts of myself, under a sense of my own insufficiency and unworthiness, and even with a flow of tears, at times, in my prayers and preaching, as being deeply affected with the exceeding and abundant grace of Christ toward me, and moved with the most touching grief and compassion, at the stupidity and perverseness, iniquity and idolatry of the people, and at the suffering and infirmities of some, and disorders of other gospel-professors; as also with many distressing afflictions and persecutions that have come upon myself, and

N O T E.

* As *Ephesus* was the metropolis of *Asia the less*, and the apostle had spent about three years with great success there, chap. xix. 17.—20. see the note on chap. xix. 10. it may well be supposed, that the *Ephesian* church was so large, as to require more pastors than one, as there were in the church

at *Philippi*, (*Phil.* i. 1.) to take the oversight of it; and these very persons that are here called *elders*, (*πρεσβυτερος*) are styled *overseers* or *bishops*, (*ἐπίσκοπος*) *ver.* 28. which shews that these were titles of the same import, to signify such elders, as were the true bishops of the New Testament-churches.

and been sore trials to my faith and patience, by means of the malicious counsels, contrivances, and attempts of unbelieving *Jews* against me.

20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house,

20 Ye likewise know with what simplicity and godly sincerity, and not as those that corrupt the word of God, and handle it deceitfully, I have fulfilled my ministry; insomuch that, notwithstanding all my difficulties and discouragements, I have never been influenced by fear or favour, or any carnal or worldly motives whatsoever, to conceal, with-hold, or shun insisting upon, any one point of faith or practice, that might be for the good and edification of my hearers; but have freely and plainly declared the whole scheme of gospel-truths unto you, as well as others, and have faithfully instructed you into them, at large, in seasonable counsels, cautions, exhortations, and encouragements, both publicly in all religious assemblies, and privately at the several houses that I have resorted to.

21 Testifying both to the *Jews*, and also to the *Greeks*, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

21 I can appeal to you, that in all my ministrations I have bore my testimony for Christ, in word and deed, both to the *Jews*, and even to the most learned among the *Gentiles*: This I have done with the greatest earnestness and concern, as one that shall witness either for or against them in the day of judgment; and I have therein, as ye know, chiefly insisted on two of the most important and comprehensive articles of Christian religion: One is the nature and necessity of unfeigned repentance toward God, which Christ is exalted to give, and which consists in a deep and humbling sense of the evil, mischief, and danger of all sin, and of all its aggravations, as sin; in an ingenuous sorrow and shame for it; in utter hatred of it, and hearty resolutions, by divine grace, against it; and in turning from it to God upon the encouragements, and by the assistance of his free mercy, through Jesus Christ, as manifested in the gospel: And the other grand subject of my ministry has been, the nature and necessity of sincere faith, as terminating upon the person and mediation of Christ, which is also the gift of God, and consists in a convinced sinner's cordially assenting to, approving of, and embracing the gospel-discovery of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only suitable, divine, and all-sufficient prophet, priest, and king of the church; and in receiving and relying on him alone, and on the rich grace of God, through his merit and righteousness, for pardon of sin, and justification, and for a whole salvation.

22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing

22 And now, behold another scene of labour and sufferings lyes before me; I am going to *Jerusalem*, being directed

knowing the things that shall befall me there:

directed and obliged to it, (*το πνεματι*) by inward suggestions of the Holy Spirit, and correspondent resolutions in my own mind, which carry the nature of a sacred bond upon me to comply with them; though I have no revelation of what particular services and troubles the Lord may call me to there, or what the final issue of them shall be, as to my own life, or death.

23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, That bonds and afflictions abide me,

23 Only this I know in general, that the divine Spirit, whose nature is holy, and who is the sanctifier of his people and servants, and of all their labours and trials, has practically witnessed by events that have befallen me in many cities where I have hitherto been, and may further tell me by inspired prophets in various cities through which I pass, (*chap. xxi. 4, 11.*) that imprisonments, bonds, and ill usage are still to attend me for the sake of Christ, who has said to his disciples, *In the world ye shall have tribulation.* (*John xvi. 33.*)

24 But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

24 But, I bless God, I am not in the least disheartened, discouraged, or shaken in my resolutions to go on, through his assistance, in his work, by any prospect of these terrors; I look upon them all as trifles, and make no manner of account of them, (*οὐτις λογος ποιηματι*) when they stand in the way of my duty: Nor do I hold, (*οὐ*) or esteem my life itself (that dearest of all earthly enjoyments) to be of any importance, or worth saving, but stand ready to resign it, whenever my Lord pleases, so that I may but end my days, and complete my appointed race of service and sufferings, to his glory, with satisfaction and joy to my own and others souls; and may thoroughly fulfil that holy and arduous, honourable and useful ministry, which I have received by the commission, and which I exercise by the gracious furniture and assistance of the Lord Jesus, to publish and confirm, with miraculous and scriptural evidence, the truth and excellence of that gospel, which springs from, and is the appointed means of setting forth and communicating the rich and sovereign grace of God, to the eternal salvation of immortal souls.

25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.

25 And now observe the way of the Lord, for engaging your diligence in his work, and taking off your dependence from instruments, and fixing it entirely on himself; I am very sure, by the intimations he has given me, that however he may dispose of me, none of you, my dear *Ephesian* brethren, will ever see me again upon earth: May we all have a joyful meeting in heaven! This then is the very last time that I shall have an opportunity of speaking face to face to you, among whom I have so often preached the great doctrines, privileges, and

and obligations, pertaining to that kingdom which God in his infinite wisdom and grace has set up in this world, and will complete in all its blessedness and glory in the world to come.

25 Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.

26 As therefore my work is now done in these parts, I solemnly declare, as in the presence of God, and dare appeal to you, as my witnesses, in confidence of your being so at the final judgment; and I may call this parting day to witness, that I have been, through grace, sincerely faithful in discharging my office among you; so that if any that sat under my ministry perish, their blood must be upon their own heads, and I shall stand clear of the ruin of their souls, as having laid before them the only way of life and salvation by Jesus Christ, and given them fair warning of the danger of rejecting him through unbelief, and persisting in their sins. (Ezek. xxxiii. 4, 9.)

27 For I have not thought to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

27 For as I have preached the pure gospel of Christ, without mixture of human inventions, or judaizing traditions, rites, and ceremonies; so I never, from a desire of pleasing some, or fear of offending others, have knowingly or willingly declined a plain and open publication to you, or others, of any part of that glorious counsel of God, concerning the salvation of lost sinners, which is the product of his eternal wisdom, and of the good pleasure of his will, and which he has now revealed to be made known to the sons of men.

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church

28 Let me therefore, as a brother, intreat you, and, as a father, charge you, in the name and presence of Christ, to follow my example, as far as I have herein followed him: Attend diligently, (*προσέχετε*) in the first place, to the state and temper of your own souls, that they be seasoned with grace, and governed by right principles and views; and look well to your conversation, that it be holy, humbled, and unblameable, as becomes the gospel of Christ: And then take special care of those whom your Lord regards as his special property and charge; and who, like sheep, ought to be meek and patient, inoffensive and useful, sociable and loving in their holy communion together under his authority, and keeping in his fold: See to it, that none of them, thro' your neglect, ever suffer in their spiritual concerns, over whom the Holy Ghost (*θεος*) has authoritatively placed and settled you, as (*ἐπισκοποι*) inspectors, watchmen, and bishops of their souls, by his furnishing you with his gifts and graces for that important trust, and inclining your hearts to it, and regularly investing you in it, according to the directions of his word; He has put you into that laborious

church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

laborious and honourable office for this very end, that ye, like pastors after his own heart, may feed his people with knowledge and understanding, (Jer. iii. 15.) and may exercise good discipline and government over them, (πομπαινον) with all wisdom and diligence, meekness and faithfulness, even over the church, of which Christ, the great Shepherd, who is the true and living God, is the supreme Head; and which he has redeemed, and bought for himself, with the infinitely valuable price of his precious blood; which was really his own blood, with as much, yea, more propriety, than any man's blood can be called his own; because he assumed the human nature into so close an union with the divine, as to make it one person with himself; and had an absolute right, originally in himself, to offer it, or not, as an atoning sacrifice for his church, according to the good pleasure of his own will. Let therefore no pains be thought too much for you to take, not only in looking well to yourselves, but also to them. And ye will find great occasion for the utmost diligence herein.

29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

29 For I plainly foresee, by the spirit of prophecy, that after I have left you, false teachers, seducers, and persecuting enemies will break in upon you, and, under various pretences, will act the part of terrible wolves among you, will rend and tear, frighten, worry, and scatter Christ's sheep, and do their utmost to destroy their faith and hope, omitting no means to accomplish their vile designs, nor forbearing any mischiefs or cruelties they can bring upon them.

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

30 And even from among yourselves, some, whom ye now have a good opinion of, and others, that may hereafter incorporate with you, will rise up in opposition to the simplicity of the gospel, uttering corrupt and dangerous notions to pervert it, and, by their plausible insinuations, to make divisions among the disciples of Christ, and bring them over to their own pernicious errors, and to themselves * as heads of parties.

31 Therefore watch

31 Be ye therefore, like faithful shepherds under Christ, the more watchful over the flock; stand upon your guard against the first motions of these evil men, to put a stop to them; and watch the first staggerings of the followers of the Lamb, to preserve and fortify them, and

N O T E.

* Instances of this kind were *Phygelus* and *Hermogenes*, *Hymeneus*, and *Philetus*, 2 Tim. i. 15. and ii. 17, 19. These were of *Asia*; forsook the apostle, made disciples to themselves and to their own corrupt tenets, and

overthrew the faith of some; and so the disciples they drew away may be understood, either of Christ's professed disciples, whom they perverted, or of disciples which they made to their own parties.

and prevent their being drawn aside: And to excite your greater care and vigilance, reflect seriously upon the pains I have taken to establish the gospel, and the minds of Christ's disciples in it, and to forewarn and forearm you against these dangers; how for the space of about three years together, (see the note on chap. xix. 10) I persisted with unwearied application, by night and by day, as opportunities offered, to caution every one against deceivers; and did this with an aching heart, and weeping eyes, lest they should make sad havock upon their faith, and so my labour upon some of whom I hoped well should prove to be in vain.

31 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

32 And now, my dear brethren, being sensible that ye need better light and assistances from above than your own or than I can give you, for a due discharge of these difficult and important duties, I earnestly recommend and commit you to the favour and blessing of God, and of the eternal Word, who is God, and full of grace and truth, (*John i. 1, 14.*) that ye may derive all reasonable strength and guidance, preservation and comfort from the Father, through the Son*; and I refer you to his holy gospel, which proceeds from his free grace, and contains all needful promises of it, and is his appointed means of conveying it, that, in his strength, ye may observe, and act according to his word, as your only rule and ground of hope, which, in the nature of means, is every way sufficient, without mixture of Jewish rites, or human inventions, to edify and establish you, and carry you on in his ways, till at length he, in the greatness of his mercy, by this means, shall conduct you to, and put you in full possession of the inheritance which he has appointed to his children, and which is to be enjoyed by all those, and those only, that are renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost; and so fitted for that glorious state of perfect purity and blessedness.

33 I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.

33 There is one thing more, for the truth of which I can appeal to God and you, and would have you remember as an answer to those enemies that may wrongfully accuse me of secular views, and as a specimen of that holy disinterestedness that ought to be found in the saints and servants of Christ, and expectants of the heavenly inheritance; I mean, that I have not been desirous, like the false teachers, of heaping up riches, or decking the body with fine apparel, or even of furnishing

N O T E.

* As the word of his grace may signify either the gospel, which is so styled, chap. xiv. 3. or the Son of God, who is often called the Word, and is to be believed in, together with the Father, *John xiv. 1.* and as (τα εὐαγγέλιον)

which is able may refer to God, (το Θεοῦ) as well as to the word of his grace, (το λόγος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ) I have endeavoured to include all these senses in the paraphrase.

ing myself with proper food and raiment, at another man's expence, whether of his silver or gold; but, like *Moses* and *Samuel*, (*Numb.* xvi. 15. and *1 Sam.* xii. 3.—5.) have declined every thing of that aspect.

34 Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.

34 Nay, on the contrary, ye yourselves are my witnesses, that when I might have demanded a comfortable subsistence from the people, I was so far from making use of my power in this respect, that, rather than the gospel should be hindered, these hands of mine have wrought hard, in making of tents, (*chap.* xviii. 3.) to earn my bread, and to provide, not for myself only, but also for my friends and brethren that accompanied me, and had not opportunity of procuring supplies for themselves.

35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

35 Thus by example, as well as doctrine, I have set before you all those things that I thought needful to direct your conduct, together with your preaching; and particularly have shown you how it becomes you, as circumstances and occasions require, to labour with your own hands, as I have done, that ye may not only provide for yourselves, and so take off the prejudices of weak and covetous minds against you, as if ye were mercenary creatures, that make a gain of godliness; but may likewise be capable of relieving the poor, that are sick and infirm, and unable to work for themselves. And that ye may not think much at this, ye should often reflect on a memorable saying of the Lord Jesus himself*, namely, that *It is more blessed to give than to receive*; meaning, that it is a greater happiness, comfort, and honour, more God-like, and acceptable to him, and derives a more signal blessing from him, to do good in acts of charity to the poor, than to receive benefactions from others, or than to increase in worldly stores.

36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down

36 And when the apostle had finished this solemn, moving discourse, he, to give them a parting prayer, as well as a farewell sermon, fell down on his knees, and, in that posture of holy reverence and humble importunity, poured out his earnest requests to the Lord for them all, they joining with him therein, that they might be enabled

N O T E.

* Some have thought that here is a reference to what Christ said in *John*, though in different words, *Luke* xiv. 13, 14. and xvi. 9. But as they are expressly called *the words of the Lord Jesus*, it rather seems that this was a saying used by our Lord on some occasions, and familiarly known among his disciples, though omitted by the *Evangelists* in the history of his life. If so, whether the apostle had the account of it from ear-witnesses, or

by immediate revelation, we are now assured that Christ spoke such words as these; but had not the sacred historian recorded Paul's recital of them, we should never have known, with certainty, any thing of them; since oral tradition would have left us as much in the dark about this, as about thousands of other sentences that were spoke by our Lord, but were not recorded by the inspired penmen.

down, and prayed with them all.

37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him.

38 Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

enabled by his grace to understand, receive, and practise the good counsel that had been given them, and might be directed and assisted, supported and succeeded in all their way and work, for the glory of God and the good of his church, and that they themselves, and all their labours might be accepted of him in Christ.

37 Hereupon they all burst out into floods of tears, and throwing themselves, one after another, on Paul's neck, with hearts full of tenderness, love, and grief, they embraced and saluted him, in the most affectionate manner, as the dearest friends use to do at parting.

38 They were exceedingly troubled at the thoughts of losing the present pleasure and advantage of his good company, counsels, and ministrations; but were most abundantly distressed in reflecting on the words, whereby he had plainly told them, (*ver.* 25.) that they would never see him in the land of the living again. And, like fast and endeared friends, that are loth to part, they attended him to his embarkation, shewing him all the kindness and respect they were capable of, and wishing him a prosperous voyage by the will of God.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a mercy is it to see the servants of Christ get safe through the uproars that are at any time made against them, and to take our leave of them in peace. And how affectionately and religiously should they part with their Christian friends and brethren, who cannot but be grieved at the loss of their edifying company and ministrations; especially when they have reason to think that they shall never see their faces any more! But in the most afflictive and self-denying cases, it becomes us to say, *The will of the Lord be done*: However, since ministers must die as well as other men, how ready should we be to accompany them, as long as we can, in their services and sufferings, and to attend their holy ministrations, especially on the Lord's days, which are divinely set apart for the celebration of sacred ordinances, such as hearing the word, breaking of bread, and prayer! And whenever we are engaged in religious worship, how should we watch against drowsiness and sleep, lest we meet with a rebuke like *Eutychus*, who fell down dead, though God, for his own glory, and the comfort of his people, raised him to life again! How indefatigable was the great apostle in the service of his Lord! He sometimes laboured with his hands to supply his own and other's wants, as knowing that our Saviour himself said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive*; and at other times he laid himself out, by night and by day, for counselling and cautioning, establishing and building up believers, and directing the pastors of churches, as well as for the conversion of sinners. What an excellent pattern has he set the ministers of the gospel! And how happy is it for them to be able, with a good conscience, and in view of a future judgment, to appeal to their hearers, as witnesses for them at their final parting! With what prayers and tears, affectionate concern and holy zeal, humility, condescension, and contempt of this world, should they, like this great apostle, serve the Lord Jesus, amidst the various trials that befall them? With what unbiassed and disinterested faithfulness and plainness should they declare the whole counsel of God, insisting especially on the most necessary and practical parts of it, such as faith and repentance, that the guilt of souls that perish may be chargeable upon their own stupidity and obstinacy, and not on any partiality or neglect of those that ministered to them; And how cheerfully should they follow the footsteps of

Providence

Providence in their ministrations, whatever dangers it may expose them to! They should expect sufferings for the sake of Christ, and even despise their own lives, in comparison with finishing their course with joy, and fulfilling the trust which Christ has committed to them, for setting forth the excellencies of the gospel of the grace of God. O with what diligence should they look to themselves, and to the church of the dear Saviour, who is God, and by his own infinitely dignified blood has purchased it for himself! How, in love and duty to him, and to the Holy Ghost, who has made them overseers, should they feed his people with sound doctrine, and watch over them in the Lord, that neither secret nor open enemies may seduce any of them! But, alas, who is sufficient for these things! And what need have pastors, as well as their flocks, to be recommended by prayer, and to commit themselves by faith to Christ and to the power and promises of God through him, to carry them on with an increase of gifts, graces, and success, and to give them a free admission at last to the eternal inheritance, which is to be enjoyed by none but holy souls!

C H A P. XXI.

Paul sets sail with his company from Miletus, and passes by several places in his way to Cesarea, 1,—7. There they lodge at Philip the evangelist's house, and travel on foot from thence to Jerusalem, notwithstanding the remonstrances, that, upon Agabus's prophecy of Paul's sufferings, were made against it, 8,—17. He salutes his brethren there, and, at their persuasion, purifies himself according to the law, in condescension to the prejudice, of the Jews, 18,—26. The Asiatic Jews, seeing him in the temple, cry out furiously, and incense the people against him, who violently seize him as a criminal, 27,—30. He narrowly escapes with his life, by the assistance of the chief captain, who rescues him out of their hands, and gives him liberty to speak in his own defence, 31,—40.

TEXT.

AND it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the day following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Paul, and those of us who were of his company, had got away with much ado, (*απομαχόμενοι*) like persons dragged with violence, from our dear Ephesian friends, who were loth to part with us, and we with them, we put off to sea; and, by the favour of Providence, sailed directly in a prosperous voyage to Coos, an island in the *Ægean* sea, famous for the temple of *Æsculapius* and *Juno*; and, the day after that, we arrived at another island, called *Rhodes*, greatly renowned for the *Colossus*, or huge statue of brass, which was erected to the honour of the sun; was seventy cubits high, and stood astride over the mouth of the harbour, in which the ships sailed between its legs, and was reckoned one of the seven wonders of the world; and from thence we sailed to *Patara*, the metropolis and chief port of *Lycia*.

And, finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard

2 And there happily meeting with a ship that was bound for *Syrophœnicia*, we went aboard her, and set forward

board, and set forth.

forward for that country, which lay directly in our way to *Jerusalem*.

3 Now when we had discovered *Cyprus*, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into *Syria*, and landed at *Tyre*: for there the ship was to unlade her burden.

3 Now when we came within sight of *Cyprus*, which lay out of our road toward the north, we passed that island, leaving it at some distance on our left hand, and made the best of our way for *Syria*; and at length reaching *Tyre*, the chief port and city of *Phœnicia*, a province of *Syria*, we went ashore: For there the vessel we sailed in was to deliver up her cargo.

4 And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul, through the spirit, that he should not go up to *Jerusalem*.

4 And there being at this city a company of believers in Christ, we found them out and visited them; and as they were extremely desirous of our staying with them, and we, being now landed on the borders of *Canaan*, could easily get to *Jerusalem* by the time that the apostle had prefixed, we continued there a whole week, that we might spend a Lord's day with them, (see the note on chap. xx. 6.) as well as improve opportunities on other days, for mutual edification and consolation: And while we were there, some of them, who were endued with extraordinary gifts, told *Paul*, by an immediate suggestion of the Spirit, that unless he would expose himself to the utmost danger of his life, he must not pursue his journey to *Jerusalem**, because great troubles would beset him, in case of his going thither.

5 And when we had accomplished those days, we departed, and went our way, and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and

5 But (he) not being terrified at the thoughts of the adversaries which he might meet with, and whose mischievous attempts against him God could over-rule for his own glory, and the furtherance of the gospel; and knowing in himself, by the Holy Ghost, that bonds and afflictions were to attend him in the discharge of his duty, (chap. xx. 23.) he would by no means be dissuaded from his important design; and so, when the seven days were expired, we set out, and went to the sea-side, all the brethren of *Tyre* accompanying us with great affection and respect †, and honouring us with presents, and bringing their wives and children along with them, till we got out of the city, that they all might learn to reverence the faithful servants of Christ, and might have the benefit of their instructions and prayers: And when we came to the shore, the whole

N O T E.

* As when God told *David*, 1 Sam. xxiii. 22. that the men of *Keilah* would deliver him up to *Saul*, *David* understood it to be, on supposition that he should stay in *Keilah*, and therefore went from thence, and escaped *Saul's* rage: So these disciples seemed to understand their prophetic impulse to be an intimation from the Spirit, that *Paul*, if he were so minded, might avoid his danger, by not going to *Jerusalem*; and therefore, in

their abundant affection to him, and concern for his safety, would have dissuaded him from going thither.

† It is highly probable, that they gave presents to the apostle and his company at parting, as their friends at *Melita* or *Malta* did, chap. xxviii. 10. And it is thought by some that this was a fulfilment of the prophecy, *Psal.* xlv. 12. that the daughter of *Tyre* should be there with a gift.

and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed.

6 And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship: and they returned home again.

7 And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cesarea; and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, (which was one of the seven,) and abode with him.

9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

10 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus.

whole company kneeled down with great solemnity upon it, and joined with the apostle in humble addresses to the throne of grace for the special presence and blessing of God to be with those of us that were upon our journey, and with those that we were to leave behind us.

6 And when we had affectionately embraced and saluted one another in a Christian manner, our company went a ship-board, for a coasting voyage; and the Tyrian brethren, with their wives and children, returned to their own homes, that they and their houses might serve the Lord.

7 And after, through the good hand of our God upon us, we had finished our passage by sea from Tyre, we landed at Ptolemais, a city of Galilee; and paying our respects in the usual forms of religious friendship to the Christian brethren there, we staid with them one day only, to tell them what great things the Lord had done by Paul's ministry; and to inquire how the good work went on among them; as also to give them suitable instructions and exhortations, for their caution, encouragement, and comfort.

8 And on the morrow, we, who were Paul's attendants, went with him from that city, and proceeded by land to Cesarea in Palestine, where the first converts were made from among the proselytes of the gate; (chap. x.) and going into the house of Philip, we took up our quarters with him, who was both an evangelist, and one of the seven first deacons that had been chosen by the church at Jerusalem, (chap. vi. 5.) and who came to this city soon after his preaching Christ had been eminently blessed to the conversion of the Samaritans, and of the Ethiopian eunuch, (chap. viii. 5, 6, 35,—40.) and now resided here.

9 This famous man had four daughters, who had preserved their chastity in an unmarried state, and were endued with the spirit of prophecy for understanding the scriptures of the the Old Testament, and for foretelling future events, in further accomplishment of the memorable prediction of Joel, before-mentioned. (Chap. ii. 17.)

10 And while we continued at this city, where we spent a considerable time in conversing with our Christian friends about the things of God, and in other religious exercises, a certain prophet came down thither from Judea, whose name was Agabus, and who some years before had foretold the great famine which afterwards came to pass. (Chap. vi. 28.)

11 And when he was come unto us he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

12 And, when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep, and to break mine heart? for I am

11 This inspired man coming into our company, and seeing the belt with which *Paul* used to gird up his long garments about his loins in travelling, took it up, and, by way of prophetic sign*, bound his own hands and feet with it, after the manner that malefactors were wont to be bound when they were apprehended; and, to interpret the meaning of this significant action, he said, The Holy Ghost, by whose immediate suggestion I now speak, assures me that, when the owner of this girdle arrives at *Jerusalem*, the *Jews* there will certainly occasion his being bound like a criminal, (*ver.* 33. and *chap.* xlii. 25.) as I have now bound my hands and feet in your sight; and will give him up to the power of the *Romans*, to abuse him, as they did his great Lord and Master himself. (*Matth.* xx. 19.)

12 And when we heard him speak so peremptorily of the terrible things that would befall the apostle, we, who were of his company, and the disciples of that city, together with us, were so deeply affected at it, and so tenderly concerned for his liberty, ease, and safety, that we all joined in earnestly begging of him, even with tears in our eyes, (*ver.* 13.) that he would by no means think of pursuing his journey to *Jerusalem*, and run a life, so important as his, into unavoidable danger there.

13 But (†) *Paul* replied, with great presence of mind, with a noble fortitude of spirit, and with a good degree of generous warmth and holy resentment, as our Lord did to *Peter* when he would have dissuaded him from his sufferings, (*Matth.* xvi. 23.) What are ye doing? or what would ye be at, my dear friends and brethren, while ye thus lament, and cry, and remonstrate against the will of God, and almost overwhelm my soul with grief, to see the timorousness, weakness, and carnality of your temper, together with your fond affection for me; and to think how ye would throw temptations in my way, to stagger my courage and resolution in the cause of Christ, and how impossible it is to acquit myself to God, and my own conscience, and at the same time to oblige you? For, though I heartily love you, and should be willing, if the Lord

see

N O T E.

* *Agabus*, it seems, first bound his hands, and afterwards loosing them, bound his feet with *Paul's* girdle, in an emblematical way, to impress the spectators with a moving sense of the ill treatment the apostle would meet with, which was prophetically represented by that action, in like manner as *Isaiah* was ordered to walk naked and barefoot, for a sign

and wonder upon Egypt and Ethiopia, to intimate their captivity by the *Assyrian*. (*Isa.* xx. 3, &c.) and as *Jeremiah* was ordered to put hands and yokes upon his neck, to signify that the kings of *Edom*, *Moab*, &c. should be brought into subjection to the king of *Babylon*, (*Jer.* xlvii. 2, &c.)

am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

15 And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem.

16 There went with us also certain of the disciples of Cesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

see meet, to continue in the body for your edification, and the common benefit of the church; yet, as to myself, who can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me, (Phil. iv. 13.) I stand prepared, not only to submit to the severest bonds, but even cheerfully to lay down my life itself, as a martyr, at Jerusalem, for the honour of my dear Lord and Saviour, and for sealing his gospel with my own blood.

14 And when we found that he could not be prevailed upon to alter his purpose, by all our melting tears and pressing importunity, we no longer persisted in our mournings and intreaties; but acquiesced in his determination to go forwards, at all adventures, saying, Not our wills, but the sovereign and holy will of the Lord Jesus, (ver. 13.) be done, in that way and manner, whatever it be, as shall be most for his glory and the good of his church.

15 And at the expiration of the time that was thought proper for us to tarry at Cesarea, we packed up our baggage *, and setting out with it, for the remainder of our journey, went up to Jerusalem; those of us that were of Paul's company, resolving to attend and assist him, as far as God should enable us, in his dangers.

16 There likewise accompanied us some of the Christians that dwelt at Cesarea, to conduct and accommodate us in our way; and as lodgings were scarce at Jerusalem, during the festival, they brought along with them a native of Cyprus, whose name was Mnason, a good old disciple of Jesus Christ, venerable for his age, and his long standing with reputation and honour in the profession of the gospel, that we might be entertained at his house, who ordinarily resided at Jerusalem, and was ready to receive and own us, notwithstanding all that he had heard of the great sufferings Paul would be exposed to. (ver. 11.)

17 And when we arrived at Jerusalem, the faithful brethren there, ministers and Christians, rejoiced to see us, and gave us a most affectionate and hearty welcome, both on account of the apostle's great worth, and of the benevolence we brought for the relief of their poor.

18 And

N O T E.

* Some think that they loaded mules, or other carriages, with their baggage, which probably contained the money they were to distribute among the poor Christians at Jerusalem; and others, that they carried them upon their own backs, as soldiers do their knapsacks. But be that as it will, this being the first time that taking up their carriages:

or packs (αὐτῶν τὰ ἑλκῶματα) is mentioned, it seems as if their luggage came by sea from Ptolemais to Cesarea, while they themselves, or most of them at least, having finished their voyage, (ver. 7.) performed that part of their journey, as they afterwards did all the remainder of it to Jerusalem by land.

18 And the day following, Paul went in with us unto James : and all the elders were present.

19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.

20 And when they heard it they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law.

21 And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest

18 And as James was the only apostle then presiding over the church at this great city, Paul went the very next day to make him a visit, taking us, his associates, along with him, to be witnesses of, and edified by, what might pass between them : And all the elders of the church, (see the note on chap. xi. 30.) having received notice of our coming, were present at this meeting.

19 And after Paul, in his usual manner, had paid his friendly and religious respects to them, he went over the particulars, one by one, (*καὶ ἑκαστον*) of the great and glorious things which God had done in the conversion of the Gentiles, and in the settlement of churches among them at various places, through Greece and the lesser Asia, by means of his ministry, since he was last at Jerusalem. (See the note on chap. xv. 3.)

20 And when they heard the surprising and delightful account, the apostle James himself, as well as the other elders, instead of envying his great success, ascribed all glory to the Lord Jesus, and to God through him, as the author of it ; owned it to be the effect of his victorious and sovereign grace ; rejoiced in it, and blessed his holy name for it : And then, that this apostle of the Gentiles might rejoice and glorify God with them, and mutual affection might be established between them, they, in their turn, reported what a remarkable progress the gospel had made from small beginnings among their own countrymen ; and thereupon they gave him a piece of advice, saying, By what you yourself, dear brother, may have observed, and have now heard from us, you cannot but be very sensible, that though the bulk of our nation still continue obstinately in unbelief, yet as there is a remnant of them according to the election of grace, (*Rom. xi. 5, 7.*) so there are many myriads, (*μυριάδες*) or tens of thousands of Jews, that have embraced the faith of Christ, receiving him as the true Messiah, and depending on his merit and righteousness for justification before God : And yet you must needs know, that, through early prejudices, they are generally exceeding fond of the law of Moses, as not absolutely abrogated ; and are zealous sticklers for Jewish converts still continuing to observe its rites and ceremonies, as things that have been undoubtedly of divine appointment for many ages past. (See the note on chap. xvi. 3.)

21 Now (*ἵνα*) they have had informations against you from your inveterate enemies, (*ver. 27, 28.*) that, wheresoever you go, you not only excite the Gentile converts

teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying, 'That they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

21 What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come.

23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: we have four men which have a vow on them:

24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing but that there

converts from all compliance with the law of *Moses*; but that you likewise teach all those *Jews* themselves, who dwell among them, to throw off its observances entirely at once, and so lead them into an utter apostacy from it; (*ἀπορρίπτειν τὰς ἐθνεύς*) telling them that they ought no longer to circumcise their children, nor to conform themselves, in their lives and conversation, to the long established and universally practised usages of our forefathers, or to the ordinances and customs which are prescribed in that divine law.

22 What therefore is to be done in this case, to take off their prejudices, and conciliate their favour to you, and their good opinion of your labours and success among the *Gentiles*, as also to dispose them to a kind acceptance of the liberality of the churches, which you have brought for the relief of our poor? The whole company of them, that have heard this charge against you, unless they be someway pacified, will certainly gather together, in a tumultuous manner to complain of you, and quarrel with you on that account: For, as you are so noted and public a person, it is impossible but that, by one means or other, they will hear of your being come hither.

23, 24 Permit us therefore to tell you what method we think may be best for you to go into, to quiet their minds; and take off those prejudices that would hinder their attending upon, and profiting by your ministry; there are four converted *Jews* amongst us, that have voluntarily brought themselves under a vow of *Nazaritism* for a certain time, which is near expiring. Now our advice is, that you would take to you these men, whose case is publicly known, and go through the remaining rites of purification with them, (*Numb. vi. 2, —8.*) * and then be at joint expence with them in providing sacrifices, that, at the end of the days of their separation, their heads may be shaved, and the offerings may be made for you all, as required on such occasions; (*Numb. vi. 13, —20.*) and so, by this manner of your proceeding, all, that are now prejudiced against you, may be convinced that those reports are not true †, which have

N O T E S.

* It seems to me as if these elders knew of *Paul's* having taken a voluntary vow of a like nature upon himself, at the expiration of which he had shaven his head in *Cenchrea*; (see the two last notes on chap. xviii. 18.) and therefore they advised him to join in company with these four persons, and to every thing else with them that was enjoined in that case by the law, till their heads were also shorn; and

then to go and publicly offer the required sacrifices together with them.

† Though the apostle *Paul*, on all occasions, zealously opposed an observation of the *Mosaic* law, as necessary to, or having any concern in the great business of justification; and though, as far as the *Jews* were able to bear it, he graciously shewed that it was fulfilled by the death of *Christ*, and so was no

thou thyself also walked orderly, and keepst the law.

have been made to them about your utterly preaching down the law of *Moses*, as though the *Jews* themselves must, on no account whatsoever, observe any of its ritual ordinances; but that even you yourself, being a *Jew*, walk regularly according to its venerable customs, and are, in your own practice, on proper occasions, an observer of its rites, and therefore cannot be supposed absolutely to forbid other *Jews* doing the same.

25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded, that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled and from fornication.

25 But (as) as to those *Gentiles* who have been brought over to the faith of Christ, you very well know, that, when you was formerly here, we, upon mature deliberation, in a full assembly of apostles and elders, with the whole church, (*chap. xv. 22.*) unanimously agreed, and (*ἐπιστάμεν*) sent letters by you and *Barnabas* to them, in which, to preserve their Christian liberty, we declared our sentiments, as under the conduct of the Holy Ghost, and we are still of the same mind, that they ought not to be obliged to any such thing as a subjection to *Mosaic* ordinances; except that we thought it necessary, in present circumstances, to insist on their abstaining from meats and drinks offered to idols, and from eating of blood, and the flesh of animals that have been suffocated or choked to death, without taking away their blood, as well as on their keeping at the utmost distance from the moral impurity of unlawful embraces. (See the paraphrase and notes on *Chap. xv. 20.*)

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered, for every one of them.

26 Then *Paul*, according to their advice, in condescension to such as were weak in the faith, that he might win upon them, took these four men along with him; and the next day beginning to observe the rites of purification as a *Nazarite*, he went in company with them into the temple, not in a tumultuous way, (*chap. xxiv. 18.*) but very peaceably and orderly, to give notice to the priest, that they had obliged themselves to a religious separation for seven days, which they would accomplish with the usual rites and ceremonies, even till the time that the sacrifices were to be offered for himself, and each of his partners in that service, according to the law. (See the two last notes on *Chap. xviii. 18.*)

27 But

N O T E.

longer blinding in point of conscience; yet he never asserted, as his enemies falsely alleged, that it was absolutely unlawful for a *Jew* to comply with its ceremonial rites, in any cases, or on any account whatsoever; but rather left it as an indifferent matter, or, at least, as what the wisdom, goodness, and condescension of God to them, tolerated for the present, and as what they might lawfully observe in the view of national civil rites, during

the continuance of the *Jewish* polity, till they, by degrees, should be thoroughly brought out from their conscientious scruples, and confirmed prejudices, and till, at length, many of these rites would become impracticable by the destruction of the temple, and of their political state: See the note on *chap. xvi. 3.* and *Dr. Leland's divine authority*, &c. vol. I. p. 404, — 411.

27 And, when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him.

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: this is the man that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and, farther, brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

29 (For they had seen before with him in the city, Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple;

27 But (2c) when the seven days designed for their separation, were about to be fulfilled, the unbelieving Jews, that dwelt in the *lesser Asia*, and came to celebrate the passover from that country, where Paul had spent about three years in preaching, and had met with great opposition from them, (*chap. xix. 9. and xx. 31.*) some of these spying him in the inner court of the temple, which none but *Israelites* were suffered to enter, took that occasion to incense the people against him; and, raising a mob, seized him with fury and violence, to the manifest profanation of the sanctuary, and of the solemnities of worship, for the honour of which they pretended to have the greatest concern;

28 Making at the same time a hideous clamour, and calling out to the multitude, Ye men of *Israel*, the peculiar people of God, if ye have any spirit in you, any zeal for your religion and country, or any veneration for this sacred place, come hither; aid and assist us with all your might: This is the man, whom we have told you of, (*ver. 21.*) that makes it his business, wherever he goes among the nations, to preach such pestilential doctrine to all he can meet with, as is directly contrary to the rites and privileges of the *Jewish* church and state, to the antient and divine law of *Moses*, and even to the honour and dignity of this holy temple: Yea, furthermore, (*ver. 28.*) not content with this, he has been so audacious, as to profane this house, which is consecrated to our God, honoured with the ark and mercy-seat, and other symbols of his special presence, and peculiarly appropriated to *our* religious use, by bringing uncircumcised *Gentiles* into its sacred inclosure, as though it were to be prostituted to the vilest of sinners.

29 Their pretence for charging him with having introduced uncircumcised *Gentiles* thither was, that they had before seen him in the city, in company with *Trophimus* an *Ephesian* *Gentile* convert, and one of the messengers of the *Asiatic* churches, (*chap. xx. 4.*) and so, without examining any further, they unjustly and maliciously asserted, as taking it for granted without any proof, that Paul had brought him, with some others of like character, into the temple along with himself, tho' in fact, it was no such thing.

30 Hereupon the whole city was in an uproar, and the people ran tumultuously together in vast crowds, to see and hear what was the matter: And finding that Paul was the man exclaimed against, they furiously fell upon him, with an intent to kill him; and, that the temple might not be defiled with his blood, they dragged

ple : and forth-
with the doors
were shut.

31 And as they
went about to kill
him, tidings came
unto the chief
captain of the
band, that all Je-
rusalem was in an
uprour :

32 Who im-
mediately took
soldiers, and cen-
turions, and ran
down unto them ;
and, when they
saw the chief
captain and the
soldiers, they left
beating of Paul.

33 Then the
chief captain came
near, and took
him, and com-
manded him to
be bound with
two chains ; and
demanded who he
was, and what he
had done.

34 And some
cried one thing,
some another, a-
mong the multi-
tude : and when
he could not know
the certainty, for
the tumult, he
commanded him
to be carried into
the castle.

ged him out of it by main force ; and immediately its doors were shut, to prevent any further confusion or disorder there : So great was their bigotry for ceremonial rites, at the same time that they made no scruple of murdering one of the best of men, without any just provocation.

31 And while, in the heat of their rage, they were thirsting after his blood, and endeavouring in a riotous manner to dispatch him, as a rebel against their law, word was brought to *Claudius Lyfias*, (*chap. xxiii. 26.*) the Roman officer (*χιλίας*) who had a thousand soldiers under his command, and kept garrison in the tower of *Antonia*, to prevent insurrections, especially at the public feasts, (*see the note on chap. iv. 1.*) he was told that the people of *Jerusalem* were all up in arms, and in the utmost confusion.

32 Upon this, to keep the peace of the city, he instantly took along with him a detachment of soldiers, and of centurions, or commanders of hundreds, that were officers under him, and marched down from the castle to the mob with all possible expedition ; and as soon as they saw the head-officer, and the soldiers at his heels, they ceased from beating *Paul*, and from pursuing their barbarous design of putting him to death by club law, for fear of the terrible consequences to themselves. So seasonably did the providence of God appear, for the preservation of his faithful servant at the most critical juncture.

33 Then the chief captain, having made his way to *Paul*, took him into custody, that he might be screened from popular fury, and be examined, and proceeded against, if there should be occasion, according to law ; and concluding, for the present, that the man against whom the people were so outrageous must needs be very criminal, he, according to *Agabus's* prophecy, (*ver. 11.*) ordered two chains to be clapt upon him, for the greater security and ignominy, and for satisfying the populace, that he had not taken him out of their hands with a design to discharge him ; and then he asked them who his prisoner was, and what offence he had been guilty of.

34 But (41) as they were all in a rage, and did not know one another's mind, some of this vast body of people clamoured against him for one crime, and others for another : And when the chief captain found that he could get no satisfaction, about the real cause of their being so bitterly incensed against him, through the confusion they were in, he ordered the centurions and their bands to conduct him, as his prisoner, for further examination

mination and security, to the tower, or castle of *Antonia*, which was under his own jurisdiction.

35 And, when he came upon the stairs, so it was that he was borne of the soldiers, for the violence of the people.

35 And when *Paul* began to ascend the stairs, which joined to a portico of the temple, and led up from thence to the castle *, the soldiers were forced to carry him in their arms, by reason of the rudeness and outrage of the mob, that they, who were ready to tear him to pieces, might not abuse him, and that, being of low stature, he might not be smothered and crushed to death in the crowd.

36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

36 For a vast multitude of people pushed and pressed up towards him, crying out, with the utmost indignation against him, as men of the same wicked spirit did against our blessed Lord, (*John* xix. 15.) Away with this fellow out of our sight; (*sic autem*) hang him up; we cannot bear to see him live.

37 And as *Paul* was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? who said, Canst thou speak Greek?

37 And when *Paul* was brought toward the upper part of the stairs, near the entrance into the castle, he addressed himself in a respectful manner to the chief captain, saying, in the *Greek* language, Sir, will you please to suffer me (*ἵνα*) just to speak a word or two, to let you know who, and what I am, which you could get no certain account of from the people, and to pacify them. The chief captain answered with surprize, What then! do you understand *Greek* so well as to be able to talk it?

38 Art not thou that Egyptian which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

38 Are you not that infamous *Egyptian* impostor, who, pretending to be a prophet, came hither about two or three years ago, and made an insurrection among the people, and heading four thousand men, a pack of ruffians and cut-throats, let them out of *Jerusalem* into the wilderness, from whence, his army having increased to a great multitude †, he returned with a design of surprising this great city; but was defeated, though he himself made his escape? The violent exclamations of the people against you make me suspect that you are the man, and that they have discovered some secret attempts to act the same rebellious part over again.

39 But *Paul* said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen

39 *Paul* replied, with great meekness and composure of mind; No, Sir; I am neither an *Egyptian*, nor a ring-leader of rebels; but am by nation a *Jew*, and a native of *Tarsus*, the chief city of *Cilicia*; a freeman of that

N O T E S.

* *Josephus* says, the castle of *Antonia* was situated on a rock fifty cubits high, at that corner of the outward temple where the western and northern porticoes joined, and that there were stairs descending from it to each of them. *Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 5. § 8.*

† This army afterwards increased to thirty

thousand. See Dr. *Lardner's* account of it from *Josephus*, with various methods of taking off the difficulty that arises from the disagreement there is between *Josephus* and our sacred historian in their respective narratives of this fact. *Credibil. gosp. hist. vol. II. p. 371, &c.*

zen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

that city, which, far from being ignoble, (*αἰὲν*) is of great renown for learning, riches, and loyalty: And the favour I would humbly beg of you is, that, though I am your prisoner, I may be permitted to speak a few words for clearing up my character to the people, to whom I have been falsely and maliciously accused.

40 And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckened with the hand unto the people: and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

40 And when *Lyfias* had granted him free leave to say what might be proper in his own defence, *Paul*, standing upon an upper part of the stairs, and so in a convenient situation to be heard, made signs to the people with his hand, to intimate that he was going to speak, and desired audience: And when, partly from curiosity, and partly out of respect to the chief captain, an universal and profound silence was procured, he lifted up his voice, and addressing them in that dialect of the *Hebrew* language which was most commonly used and understood at *Jerusalem*, made a noble speech in vindication of himself, and of his glorious cause, to the following effect.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How pleasant is it to travel up and down under the guidance and protection of a good providence, and to meet with Christian friends in the towns and cities where we come! And how concerned should persons of this character be, to spend their time together in religious converse and advice, for mutual edification, about the great things that God has done by the ministration of his servants, in one place and another, for the conversion of sinners, and the establishment of the churches of Christ! This is matter of joy and praise; and all upright ministers and people will heartily glorify God for it, though it may far exceed any success that they themselves have been honoured with. They ought to receive one another gladly, and should meet and part with Christian, as well as civil salutations, and as opportunities and occasions offer, with solemn prayer. But, O how touching is the thought, when, though the spirit of prophecy is ceased, which was always answered in events, they have great reason to fear, that they shall never see one another's faces again; and especially that those, whom they dearly love and honour for their eminent usefulness to the church, are going to suffer bonds and cruelties, and death itself, for the sake of Christ! And with what tenderness are his servants affected, almost to the breaking of their hearts, when their fellow-Christians weep and mourn, and would dissuade them from the way of duty, to avoid the sufferings that God calls them to! But it is the noblest fortitude and Christian heroism, in the midst of such melting circumstances and formidable prospects, to be ready, not only to be bound, but even to die for the name of the Lord Jesus; and in such cases, it becomes the lovers of Christ to acquiesce, and say, The will of the Lord be done. But, alas! how many are the weaknesses and prejudices of thousands that believe; and how difficult is it to know the due measures of condescension to them on one hand, in things that, all circumstances considered, are as indifferent as *Mosaic* ceremonies were for a time to the *Jews*; or of zealously appearing for Christian liberty on the other! And how uncertain are the events of the most cautious and prudent conduct in such cases! However, this we may be sure of, that there is no end of complying with ignorant, determined, and ungodly bigots, who, right or wrong, will be enraged against the true ministers of Jesus Christ, and maliciously and falsely accuse them, rather than not incense people against them. How violent and threatening is their fury; and what confusion and injustice is there in popular tumults! But in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen. How seasonably doth he

appear

appear and raise up instruments, even from among them that do not know him, for delivering his servants, as he did *Paul*, by means of the chief captain, out of the hands of wicked and unreasonable men, and for accomplishing the great purposes of his providence in spreading the gospel, and giving them opportunities and assistances to vindicate their own innocence, and plead for Christ, as well as for themselves!

C H A P. XXII.

Paul, in making his defence at Jerusalem, gives an account of his Jewish extract, education, and former bigotry, 1,—5. Of his miraculous conversion, 6,—11. Of his being baptised and further instructed by Ananias, 12,—16. And of his being afterwards called immediately from heaven to the apostleship among the Gentiles, 17,—21. Hereupon the Jews fly into a violent passion against him, 22, 23. He is rescued a second time out of their hands by the chief captain, and ordered to be bound and examined by scourging, 24, 25. But he, claiming the privilege of a Roman, escapes the torture, and is free from his bonds, and brought before the council, 26,—30.

TEXT.

MEN, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.

PARAPHRASE.

MEN, brethren, and fathers, whatever your thoughts be of me, I consider you as rational creatures, capable of reflecting on what I am about to say, and of exercising humanity toward me; I likewise regard you with the affection of a brother, as we all are of the same Jewish nation, hope in the same promises, and worship the same God; and I maintain the duty and reverence of a son toward those of you that are of superior character, as fathers in *Israel*, who, as is to be supposed, have a paternal affection for descendents from among yourselves: I beseech you therefore to attend, with diligence, impartiality, and candor, in the apology, (*ἀπολογία*) I would now offer to every one of you for myself, and the doctrine I preach and practise.

1 (And, when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,)

2 And when they heard that he addressed and called out to them, (*ἀποστείλοντι*) in the *Hebrew* dialect, which they familiarly understood, and was indeed their own mother tongue, and by his speaking in which they perceived that he was not an *Hellenist*, but a *Hebrew Jew*, they were the rather silent, that they might listen to him: And having thus engaged their attention, he proceeded in the following manner:

3 I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought

3 I am not only a man, who, as such, ought to have the liberty of judging for myself, and to be treated with justice and compassion; but, as is well known, I am really one of your own nation, a true-born Jew; the place of my nativity was *Tarsus*, the metropolis of *Cilicia*, but I was bred and educated in this very city, the chief

brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women,

5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.

chief seat of Jewish learning and religion, under the tuition of the celebrated *Gamaliel*, (*chap. v. 34.*) that eminent Pharisee, and profound doctor of the law *, at whose feet I sat, as one of his disciples, to receive his instructions with a humble and teachable disposition of mind; and by him was I led into the most critical and accurate (*xxxix. ἀκριβέως*) principles and institutions of the divine law, which was given to, and observed by, our ancient fathers; yea, being myself a Pharisee, (*chap. xxvi. 5.*) I learnt, and thoroughly understood and embraced, the traditions of the elders, that have been handed down from age to age, (*Gal. i. 14.*) and was exceeding zealous for all those things, with a conscience toward God, as ye now generally are, and to as great a degree as any of you can pretend to be at this very day.

4 And so flagrant was my zeal, that, as to the Christian religion, which I now, through divine grace, have received, and am authorized to preach, I resolved, if possible, to root it out of the church and the world, and rather to die myself, than to suffer it to live; and, in the madness of my zeal, I breathed out threatnings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord Jesus, wherever I went, (*chap. ix. 1.*) insomuch that I persecuted them unto death, seizing and binding them, like criminals, and haling them to jails, that they might either recant, or die for their principles and profession, whether they were men or women, without shewing the least compassion even to the tender sex.

5 This is an undeniable fact, as even the high-priest himself, and the whole body of that venerable assembly, the great sanhedrim, can testify concerning me, if they please; to whom I was well known as an active famous zealot, the fittest that could be met with to serve such a turn; and from whom, upon my applying to them, I received warrants, (*chap. ix. 2.*) which they wrote, and directed to their brethren, the Jewish rulers of the synagogues at *Damascus*, to be aiding and assisting to me in the unmerciful work for which I was sent: And with these severe credentials, I set out for that city to apprehend all the Christians I could light on there, and bring them bound along with me back to *Jerusalem*, in order to their being proceeded against to the utmost extremity, as apostates and blasphemers of the law of *Moses*. And, had I been left to myself, I should certainly have made them feel the weight of my fury, and still have

N O T E

* The apostle here refers to the Jewish custom in their schools, where the learners used to sit either upon benches, or upon mats

on the floor, at the feet of their masters, whose seats were elevated above them.

have continued as inveterate an enemy to the gospel, and the professors of it, as ever; all my notions, temper, and prejudices, secular interests and honour, then lying directly against it.

6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

6 But (24) the Lord Jesus himself interposed, in a most immediate and extraordinary manner, to prevent me with his mercy, and to make a happy change upon my heart and views; for while I was travelling on the road, with a full resolution to execute my commission with the utmost rigour, and drew near to *Damascus*, about the middle of a most memorable day, all on a sudden an exceeding great, supernatural, and divine light darted down from heaven, and shone with surprizing brightness upon, and all around me, far surpassing that of the sun, in its unclouded lustre, at high noon. (*Chap. xxvi. 13.*)

7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

7 And I thereupon, through terror and amazement, immediately fell down to the earth, as unable to bear the heavenly and awful splendor; and at the same time I heard a voice distinctly pronouncing my name, and saying to me, with great earnestness, in the *Hebrew* tongue, (*chap. xxvi. 14.*) *Saul, Saul*, why persecutest thou me? Meaning, as *Lasterwards* understood it, Why are you such a desperate enemy to me, and so violently enraged against my members, as to be set upon cruelly persecuting them whom I esteem as parts of myself, whose cause and mine is one and the same; and whose afflictions for my sake I resent, as if they were laid upon myself personally? What good reason can you have for this? Or what but ruin to your own soul can you get by it?

8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.

8 Then, as soon as I could recover myself, I replied, under full conviction of its being a divine voice particularly directed to myself, Lord, who art thou, that speakest in this solemn and moving language to me? Let me, I beseech thee, know thy name, and wherein I persecute thee. In answer hereunto he said to me, I am the true Messiah, the only Saviour, who, in the days of my flesh, was called, by way of derision and contempt, *Jesus of Nazareth*; and, as if it were not enough that I was abused in person, and crucified by men of your malignant spirit, you are now persecuting me in my disciples, and in my religion, name, and character, while I myself am got beyond your reach.

9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light,

9 And as it is impossible that I should be mistaken in what I thus plainly saw and heard; so my fellow-travellers, who were to assist me in my persecuting design, can bear me witness, that this was no fancy or delusion;

light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.

10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwell there,

tion: For they themselves really saw the illustrious light, and were so exceedingly terrified at it, that they fell down to the ground as well as I, (*chap. xvi. 14.*) and they heard the sound of a voice, but did not hear the articulate words of him that spoke, so as to understand their meaning, which were directed and conveyed in their distinct pronounciation, not to them, but me. (See the note on *chap. ix. 7.*)

10 Then, being thoroughly satisfied of the reality and importance of what the dear and glorious Saviour said to me, and being deeply humbled under a sense of my own guilt and vileness, and afraid of the terrible consequence, I replied in the anguish of my soul, Lord, I am quite confounded at the thought of what I have been doing against thee; but am now ready to hear and obey whatsoever thou shalt command me; I humbly intreat thee to tell me what course thou wouldst have me take to undo, as much as possible, what I have done, and to escape thy wrath, and find favour with thee. In answer to which, the Lord Jesus spoke distinctly to me again, saying, Get up from your prostration on the ground, and pursue your journey to *Damascus*, whither you were going with the worst of errands; and there you shall have an account from a certain man, under my special direction, of every thing that, for the present, I have appointed you to be acquainted with, and to put in practice, for my honour, and the good of your own and others souls.

11 And as I was struck blind by the dazzling lustre which darted directly upon mine eyes, and was too strong for them to bear, some of the company, whose sight was not affected like mine, taking compassion upon me, acted the part of kind guides; and under their conduct, who led me by the hand, I arrived safely at *Damascus*, for much better purposes than those with which I set out for that city.

12 Accordingly, in the event, three days after I came thither, (*chap. ix. 9.*) a certain man, *Ananias* by name, who was a truly religious person*, and a devout observer of the law of *Moses*, and yet a faithful believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who was a man of considerable note, and of an unblemished character, among all the Jews that resided in those parts.

13 This

N O T E.

* A devout man according to the law (*εὐσεβὴς κατὰ νόμον*) seems to be the description of a proselyte of righteousness; and yet as *Ananias* afterwards, *ver. 13, 14.* calls *Saul* his brother, and the God of *Israel*, the God of our fathers, I rather incline to think

that he was a converted Jew; but have formed the paraphrase in such a manner, as may be applied to a person of either of these characters, without determining one way or the other.

13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

13 This excellent man, being directed by an extraordinary vision from heaven, in which the Lord Jesus told him the circumstances of my case, (*chap. ix. 10.*—*16.*) came to me, and standing before me, and laying his hands upon me, (*chap. ix. 17.*) accosted me after the following manner, My dear brother *Saul*, though you have hitherto been a terror to our churches, I now love and receive you as one whom I know Christ has received into his family; and I rejoice to tell you, that our great Lord has sent me with a commission to restore your sight, which you lost by the splendor of his glory, that overpowered it in your way to this place; accordingly, in his name, and by his authority, I now say unto you, (*ἀναβλεψόν*) Lift up your eyes, receive your sight again, and look at me: And at that very instant, through the power of Christ which accompanied his words, I looked up; and something, like fish-scales, falling from mine eyes, (*chap. ix. 18.*) I beheld him as plainly as ever I could have done before.

14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.

14 Then he delivered his message, with which he was charged for my further instruction, saying to this effect, The only living and true God, who made his covenant with, and was adored by, our venerable ancestors, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, and by all our godly predecessors, has, in his eternal counsels, graciously chosen you for himself, that you might be brought to the saving knowledge of his mind and will, in and through his Son; and that, in due time, you might have a miraculous sight of the person of that Jesus who met and spoke to you on the road, and is, by way of eminence in himself, and in his performances, the just or righteous One, how much soever you, and others of his enemies, have reviled and treated him as an impostor; and that you might again hear his voice, and receive a further commission, and more abundant revelations from his own mouth. (*Gal. i. 12.*)

15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

15 For I am commanded to tell you, that you shall have this, as well as all other peculiar qualifications of an apostle, (see the note on *chap. ix. 17.*) in order to your publicly testifying unto all nations, and all ranks of people among them, (*chap. ix. 15.*) both what you have already been, and hereafter shall be an eye and ear-witness of.

16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away

16 And now, Why should you any longer defer devoting yourself to him and his service, according to his institution? Up, and be doing; set forward for your important work; and, in order hereunto, visibly own and honour him, by being baptized in his name, in obedience

way thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

dience to his authority, and in testimony of your faith in him, and of your being cleansed from the guilt and defilement of your sins, by pardoning and sanctifying grace; and let your religious and fiducial addresses be made to him, as the only Saviour, that all the covenant-blessings may be conferred on you, and all the duties performed by you, which are signified by Christian baptism.

16 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;

17 Now, (21) according to the forementioned prediction of *Ananias*, (ver. 14, 15.) it was graciously ordered several years afterwards, (see the note on chap. ix. 17.) that when I returned to *Jerusalem*, even while I was one day pouring out my heart before the Lord by solemn prayer in the temple, (which shews my veneration for that holy place) I then fell into a divine ecstasy, my eyes being open and awake, to behold the representations that in a supernatural way were made to me.

18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

18 And I therein evidently saw the person of the Lord Jesus himself, and plainly heard him saying to me in words of the following purport, Go forthwith out of the temple; and, instead of staying to preach the gospel at *Jerusalem*, be as expeditious as you can, in departing from it to carry on your work elsewhere; For the inhabitants of this city are so perverse and prejudiced against me, that they will not attend to, and believe the doctrine of salvation, which I have made known to you, and which chiefly consists in the testimony that you, as an apostle, are to bear to my name, as the crucified, risen, and exalted Saviour.

19 And I said, Lord, they know that I am imprisoned, and beat in every synagogue, and that they believed on thee.

19 Then I, surprised at this declaration, and loth to entertain any hard thoughts of my dear countrymen, and kindred after the flesh, whose salvation I passionately long for, (*Rom. ix. 1,—3.*) humbly pleaded in their favour, saying, Lord, I had great hopes of being very useful to this people, and of their regarding thy gracious message, as delivered by me, rather than by others of thine apostles: For it is universally known among them, that I formerly was such a blind, bigotted, and bitter enemy to thee, and to thy interest, cause, and people, as to be uncommonly vigorous and active in searching out the believers on thy name, and dragging them to prisons; and in bringing them to be infamously treated, and scourged in every synagogue, wherever I came and found any of them.

20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was

20 And particularly when thy servant *Stephen*, that eminent disciple and evangelist, who was the first martyr for thee, was stoned to death, it is notorious, especially here

was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21 And he said unto me, Depart : for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lift up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth : for it is not fit that he should live.

23 And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air,

24 The chief captain commanded

here at *Jerusalem*, that I was present as one of the most zealous to vote against him, and to concur in bringing him to his tragical end ; and that, to shew how mightily I was pleased with it, I took care of the garments of those who stript themselves for the murderous execution. This people therefore have the greatest reason to believe, that it is merely from a supernatural change, which thy all-conquering grace has made upon my heart, that I now believe in thee, and preach the faith, which, as they all know, I once destroyed ; and so they will probably be the better disposed to hear me.

21 And yet, after all that I could say in good will to my brethren the *Jews*, he, who knows the hearts of all men, and them that are his, and has a right to send his gospel, and make it effectual wherever he pleases, saw that they would rather count me an apostate, and be the more irritated against me, for espousing his cause, than be induced to regard my testimony ; and therefore he still insisted, that I should quit *Jerusalem* without any further disputing, or delay : For, said he, I will send you from hence into far distant countries, to turn the idolatrous *Gentiles* ; from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. (*Chap. xxvi. 18.*)

22 The *Jews* heard all this discourse with tolerable patience, till the apostle came to mention his being sent to the *Gentiles* ; but then they were so terribly exasperated, that, to drown his voice, and express their indignation and scorn at the thought of such favours being shewn to mere heathens, whom they had in the utmost abhorrence and contempt, they cried out in a tumultuous manner, with abundance of noise and fury, Away with this worthless, pestilent fellow, who talks of preferring idolators to us, the only people of God : We cannot bear to look at him ; let him be hanged up and cut off from the earth : For it is by no means reasonable, fit, or safe, that such a wretch should live any longer.

23 And while they thus outrageously clamoured against him, and some of them, in token of their utmost detestation, stript off their garments, in order to their stoning him to death, as an apostate and blasphemer ; and others threw dust about in the air, as if they would smother and bury him alive ; and all of them were so mad against him, that they knew not how to contain themselves, and nothing less was to be expected, than that they would immediately murder him.

24 *Lyfias* the Roman officer, partly from a principle of honour, partly from fear of ill consequences to himself,

manded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

self, in case he should suffer *Paul* to be massacred in his presence, and partly from apprehensions that he might possibly have been guilty of some notorious crime, and apparently under the influence of the over-ruling providence of God, who takes care of his servants in times of the greatest danger, ordered his soldiers to rescue him out of their hands, and conduct him forwards into the tower of *Antonia*; and then instead of calling his adversaries to a severe account, as they deserved, for their tumultuous, unlawful, and shameful treatment of his prisoner, he unjustly ordered him to be strictly examined under the lash, to make him accuse himself, and to extort a confession from his own mouth, of what incensing misdemeanors were chargeable upon him, that by this cruel means he might be satisfied about the reason of the violent rage of the *Jews*, in which they with so much indignation cried out, Shame upon him; kill him out of the way.

25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and undcondemned?

25 But while the soldiers were stretching out his arms, and fastening him with leathern straps to the whipping post, (*ὡς δὲ ἀποστείλει αὐτοὺς τὸν ἄνθρωπον*) in order to his being scourged with rods *, the apostle turning to the centurion, who stood by to see his superior officer's commands executed, said to him, with a calm dispassionate temper, and not merely for his own sake, who *was ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus*, (*chap. xxi. 13.*) but chiefly for the cause of righteousness and civil liberty, which he on all occasions strenuously asserted, (*chap. xvi. 37. and xxv. 10, 11.*) Have you any legal authority to put a *Roman* citizen to the torture, in this ignominious manner, to force a confession from him, and that before he has been tried, convicted, and condemned for any fault?

26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.

26 The centurion, hearing him speak in this manner, was startled at it; and, going immediately to his captain, said, It will be necessary, Sir, to proceed with prudence, lenity, and caution, in what you order to be done to this man; it behoves you to take good care, that you do not bring yourself into a præmunire: For I perceive, by a question he put to me, that after all, he happens to be a freeman of *Rome*.

27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto

27 Then the chief captain being alarmed with fear, as knowing the severity of the *Roman* laws against those that should bind and scourge any of its citizens, especially

N O T E.

* A freeman of *Rome* might be bound with a chain, and beaten with a staff; but it was reckoned an unsufferable indignity bind him

with thongs, or scourge him with rods. See Dr. Lardner's *credibility of the gospel history*, vol. I. p. 479.

unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.

18 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free-born.

19 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

30 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed from him his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.

ally without a fair trial and legal condemnation, went and spoke courteously to Paul himself, saying, Be so good as to deal frankly with me. Are you indeed a freeman of Rome? Paul answered, Yes, Sir, I really am.

28 The chief captain replied, as being still more amazed at this, than he was that Paul could speak Greek, (chap. xxi. 37.) Since by what you yourself told me, and by your Hebrew speech, but now delivered to the people, (chap. xxi. 39, 40.) you seem to be a Jew, and by your appearance one can scarce think that you could purchase this dignity, which cost me a great sum of money, How came you by it? Paul answered, I had it not by redemption, but by birth †, as the son of a freeman.

29 Then Lyffias, believing that what Paul said was true, immediately ordered those that were going to examine him by scourging, to unbind and let him alone; which they accordingly did, and went their way, not without some fear that they had been too active in putting those indignities upon him: And when Lyffias, their chief commanding officer, came to know him to be a Roman citizen, he also was in a terrible fright, lest he himself should feel the severe resentments of the government, because he had rashly ordered him to be bound and beaten, before he had inquired into his character, or heard what he had to say in his own behalf.

30 And the next day, being desirous to know with certainty, and in the most unexceptionable manner, what the crimes were, that had so highly provoked the Jews, and that they could really lay to his prisoner's charge, he took a more prudent, equitable, and wary course than before, more unexceptionable in its own nature, more safe to himself, and as obliging as possible to the Jews: He set the apostle at liberty from his bonds, that he might not seem to prejudice him; and then called the chief-priests, (see the note on chap. ix. 14.) and the rest of the *sanhedrim* together, to hear and examine him in full council; and, bringing Paul down from the prison, placed him before them, that he might have free leave to speak for himself, and they to make their objections against him.

RECOL.

N O T E.

† Paul seems to have been free-born, not by virtue of his nativity at Tarsus, as has been supposed by many: For had that been a Roman colony, vested with the honour of the citizen-ship of Rome, Lyffias must have known it; and consequently could not have wondered how Paul came by it, since he had told him before, chap. xxi. 39. that he was a Jew of Tarsus. But, perhaps, he was born of ancestors that had obtained this privilege,

as several Jews had in those days, for some remarkable services to the commonwealth. See *ibid.* p. 483,—193. If so, Paul was one of those freemen whom the Romans called *Libertini*, as being the children of such as had been made free, in distinction from the *Liberti*, who had been made free themselves, and from the *ingeniti*, who were born of parents that had been always free. See Kennel's *Roman antiqu.* p. 97.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

With what prudence and temper, courage and faithfulness, is the cause of Christ to be maintained against its most malicious opposers! And alas, with what furious zeal are blind bigots inflamed against it, even to the persecuting of its professors unto death. But how much better is their sense of things, when God reaches their hearts by converting grace, which, in a spiritual sense, carries all the evidence of a shining light round about them, and of a voice speaking to them. Many indeed may see something of this light, and hear something confusedly of this voice, like Paul's companions in his journey, without thoroughly understanding them; but wherever God has really begun a good work in any souls, whether it be in the usual, or in an extraordinary way, he will lead them, by his providence, to the ordinary means of his appointment and blessing, to carry it on till they come to be acquainted with his will, relating to the further duties that lie before them, and till they come to know that he has chosen them for himself. And if, as was *Paul's* case, they have not been entered into the gospel-covenant in the days of their infancy, they ought to be baptised in token of their purgation from the guilt and pollution of their sins, by the blood and spirit of Christ; and they ought religiously and fiducially to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus, as a divine Saviour. He will shew them the way they should take; and if he calls them to holy ministrations, though they may be rejected by some, he will direct their course elsewhere, and open the hearts of others, though it be in distant countries, and among the most unlikely people to receive them. But O how impatient are self-conceited zealots, at the thoughts of the freedom and sovereignty of God's grace, in leaving them, and making its way to the most unworthy! And how obstinately do they shut their eyes against the most evident appearances of God's own interposing, by his Providence and Spirit, to send and succeed his gospel, among people of odious and despicable characters, like the idolatrous heathens! But when violent outrages, on this and such like accounts, threaten the lives of his faithful servants, his over-ruling Providence raises up instruments for their protection; in order to which, they may lawfully insist on their civil rights and privileges, as well as other men; and while they stand up for truth and liberty, they shall be owned of God, and often favoured with opportunities of defending his, and their own righteous cause.

C H A P. XXIII.

Paul, in the presence of the council at Jerusalem, solemnly professes his integrity, and has a sharp rencounter with the high priest, 1,—5. He prudently sets his adversaries at variance one with another, and so brings himself off, 6,—10. The Lord Jesus encourages him in a vision, against further troubles that he should meet with at Rome, 11. The Jews conspire against his life, 12,—15. Their wicked design is discovered to Lyfias, the chief captain, and he prevents the execution of it, by sending Paul under a strong guard to Felix the governor of Cæarea, 16,—35.

TEXT.

AND Paul earnestly beholding the council,

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Paul was brought before the sanhedrim, or great council, at Jerusalem, he looked with undaunted courage upon them; and, as by his former conversation with men of figure and learning, he knew many of their faces, and what their tenets were; he carefully viewed them all around him, to observe what num-

bers

cil, said, Men, and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.

bers there were of different sects among them, that he might order his cause before them, to the best advantage, for his own safety; and then addressed them in the following manner, Ye men and brethren, before whom I am convened to give an account of myself, and from whom I would hope for a fair and favourable hearing, as being a man of the same common nature, of the same nation, and descended from the same religious ancestors with yourselves; though I have been extremely misrepresented and villified, I can solemnly appeal to God, who knows my heart, that in my religion and morals, I have always, abating human infirmities, maintained a conscientious regard to him, and have acted with great sincerity, according to my light, as under his all-seeing eye, in every turn and period of my life, to this very day: While I continued the profession of a Jew, I was, *touching the righteousness of the law, blameless*, (*Phil. iii. 6.*) and, even in persecuting the Christians, *I verily thought that I ought to do it*, (*chap. xxvi. 9.*): Afterwards, in my embracing and preaching the faith of Christ, I acted upon the strongest conviction and clearest evidence, in direct contradiction to my former mistaken sentiments and prejudices, (*chap. ix. 1,—20.*) and I have ever since served God with a pure conscience, and been willing to live honestly, which I can now rejoice in before him. (*2 Tim. i. 3. Heb. xiii. 18. and 2 Cor. i. 12.*)

1 And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.

2 But (as) the false prophet, *Zedekiah*, smote *Micaiah*, the prophet of the Lord, (*1 Kings xxii. 24.*) and as *Pashur*, the chief governor of the house of the Lord, smote the prophet *Jeremiah*, (*Jer. xx. 1, 2.*) and an officer struck the blessed Jesus himself, for his answer to the high priest, (*John xviii. 22.*) in token of indignation and contempt; so *Ananias* the high priest, who was president of this august assembly, was so incensed at *Paul's* opening his speech with such a free, bold, and solemn protestation of his own integrity, and was so inveterate in his spirit against the gospel, that, calling out to those that stood near him, he imperiously ordered them to strike him on the face for it, to stop his mouth, and not suffer him to go on at that rate; which was accordingly done.

3 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee,

3 Then *Paul* being under some emotion of spirit, at such a sudden and illegal abuse, and being likewise under a divine and prophetic impulse, said to him, in language near a-kin to that which his great Lord had used to the scribes and Pharisees, (*Matth. xxiii. 27.*) Thou

thee, thou whited wall: for si-test thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?

hypocrite *, God in his holy Providence will vindicate his own and my righteous cause, and will avenge the injury you have done me, by a terrible stroke of his judgment upon you, who, notwithstanding your specious shew of religion, are but like a whited mud wall, that appears beautiful without, while within it is nothing but sticks, straws, and dirt: For while you pretend to sit as a judge upon me, to try and convict me in a regular process, according to the law of God, how unjust and unwarrantable is it in you, at the same time, to command me to be stricken, in direct contradiction to a known rule in that law itself, which says, *Thou shalt do no unrighteousness in judgment; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour?* (Lev. xix. 15.) And how could you justifiably use me after this rate, in defiance of all right and equity, without so much as hearing what I have to say for myself, instead of *inquiring diligently* into the merits of the cause, which you ought to have done, according to another rule in the judicial law? (Deut. xvii. 4.)

* And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest?

4 Hereupon some that were present in court, having a high veneration for *Ananias's* office-character, and overlooking the notorious injury he had done to the apostle †, said with a taunt, What insolence is this! How durst you speak with such calumny and contempt to so sacred a person as the high priest, whom God has set over his people?

† Then said Paul, I will not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written,

5 As soon as *Paul* heard this, he apologized for his expressions, saying, I did not see who it was that ordered me to be struck, nor did I, brethren, consider him as the high priest, when I uttered those words; if I had, and the prophetic Spirit had not moved me to express myself as I did, I should not have taken the liberty to speak in so severe and disrespectful a manner to him, how

N O T E S.

* Perhaps the apostle might use this opprobrious title, with rather too much warmth of temper, under a violent effort of the law of his members against the law of his mind, according to his complaint, chap. vii. 23. 24. through inattention, sudden surprise, and high provocation: But if there were a mixture of sinful infirmity in it, I can by no means think that he was so far under the power of corruption, as to wish evil to the high priest, or denounce the judgments of God against him, from any revengeful passion of his own mind; this being so inconsistent with his own amiable temper and character, and with the very nature and genius of the gospel, and of true grace in the heart. The threatening part of this sentence is there-

fore to be understood, as delivered by a prophetic impulse, like the imprecations in *Psalm* cix. 6, &c. and on *Alexander* the copper-smith, 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. Accordingly several expositors, *Graias*, *Whitby*, and others, have taken notice, that this prediction was fulfilled, either by *Ananias's* being slain, or by his perishing in the siege of *Jerusalem*, or by his being deposed and sent bound to *Rome*; and so what the apostle said (and came to pass) under divine suggestion, is an example to be imitated by others, as speaking by their own private spirit.

† Some have thought that the persons who said this, and whom the apostle styles *brethren* in the next verse, were believing Jews, that were zealous for the law; and consequently

written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

how injuriously soever he had treated me *: For as I said before (*ver. 1.*) that I have lived in all good conscience before God to this day; so I should have paid a religious regard to that injunction of the law, which, to keep up a just reverence for magistracy, in ordinary cases, says, *Thou shalt not revile, or speak dishonourably, of the gods, or judges; nor curse, or denounce menacing sentences against, the rulers of thy people.* (*Exod. xxii. 28.*)

* But, when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee,

6 Now (30) when Paul perceived, by the observation he had made, (*ver. 1.*) that one part of this assembly consisted of Sadducees and another of Pharisees, so as to be pretty equally divided between both, he, in his great penetration, judged that a fair opportunity offered to disconcert their measures against him, by setting them at variance among themselves; and therefore, raising his voice, he spoke aloud in the presence of the council, that all might hear him, saying, Men and brethren, as I am one of your own nation, so my education and religious

NOTES.

quently for the honour of the high priest. But as brethren was a common salutation, and the apostle had used it toward the council in his entrance on his defence, *ver. 1.* and resume it, *ver. 6.* and as his behaviour lay immediately under their cognisance, it is very questionable whether the believing Jews would interpose, and so publicly take the high priest's part against him; especially since they could not but know, that the high priest and council were then striking at the whole cause of Christianity itself through the apostle's sides.

* The paraphrase on the former part of this verse, is formed to comport with the two most prevailing sentiments of expositors upon it; some of which consider it as an excuse, and others as a justification of what the apostle had said. They that take it for an excuse and retraction, suppose him to own that he really did not know Ananias to be the high priest, his ignorance of which might be occasioned by his having been for some years absent from Jerusalem, and by the high priest's not appearing in his distinguishing place, or vestments: And Dr. Whitby supposes, that though the apostle, acting as a prophet, was not under the obligation of the retired law, as others were; yet, the prophetic impulse which was upon him, did not permit him to advert that it was the high priest, lest that law should have restrained him from complying with that impulse. To which I would add, that he might be looking another way, to observe what parties the council consisted of when the high priest spoke; and so really did not see, (as the word here used sometimes signifies) that it was he who gave the order to smite him. But they that make his an-

swer a justification of what he had said, think it highly improbable, that the apostle should not know the high priest, since he had been about seven days in the temple, (*chap. xxi. 27.*) and could hardly fail of seeing him on some of those days; and since, from what is said, *ver. 6.* he seemed to know a considerable number of the council; and as he at least knew that Ananias was one of them who then sat as judges upon him, the law against reviling the rulers of the people would have been as much violated by what he uttered, as if he had known him to be the high priest. When therefore the apostle said, (*ver. 6.*) I will not, or did not know that he was the high priest, he might mean that, as the death of Christ, and his priesthood in heaven, had put an end to the divine authority of that office on earth, and as the Romans had usurped an unlawful power in disposing of it, just as they pleased, and Ananias had obtained it by bribery, the apostle did not own, esteem, or allow Ananias to be high priest; in which senses the verb (*οὐκ ᾔδειν*) is sometimes used, as in *Matth. xxv. 12. Rom. vii. 15. 2 Cor. v. 10. and Rev. ii. 14.* Vid *Gloss. rheol. sacr. tract. 1. cap. 1.* And it has been observed from Josephus's account, (*Antiq. lib. 20. cap. 8. § 1, 4.*) that Jesus the son of Gamaliel, and not Ananias, was in fact the high priest at this time, and that Ananias only bore the name of that office, which he once enjoyed, but from which he had been deposed some years before, and that the superintendency he gained in the council, was owing to artifice, bribery, and corruption; and therefore the apostle Paul did not look upon him as the high priest, or as a lawful ruler of the people.

Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.

religious sentiments have been after the strictest of your sects, which is known by the name of *Pharisees*; I believed, and zealously professed, practised, and promoted the whole system of its tenets all the days of my *Judaism*, and still hold some of its distinguishing principles; my father also was a *Pharisee*: And, according to one grand article of faith among that sect, I am now called to an account, and am to be judged and condemned, for preaching the doctrine of eternal life, and of a resurrection from the dead, in order to a complete possession of it^a, the hope of which, by divine grace, I have in myself, and labour, in compassion to the souls of others, to propagate in them, thro' faith in a risen Redeemer, who has laid the surest ground of hope for it to all that believe in him.

7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided.

7 And the apostle's speaking in this manner occasioned a warm debate between the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, according to his expectation and design; in so much that both parties in the council, and among the people, fell out one with the other about this point, and about the apostle for asserting it; some favouring, and others opposing both it and him.

8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.

8 For, on one hand, the *Sadducees*, those free thinkers of the age, deny that there will be a resurrection of the dead; or that there is any such permanent being, as an angel in the invisible world, or a separate spirit of man, that survives the death of the body, and subsists in a state of disunion from it: But, on the contrary, the *Pharisees*, the most religious sect of the *Jews*, profess to believe the resurrection of the body, and the existence of spiritual beings, both of the angelic and human rank, in the other world.

9 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him,

9 And this difference of opinion gave rise to an exceeding great and contentious clamour among them, in which the doctors of the law, that were of the sect of the *Pharisees*, set themselves against the *Sadducees*, and in mere opposition to them, wrangled and disputed vehemently in favour of the apostle, saying, As for our parts, we cannot find that any thing has been said or done amiss by this man: But if, as is very possible, a holy angel, or some other good spirit, that belongs to the invisible state, has come with a commission from God, to communicate his mind and will, in an extraordinary way, to this *Paul*, according to what he has intimated, (*chap. xxii. 6,—10.*) let us remember and follow our celebrated doctor *Gamaliel's* excellent advice, (*chap.*

N O T E.

^a The hope and resurrection of the dead resurrection: For this hope manifestly relates is put, by an *Hendiadys*, for the hope of a to the resurrection of the body to eternal life.

him, let us not fight against God.

10 And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.

11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

12 And when it was day certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

13 And they were more than forty which had made

(chap. v. 38, 39.) that we may offer no violence to him, nor reject and oppose his message, lest we be found fighters against God himself.

10 And when the *Sadducees*, being contrary minded, were horribly provoked to hear how the *Pharisees* sided with the apostle; and when hereupon the two parties fell into tumultuous heats and furious quarrels about him, *Lyfias*, the chief captain, being afraid lest, in the rage of their ungovernable passions, they should murder *Paul*, and even tear him limb from limb, one party pulling to rescue him, and the other to destroy him, commanded a company of soldiers to come down immediately from the castle, and to deliver him by main force out of their hands, and conduct him back again with safety to that strong hold; where he continued still a close prisoner, uncertain in his own mind about what might be the final event. Thus God in his Providence remarkably interposed a second time, to preserve him from the most imminent danger.

11 And, in the next night after all this, the Lord Jesus himself appeared to him in a vision, and, standing by his bed side, said for his support and encouragement, *Paul*, whatever distress has befallen you, or you may yet be further apprehensive of, (*ἁπαρ*) maintain your trust and confidence in me; be of good comfort, and let nothing terrify you: Whoever neglects or opposes you, I will be with you; and how great soever your troubles be, in bearing witness to me and my cause here at *Jerusalem*, you shall not fall by any of them: For, as I have still further work to do by you, I have determined, and, by my over-ruling Providence, will bring it to pass, that, according to your own heart's desire, (chap. xix. 21. and *Rom. i. 11.*) you shall be sent to *Rome*, the metropolis of the empire, and there shall bear a noble testimony to my name, as you have done here.

12 But (*ἵνα*) as soon as the following day came on, some desperate ruffians among the Jews entered into a most shockingly vile and treacherous conspiracy against the life of this eminently good and holy man, in their implacable enmity to him for his attachment to the cause of Christ; and to make them the more resolute in going through with it, at all adventures, they bound themselves by an oath, wishing that the curse and wrath of God might fall upon them, if they did not assassinate *Paul*, before they should eat one morsel, or drink one drop of any thing whatsoever.

13 And so deep was the plot laid, that there were above forty of these abandoned wretches, that had joined

made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ye, with the council, signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called

ed together in this horrid combination to dispatch him without law, or mercy, and directly contrary to all principles of religion, justice, and humanity, how much soever they might pretend to a pious zeal for doing God good service thereby.

14 In pursuance of their execrable design, they went and communicated it to some of the chief priests and elders of the people, who they knew were the most furious and implacable enemies of Christianity, and, notwithstanding their high and sacred characters, would stick at no measures for suppressing it, saying, We have bound ourselves by the severest curse upon soul and body for ever, (*κυριωσθε γενομεθα*) that we will taste neither food nor drink, (*ver. 12.*) till we have actually killed this pestilent fellow, *Paul*, who we think is too much favoured by *Lyfias*, but is not fit to live.

15 Now therefore we beg that ye would keep our counsel, and, as though ye knew nothing of our intention, would speak to the rest of the sanhedrim, and desire them to join with you in a request to the chief captain, that he would once more order *Paul* to appear before you to-morrow; and, for a pretence, it may be told him, that ye want to hear what the man has to say to some farther evidences, which ye have received against him, and to be more fully and exactly acquainted (*διαγινωσκετε επιμελιστα*) with the true state of his case, which through yesterday's tumult ye could not come at. And if there be any guilt, as we think there is none, in shedding the blood of such a seditious fellow, we will take it all upon ourselves, who are resolved to dispatch him in his way from the castle, before he gets near the room where the sanhedrim sits, whatever be the consequence.

16 But (*δε*) as no counsel can be too deep for God to search it out, and bring it to light; and as *his eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him*, (*2 Chron. xvi. 9.*) so, by one means or other, the barbarous scheme providentially took air, and came to the knowledge of a young man, who was *Paul's* nephew by mother's side; and as soon as he heard of the snare (*ρωσθησας*) they had laid for his uncle, and how they were to lye in ambuscade to destroy him, he hastened away to the prison, and, getting access to *Paul*, told him the whole affair.

17 Then, as *Paul* knew the connection of end and means in all divine purposes and promises, and that no proper methods were to be neglected for his own preservation,

called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou hast to tell me?

20 And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as tho' they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21 But do not thou yield unto them: for there lye in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have

servation, though the Lord Jesus had absolutely assured him that he should bear witness to him at Rome, (*ver. 11.*) he prudently desired to speak with the centurion that had him in custody, and then said, I intreat you to conduct this youth to your head-officer; for he has something of importance, which the civil government is concerned in, to acquaint him with.

18 So the centurion, having a respect for Paul, who had always behaved in a becoming manner ever since he had the charge of him, readily took his nephew along with him, and went himself to introduce him to the chief captain, and said, Paul, your prisoner, just now calling me to him, begged that I would bring this youth to you, who, it seems, can give you an information of something that is of consequence to himself, and to the government; and therefore I thought proper to give him an opportunity of waiting upon you.

19 Then the chief captain, having also a good opinion of Paul, (*ver. 29.*) and a concern for the interest of the state, laid hold on the young man's hand in a free and familiar manner; and, taking him aside to a private place, that none might over-hear them, he asked him, not in an austere way, but with condescending and friendly courtesy, saying, Well, young man, what is it that you have to inform me of? Do not be dashed, or afraid; but tell me as freely as if you were speaking to one of your own companions.

20 And the youth, being encouraged by such affable treatment, replied, with great presence of mind, My business is to acquaint you, Sir, that some Jews of considerable note, who are bitter enemies to Paul, your prisoner, have agreed among themselves to desire you to favour them so far, as to bring him down from the castle to-morrow, that he may appear again before the great council for a second hearing, under pretence of wanting to be more critical and exact in their inquiries about him, (*επι αυτου*) than they could be in the midst of all the noise and hurry of yesterday's debates.

21 But I beg that you would not be persuaded by them (*αυτοις αυτου*) to comply with their request: For I can assure you, upon the most certain evidence, that there are above forty desperate men of their cabal, who have entered into a wicked conspiracy against his life, with a design to way-lay him in his passage, before he can get to the room where the sanhedrim meets; and they have been so daring, as to bind themselves with an oath, under a dreadful curse, that they will take no manner of sustenance, by eating or drink-
ing

have killed him : and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

ing, till they have accomplished their villanous resolution of assassinating him : And now, having concerted their measures, they are all ready to perpetrate the horrid crime, in expectation of a promise from you to order him to be forth-coming, that they may have an opportunity for it.

21 So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged him, See thou tell no man that thou hast shewed these things to me.

22 The chief captain, having heard and believed this story, and being fully convinced of the restless, implacable, and impatient malice of the Jews against his prisoner, dismissed the young man, and, strictly commanding him to keep his own counsel, said, As ever you value the life and safety of this person, and would have the pernicious designs of his enemies defeated, be sure that you tell no one living, except *Paul* himself, that you have discovered these things to me ; and I will take effectual care of him.

23 And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to *Cesarea*, and horsemen three-score and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night.

23 And as soon as the youth was gone, *Lysias*, fearing that these malignants would never be quiet, till, by some means or other, they had murdered *Paul*, and that he himself should thereby be brought into a scrape, called two of the centurions, that were under his command, and gave orders to them, saying, Go forthwith, and get ready your two hundred foot soldiers, that they may march to *Cesarea of Palestine* ; and, together with them, let there be seventy horsemen, and two hundred pikemen ; and see that they all set out by nine o'clock this evening.

24 And provide them beasts, that they may set *Paul* on, and bring him safe unto *Felix* the governor.

24 Take care likewise that *Paul*, the famous prisoner in the castle, who is to go with you, be not put to the fatigue of travelling on foot, but be accommodated with a proper beast to ride upon *, and civilly treated ; and that he be guarded with all possible safety, and delivered to *Felix* the governor of *Judea*, who resides at *Cesarea*. Thus Providence ordered that public honour should be paid to this eminent servant of Christ, even in his bonds, as well as that the promise of his going to *Rome* (ver. 11.) might be fulfilled, in spite of all conspirators against him.

25 And he wrote a letter after this manner :

25 And while the soldiers were getting ready, the chief captain wrote a letter of the following purport, to be sent along with them :

26 *Claudius Lysias*, unto the most

26 *Claudius Lysias*, military tribune at *Jerusalem*, sends his most humble and respectful salutations, wishing

N O T E.

* Beasts may either signify only one beast, (see the notes on *Matt* xxi. 7. and xxvii. 44.) one being sufficient to carry *Paul* to *Cesarea*, which was but about thirty-five miles from *Jerusalem* ; or there might be more

than one provided, for him to make his choice, or for each of his friends to ride upon as might be desirous to attend him in his journey.

most excellent governor Felix, Jewish greeting.

27 This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them: then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman.

ing all manner of prosperity to the most noble Felix, (*επαρτα*) the proconsul of Judea, at his court in *Cesarea*.

27 The man who attends these lines, as a prisoner under guard, was, the day before yesterday, (*ver. 10, 11, 12.* compared with *chap. xxii. 30.*) violently and tumultuously seized upon in the temple by the Jews; and they were so outrageous against him, that there was the utmost danger of his being murdered by them: As soon as I heard of this, I being in duty bound to suppress all riots, and preserve the peace of the city, went immediately with a number of forces to quell the mob; and, taking him under my protection, delivered him out of their hands; and I have the greater pleasure in reflection upon this seasonable rescue, having afterwards learnt that he is a freeman of *Rome*, and therefore ought the rather to be screened from insults and abuses.

28 However, being desirous (*θυμωμενος δὲ*) to manage with the utmost impartiality between the Jews and the prisoner, and to hear what crime they had to lay to his charge, that so enraged them against him, I brought him the next day, (*chap. xxii. 30.*) before their sanhedrim, that they might fairly examine him, and not complain of being bore down by military power, to prevent a legal process against him.

29 Whom, as I found by their debates, they charged with violating some points of their law relating to religious rites and ceremonies, and with preaching the doctrine of a resurrection from the dead, (*ver. 6.*) but I could not perceive that they so much as pretended to accuse him of any one fact, which by the *Roman* law, deserves to be punished with death, or even so much as with imprisonment, or bonds.

30 But (*δὲ*) being certainly informed, after all this, that a considerable number of enraged Jews had entered into a desperate conspiracy, and concerted measures to assassinate him, I determined, for preventing the execution of such a barbarous, as well as illegal design, to send him away immediately, as I now do, to your Excellency*; and that the Jews may have no pretence of oppression, or grievance, I have ordered his prosecutors to go with their witnesses, and offer what they have to object against him, before your Excellency, that you, upon hearing both sides, may judge of the merits of the

the

N O T E.

* *Lyfias* made a fair representation of the state of Paul's case; only, as he was not obliged to accuse himself, he concealed his own false step, in ordering him to be examined

by scourging, *chap. xxi. 24.* &c. but his reflection on this might be an inducement to his writing the more tenderly about the prisoner.

against him. Farewell.

31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris.

32 On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle.

33 Who, when they came to Cesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him.

34 And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia;

35 I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment-hall.

the cause, and give sentence upon it according to law. May all health and happiness attend you!

31 Then the soldiers, in obedience to their orders, set out with the letter, and, taking Paul into their custody, conducted him in the night, to prevent an insurrection, as far as *Antipatris*, a city which, being built by *Herod the great*, was so called in honour of his father, whose name was *Antipater*, and lay seventeen or eighteen miles from *Jerusalem*, about half way to *Cesarea*.

32 On the morrow, leaving him to the care of the horsemen, who were to escort him the rest of the journey, the two companies of foot soldiers, and pikemen, apprehending that there was no further danger of a rescue, returned to their respective posts at the tower of *Antonia*.

33 The horse soldiers accordingly proceeded forward with their prisoner; and when they arrived at *Cesarea*, they delivered the letter which *Lyfias* had sent by them to *Felix*, the governor, and, together with it, brought Paul before him; and so resigned up their charge.

34, 35 And as soon as *Felix* had perused the letter, which mentioned Paul as a citizen of *Rome*, he asked him what *Roman* province he belonged to. And being told that he was born at *Tarsus* in *Cilicia*, which was under his own jurisdiction, he, turning to the apostle, said, I will give you a fair and thorough hearing, (*δικαιωσας σε*) according to the laws of the empire, as soon as those that have accused you of certain crimes shall be likewise present, as I perceive they will be ere long, that what both parties have to offer may be impartially considered. And *Felix* was so far wrought upon by *Lyfia's* letter, as, in the mean-while, to shew Paul so much favour, as to order him to be confined, not in the common jail, but in an apartment of the palace, which was built by *Herod the great*, and in which courts of justice were wont to be held, and so bore the name of *Herod's judgment-hall*.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How desirable is it to be able to appeal to God, that we have lived in all good conscience before him; and how unrighteous is it to abuse an honest man for professing, that, according to his light, he has done so! But He, who knows the heart, will vindicate the cause of his faithful servants to the confusion of their enemies, be their characters ever so great and venerable among men. However, in ordinary cases, we are not to speak evil of those that are known to be set in authority over us; and when they call us to an account, how much wiser and better is it, to divide their counsels, than revile their persons, and to do this by maintaining any important article of faith, like that of the resurrection of the dead, which was owned by the *Pharisees* themselves, though denied by the *Sad-*

duces! If such a prudent method of self-preservation, and openly avowing any truth of the gospel, should enrage some against us, God may turn it into a means of making others, even of his and our enemies, to stand up for us; and if by this means tumults should rise so high in quarrels about us, as to threaten immediate death to ourselves; yet he, who has appointed civil government for our protection, while we are followers of that which is good, and has all hearts in his hands, can spirit secular powers to interpose, according to their duty, for our safety, and can easily over-rule the most dangerous circumstances for giving us favour in their sight. And why should we be afraid, if the Lord Jesus himself will stand by us for our present support and comfort, and for further preservation to fulfil such services, as he has laid out for us? His promises shall certainly be performed by proper and appointed means, maugre all attempts to defeat them. But how desperately wicked and malignant must those wretches be, that, contrary to the law of nature, and of all nations, would murder the man whom they cannot convict in a legal way, and who deserves the best regards! No pretences of religion can ever sanctify such a monstrous villainy. But what a watchful eye has the providence of God upon all their secret plots and conspiracies, to discover and blast them in favour of those whose lives and services are dear to him! And what a dreadful snare do such blind and mad zealots lay for their own souls, who bind themselves under a curse to work the worst of iniquities! They do not consider how God can disappoint them, and that, whether they succeed in their impious designs, or not, he will avenge their wickedness on their own heads, and turn all the mischief they intended, to the good of his servants, and to their further usefulness in the world.

C H A P. XXIV.

Tertullus, the orator, comes to Cæsarea, and accuses Paul to Felix of sedition, heresy, and prophaneing the temple, 1,—9. Paul clears himself of those charges, and defends his behaviour and doctrine, 10, 21. Felix defers the decision of the cause, and gives the apostle more liberty than before, 22, 23. Paul preaches Christ to him, who trembles, and yet detains his prisoner in hopes of a bribe to free him, 24,—26. And, after two years, being turned out of his office, he leaves Paul a prisoner, till Festus succeeds to the government, 27.

TEXT.

AND, after five days, Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.

PARAPHRASE.

FIVE days after Paul's being first seized in the temple*, (chap. xxi. 27.) Ananias, the high-priest, being so full of malice against him, as to forget the dignity of his own character, went down in all haste from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, with several other members of the sanhedrim; and they carried along with them a certain learned and artful counsellor, *Tertullus* by name, who was well acquainted with the Roman laws and language, to be their advocate: These (*οὗτοι ἐκείνην*) appearing in a body before *Felix* the governor, to give the greater weight to their cause, opened their complaints against Paul.

2, 3 And

NOTE.

* These five days seem to be reckoned from the time of Paul's being first apprehended in the temple: For he says, ver. 11. it was but twelve since he went to Jerusalem; and as he

had spent about seven days there, when the Jews seized him, chap. xxi. 27. if we add five days to those, they make up twelve.

2 And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation, by thy providence.

3 We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

4 Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words.

5 For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes:

2, 3 And when he was called to the bar the *Roman* orator, like one that pleaded only for pay, began his speech, in the name of the high-priest and council, with the most sulsome flatteries of the governor, in direct contradiction to his known character, to bias him in their favour; and with false exaggerating charges against the prisoner, to fix an odium upon him, saying, We of the *Jewish* nation, whose cause I am come to plead, having enjoyed a great deal of peace and liberty, tranquility and prosperity, under your happy administration *, and many eminent acts of justice and goodness having been performed towards our people by your great penetration and foresight, (*διὰ τὴν οὐκ ἀπολείπεις*) prudent care and management, most worthy and excellent *Felix*; we constantly, and every where, on all occasions, receive and reflect upon these tokens of your wisdom, equity, and favour, with the utmost gratitude and acknowledgment, and are thereby encouraged to expect the justice we are come to demand against the criminal now brought before you.

4 But (δὲ) that I may not take up too much of your time, nor trespass upon your patience, and upon your modesty, by expiating on your noble virtues, I humbly and earnestly beseech your Excellency, that, in your great lenity and candour, you would please to attend to, and consider what we have to offer against the prisoner, which we shall sum up as briefly as possible, and in which I doubt not but we shall prove him guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors, in attempts to destroy the rites of the *Jews*, and to disturb the public peace, and subvert the civil government.

5 For, by sad experience, we have often found this infamous man, who now stands arraigned at your bar, to be a most pernicious fellow, spreading infection, (*λοιμὸν*) like the plague, all around him: He even infuses seditious principles, and stirs up riots and rebellions among all our countrymen, the *Jews*, wherever he goes, and can meet with them, through every part of the *Roman* empire; and is the first broacher, grand abetter, and promoter, of the pestilent heresy (*αἵρεσις*) of the *Nazarenes*, an upstart sect, as injurious to the state

N O T E.

* Though *Felix* had been the means of delivering the country from some thieves and impostors, yet ancient historians, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* agree, that he was a very wicked, cruel, and covetous man; was guilty of great injustice and oppression toward the *Jews*; had basely procured the murder of

Jonathan their high-priest, for inveighing against the tyranny of his government; and lived adulterously with *Drasilla*, who left her own husband to marry him, as commentators have generally observed from *Josephus*, antiq. lib. xx. cap. 6, 7: and from *Tacitus* hist. lib. 5. cap. 9.

state * as to our church; it having taken its rise from one *Jesus of Nazareth*, who, we all know, was crucified at *Jerusalem* by the *Roman* power, not thirty years ago, for his notoriously seditious principles and practices, and for setting himself up as king of the *Jews*, in opposition to *Cesar*. (See *John* xix. 12,—16.)

6 Who also hath gone about to profane the temple; whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.

6 The prisoner has likewise been so daring and impious, as to do what in him lay to defile our sacred temple, by bringing uncircumcised *Gentiles* into it, (*chap.* xxi. 28, 29.) ; for which reason we, impatient of such an abominable affront to our God, and to his house, apprehended him, with a design of bringing him to justice, and were going to try and judge him in an impartial manner, according to our law, which is the rule of our religion, and which, by the favour of the government, we are allowed to observe, and to support, against all that would profanely violate its holy institutions.

7 But the chief captain *Lyfias* came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands,

7 But before we could enter upon a judicial process, *Lyfias*, the military tribune, who has the chief command of the garrison at *Jerusalem*, rushed in upon us, with a party of soldiers, at unawares, and wrested this criminal out of our hands, in an arbitrary manner, and by main force, and would not suffer us to prosecute him in our own court, but referred us to your tribunal, to which he sent him.

8 Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom, thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him.

8 In consequence of this, he laid a difficulty and hardship upon the witnesses against this man, by ordering them to undergo the fatigue, expence, and inconvenience of a long journey hither, to bring their allegations against him before your Excellency, who, by hearing their evidence, and examining him upon it, may now easily judge of the merits of the cause, and be thoroughly satisfied about the truth of all the particulars that we have charged him with. Thus impetuously and confidently did *Tertullus* assert, and exaggerate every thing that might make against *Paul*.

9 And the Jews also assented, saying,

9 And though the most invidious falsehoods ran through all this oratorical barangue; yet, to add the greater credit to it, and the more deeply to impress the governor's mind, *Ananias* the high-priest, and the elders of the *Jews* then present, (*ver.* 1.) readily concurred

N O T E.

* It is a little strange to me, that no expostitor, as far as I find, takes notice of the insinuation that *Tertullus* seems to have given, as though the sect of the *Nazarenes* were enemies to the *Roman* government; since no-

thing could better suit his artful design of exasperating *Felix* against *Paul*, or of inducing him, as a *Roman* magistrate, to deal by arms as *Pilate* had done by *Jesus*, his Lord and Master.

ing, That these things were so.

10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself :

curring in signifying their consent and approbation ; and made no scruple of roundly affirming, that all the facts were certainly true, as *Tertullus* had represented them.

10 Then as, according to the *Roman* law, and even the natural rights of mankind, both parties were to be heard before judgment should be given, the governor intimated to *Paul*, that now was his time to speak ; and that he had free liberty to make his defence : Hereupon the apostle, with admirable address and presence of mind, and with as much prudent respect to his judge as was consistent with truth and honesty, replied, Inasmuch as I well know that your Excellency has been for several years in the high and honourable station of a ruler over the *Israelitish* nation, and so cannot be a stranger to the religious rites and customs, temper and spirit, sects and parties, that visibly appear among that people, I, with the greater pleasure and freedom of mind, plead my cause before you, who are so well qualified to judge of the improbability of some facts alledged against me, and will please to make all due allowances in my favour, for the warmth and prejudices with which my adversaries have brought their accusations against me.

11 For as to that part of the charge which relates to *sedition*, (*ver. 5.*) you may be abundantly assured from many witnesses, and your own knowledge of the times of their festivals may induce you to believe, that it is now no more than twelve days since I came up from distant countries to *Jerusalem*, to perform the religious services at the feast of *Pentecost*, that are conformable to the *Jewish* law, and thereby to testify my brotherly love to those that are most zealous for them.

12, 13 And during the six or seven days, at most, of my being there before my confinement, (see the note on *ver. 1.*) though I daily frequented the temple for religious worship, which, as a *Jew*, I had a right to do, as well as any of my accusers ; yet I am bold to aver to your Excellency, in the presence of them all, that it was in the most peaceable and orderly manner ; and that they did not so much as once find me there, either contradicting and opposing, or contending and quarrelling with, any one whatsoever, about points of religion or government, or ever making the least attempt to spirit up the people to tumults or insurrections of any kind ; no, nor did they, all that while, ever catch me at practising upon the people, to prejudice them against their civil or ecclesiastical rulers, in any

11 Because that thou mayest understand that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to *Jerusalem* for to worship.

12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city :

13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.

of their other places of worship, such as the synagogues, where they ordinarily meet to hear their laws read and expounded; or in any part of that famous and populous city: Nor, were these mine accusers put to it, could any of them prove so much as one of the crimes with which they have so boldly and peremptorily charged me.

14 But this I confess unto thee, that, after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets:

14 But as to the *heresy*, (*ver. 5.*) which they accuse me of, and are pleased to insinuate is of dangerous consequence, both to religion and the civil government, I freely own, Sir, in your presence, and before them all, that in the way, which they have unjustly stigmatized with that infamous brand, I do pay all religious homage to the only living and true God, even the God of all my pious ancestors, whom he took into covenant with himself; and I am induced to take this God of my fathers for my God, and thus solemnly to worship him; because I firmly believe the divine authority of all those doctrines, and the sure accomplishment of all those gracious promises and predictions, that are contained in the antient and venerable writings of *Moses*, and the succeeding prophets, which not only I, but the generality of the *Jews*, profess to receive, as the inspired oracles of God.

15 And have hope towards God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

15 And as I preach none other things than those which *Moses* and the prophets did say should come, (*chap. xxvi. 22.*) so God having fulfilled his great promise made to the fathers, to us their children, by the coming of the Messiah, I have, and profess to have, an entire dependence on the word and power of God, and a joyful expectation from him, through the risen Saviour, with respect to a fundamental article of the Christian faith, which is likewise, in part at least, consented to, and approved of by, the whole nation of the *Jews* themselves, the *Sadducees* excepted, *viz.* That, at the last day, there will be an universal resurrection of the bodies of the dead*, both of the righteous to everlasting life, and of the wicked to everlasting shame and contempt, as was antiently prophesied, (*Dan. xii. 2.*) and was afterwards confirmed, (*John v. 28, 29.*) by that Jesus of *Nazareth*, whom I preach, not as a temporal prince, but as the once crucified, and now living Redeemer, by whose merit and energy, and after whose example, all, that sincerely believe in him, shall be raised to immortal glory.

16 And

N O T E.

* The unjust, says Dr *Whitby* on this place, seems necessarily to be added; because the doctrine of the *Pharisees*, according to *Jose-*

phar, restrained the resurrection to the just, condemning the unjust to perpetual torments without any resurrection.

16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

16 And for this cause *, in view and prospect of this solemn and important day, I myself, as I told the great council at *Jerusalem*, (*chap. xiii. 1.*) make it the governing care, study, and business of my life and ministry, at all times, in all things, and by all means, under divine influence, to maintain a faithful and peaceful conscience, as in the sight of God, and with a reference to the future judgment, free from all allowed guile, and from all just occasions of inward smitings for known and wilful sin, that in my thoughts, words, and ways I may neither offend God nor do any thing injurious to man, whether friend or enemy, but *may be sincere and without offence, till the day of Christ.* (*Phil. i. 10.*)

17 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offering.

17 Lastly, As to my *profaning the temple*, which is, with equal vehemence, added (*ver. 6.*) to the charge of sedition and heresy, This is as false as all the rest, and is utterly contrary to all my behaviour in that holy place; the true state of which is this: After many years absence from *Jerusalem*, I came thither within less than a fortnight ago, (*ver. 12.*) bringing along with me charitable contributions, which I had collected among my friends and brethren in distant parts, for the relief of some of my poor countrymen, (*Rom. xv. 25, 26.*) and being there, I began to observe the rites of purification, and designed to have offered the sacrifices appointed by the law of *Moses*, for completing a religious vow, which I had made. (*Chap. xxi. 24, 26.*)

18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

18 While I was thus performing the services belonging to my vow, some *Jews*, that came from the *lesser Asia*, (*chap. xxi. 27.*) and knew me when I sojourned in those parts, found me going through the legal methods of purification in the temple, with no more than four persons, who were *Israelites*, and attended me to discharge like obligations, which lay upon them, (*chap. xxi. 23, 26.*) not in any riotous manner, but with all possible quietness and regularity; only these *Asiatic Jews*, having before seen one *Trophimus*, a *Gentile* convert to Christianity, in the city with me, falsely suggested that I had brought him into the temple, (*chap. xxi. 29.*); and so not I, but they raised the tumult, and defiled that holy place.

19 Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had

19 These very men ought, in all reason, to have appeared before your Excellency, and to have witnessed against me, if they were able to have proved any crime upon

N O T E.

* *Herein* (or *relo*) may be rendered *for this*, or *for this cause*, the preposition *εἰς* being sometimes put for *διὰ*, as in *Matth. vi. 7. Eph.*

iii. 13. and *Col. ii. 16* In all which places it manifestly signifies, and in the two last is translated, *for*.

had ought against me.

upon me, which, it is plain by their absence, they could not do; and therefore nothing can be depended upon, nor ought to be admitted in a court of judicature, that is clamorously objected against me.

20 Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil-doing in me, while I stood before the council:

20 Or, since they are not here to confront me, let even these mine adversaries, that are present, speak freely, if they can honestly say, that they found any injurious or unrighteous fact, (*adunna*) made out against me, while I stood before, and was examined by, the *sanhedrim* at *Jerusalem*: I challenge the worst of them all to prove any thing like it;

21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.

21 Unless it were, as they themselves could not deny, for this one declaration, in which I glory, and which, though deemed heresy by the *Sadducees*, was avowed by the *Pharisees* in that very council, (*chap. xiii. 7, 8, 9.*) namely, that while I stood among them, I said, with an earnestness suitable to the importance of the point, I am this day called to an account, and am to be judged and condemned by you, for my belief, expectation, and preaching the resurrection of all mankind from the dead, in order to the complete happiness of the righteous, and punishment of the wicked, in body as well as soul, for ever.

22 And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When *Lyfias* the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.

22 Now (*sc.*) when *Felix* had given both parties a full hearing, he deferred passing judgment upon the case, because he had a more exact knowledge than they imagined him to have, or than *Lyfias* had, of the state of Christianity, and of the orderly behaviour of its professors, by means of its early settlement at *Cæsarea*, in the conversion of *Cornelius* and his friends, (*chap. x.*) which was followed with the gathering of a church of believers, and with the residence of *Philip* the evangelist there, (*chap. xviii. 22. and xxi. 8.*) * and because he had a mind to inform himself still more accurately, about the nature and tendency of its doctrines, whether they affected the civil government, or not: And as *Paul's* accusers seemed to reflect on the conduct of *Lyfias*, as though he had acted in a forcible and arbitrary manner, when he rescued the prisoner out of their hands, *Felix* took occasion from thence to put the matter off, saying, When *Lyfias*, the tribune, is come, who ought to be present to answer for himself, I will more

N O T E.

* As *Felix's* having a more perfect knowledge of that way, (*αὐτὸς ἔχων ἰσχυρὰ καὶ ἰσχυρὰ*) is thought by some to relate to what knowledge he already had of the state of the Christian religion, which is manifestly intend-

ed by that way, (see *chap. ix. 2. and xxii. 4.*) and by others to the further information he would endeavour to get of it, I have taken both senses into the paraphrase.

more thoroughly examine into, and then finally decide the cause ye have brought before me.

22 And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister, or come unto him.

23 In the mean while, he conceived so good an opinion of Paul, that, committing him to the custody of a military officer, who had the command of a hundred soldiers, he ordered this centurion not to keep him in close confinement, but to let him have liberty to walk about, as a prisoner at large, and not to hinder any of his friends and acquaintance in *Cæsarea*, and the parts adjacent, where there were many Christians, or any others of what country soever, from having free access to converse with him, or to bring him money or victuals, or perform any office of kindness that they had a mind to shew him.

24 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

24 And, a few days afterwards, *Felix* coming into the judgment-hall with his lady, whose name was *Drusilla* *, and who was of Jewish parents, sent for the apostle, and, together with her, heard what he had to say about the doctrine of Christ, and about what his followers were to believe concerning him, that he might judge whether it contained any principles, that threatened disturbance to the state, and might gratify his own and her curiosity, rather than that they might be instructed, and led in the way to eternal life, for the saving of their own souls.

25 And, as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance,

25 And as the apostle knew the abominable vices that were most predominant in them, (see the note on ver. 2.) so when he had given a plain account of the most peculiar and distinguishing points of the gospel, relating to the person and mediation, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, and the way of salvation through faith in him; he not fearing the faces of those great personages, nor consulting what might best please their curiosity, and subserve his own liberty and safety, proceeded to such a serious and faithful application of his doctrine, as might be best suited, and, by the blessing of God, most effectual, to touch their consciences, and convince them of their wickedness and danger, of their need of Christ, and the impossibility of their being saved, if they persisted in their evil courses: In pursuit of this noble design, Paul reasoned with strong evidence, and a moving pathos, about the nature, excellence, and necessity of justice toward men, as well

as

N O T E.

* *Drusilla* was a daughter of *Herod Agrippa*, and brought up in the Jewish religion; her virtue was far below her beauty. She being one of the finest women of that age,

Felix fell in love with her, and persuaded her to forsake her husband, *Azizus* king of *Emessa*, and to be married to himself, though a *Pagan*. See *Univ. hist.* vol. IV. p. 265.

rance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.

as religion toward God; and about chastity (*εὐπαιδείας*) and a regular government of the passions, affections, and inclinations, in a sober and lawful use of sensitive enjoyments; as also about the certainty, strictness, and solemnity, of a future day of account, in which all must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, (2 Cor. v. 10.) and what a terrible day that will be to them, who, tho' they have heard of the Saviour, shall then be found in impenitence and unbelief. How little soever *Drusilla* might be impressed by this awful discourse, as vainly trusting to her *Jewish* privileges, under all her wickedness; yet, while *Paul* was delivering it, *Felix's* conscience was so struck and alarmed, in reflection on his own guilt, that, great and haughty as he was, he was perfectly frightened; insomuch that he trembled for fear of God's wrath; and yet, being still in love with his sins, and desirous to stifle convictions, and get rid of the terrors that attended them, he, instead of inquiring farther into the way of deliverance, or crying out with the trembling jailor, *What shall I do to be saved?* (*chap. xvi. 30.*) dismissed the apostle, saying, Withdraw for the present, other affairs now call me away; when I have more leisure, and a better opportunity, I will send for you again, and hear what you have further to say about these things.

25 He hoped also that money should have been given him of *Paul*, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

26 And, even at the same time, (*καὶ ἐν ταῖς*) his heart went so much after his covetousness, like those hypocrites of old, (*Ezek. xxxiii. 31.*) that he was listning and longing for an offer of a bribe from *Paul*, to set him at liberty*, which he hoped a man of his eminence and interest among the Christians might easily have procured and proposed; therefore he the more frequently took occasions to send for him, and converse with him, not to hear any more about the faith of Christ, for his own salvation, or about the solemn subjects that had thrown him into agonizing pangs before; but to see whether any thing might turn up for making a good penny of his prisoner.

27 But, after two

27 But while he was thus hoping, in vain, for a good round sum from *Paul*, which neither the apostle, nor any of his friends were suffered, by providence †, to

N O T E S.

* *Felix* might the rather hope for a good boon from *Paul*, considering that he had lately collected from the Christians, a large supply for the poor at *Jerusalem*, (*ver. 27.*) and that, perhaps, the whole of it might not be as yet disposed of; or, if it were, that the same friends, who entrusted him with that, both could, and would raise a considerable

sum for the release of one, who stood so high in their esteem, and was so important to them.

† *Mr Henry* observes, that though *Paul* had such a great and generous soul, as disdained to bid money to *Felix*, or beg it of the churches; yet they ought to have solicited the governor, and to have given him a set, if that

two years, Porcius Festus came into Felix's room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

to offer for his discharge, he continued to keep him in custody, for two years together; at the end of which, *Felix*, who sought to please men rather than God, was deposed; and *Porcius Festus* succeeded to the government of *Cæsarea* in his stead: And *Felix*, being desirous to curry favour with the *Jews*, lest otherwise they should accuse him to the emperor of his many oppressions and cruelties, during his administration, (see the note on *ver. 2.*) was so unjust to *Paul*, as to leave him still a prisoner, though he had nothing to lay to his charge.

RECOLLECTIONS.

With what detestable arts of falsehood, and flattery of *Felix*, did the high priest and elders vent their spleen, in concurrence with *Tertullus* their advocate, against the apostle *Paul*, and the doctrines of the gospel! No scruple was made of calling their own illegal and furious outrage, an attempt to judge him according to their law; or of calling *Lyfias*'s just and necessary interposition, to prevent their murdering him, and taking him out of their hands with violence; nor did they make any difficulty of sawning upon an infamous governor, and extolling him to the skies, that they might sooth his vanity, and engage him to patronize the vile slanders, which they cast on one of the best of men, as though he were a heretic, a seditious fellow, a profaner of the temple, and the very pest of the earth. What will not spite and malice say against the faithful servants of Christ, and against his gospel, to expose them to indignation and contempt! But how just and reasonable is it, that, with a due deference to the civil magistrate, they vindicate themselves, and their doctrine, from all invidious reproach? And what a noble spirit do they discover, when they boldly own the truth, in the face of all opposition and danger, especially truth of the greatest importance, like that of an universal resurrection of mankind from the dead, which is matter of joyful hope to the righteous, though of terror to the wicked! How impossible is it for the enemies of Christianity, to prove their injurious charges upon it, or upon those preachers of it, who are enabled, by divine grace, to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man! Even *Felix* himself, wicked as he was, had so good an opinion of *Paul*, as to relax his bonds, from which indeed he ought to have been entirely released, instead of being retained a prisoner in any form whatsoever: And when the apostle, having opened to him the way of faith in Christ for salvation, came close to his conscience in reasoning with him about righteousness, temperance, and a future judgment, to awaken within him a sense of his sin, of his need of a Saviour, and of his obligations to purity and holiness, as ever he would appear with safety and comfort at the bar of God: How did he tremble for fear of divine wrath; and yet how ineffectual were his strong remorse and agonies of mind; and how soon stifled, while they were under the management of a heart in love with sin, and not under the powerful and abiding influences of the Holy Spirit! But O how dangerous is it to fight against present convictions, and put off the great concerns of salvation, to some other pretendedly more convenient season, which the sinner, like *Felix*, may never have a heart to seek, or to improve! And how can it be expected that he should, while he is cultivating such a friendship of this world, as is enmity to God.

CHAP.

NOTE.

that were necessary, to engage him to do justice to *Paul* in setting him at liberty, rather than let such an eminent and useful man lie in a jail, when a little money would have fetched him out, and restored him to his usefulness again. But, there might be a provi-

dence in their not doing it, as *Paul*'s bonds were to be for the furtherance of the gospel. And we may add, that this was to be one means of his being sent to *Rome*, to bear witness to Christ there, according to the prediction, chap. xxiii. 11.

C H A P. XXV.

Paul is again accused by the Jews before Festus, 1,—7. He vindicates himself, and, to avoid removing the cause to Jerusalem, appeals to Cæsar, 8,—12. Festus tells the story to king Agrippa, at whose desire to hear the apostle himself, he is brought before him in a grand assembly, 13,—3. And Festus relates the state of his case, in which he declares that he found nothing done by him worthy of death, but leaves him to answer for himself, 24,—27.

TEXT.

NOW, when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cæsarea to Jerusalem.

2 Then the high priest, and the chief of the Jews, informed him against Paul, and besought him,

3 And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him.

4 But Festus answered—

PARAPHRASE.

NOW about three days after Festus came into the province of Judea, to enter upon the administration of the government, as proconsul in the room of Felix, he took an opportunity to go up from Cæsarea, the usual place of the governor's residence, to Jerusalem, which was under his jurisdiction, that he might shew himself, and give proper orders about the management of affairs there.

2 Immediately upon his arrival thither, the high-priest, and some principal members of the Jewish sanhedrim waited upon him in a body, to pay him their compliments; and their hearts were still so full of restless and impatient malice against Paul, that, to prepossess the governor's mind, they represented their quarrel with him in a most invidious and partial light, earnestly intreating him to re-assume the consideration of an affair, which, to their great dissatisfaction, had lain so long dormant, without being brought to any issue; and to give judgment against him as a criminal that deserved to be put to death. (ver. 15, 16.)

3 And instead of asking him to try the merits of the cause, like an upright judge, without favour or affection, they solicited him, with all the arts of vile insinuation, to stand their friend against Paul, and to order him to be brought from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, to be tried before him in the presence of the great council there: And yet, as they might not be able, even then, to carry their point against him, while Festus should be the judge, their true design was only to get an opportunity for way-laying, and murdering him on the road; and so it was just such another villanous artifice as was intended to have been used with Lysias, in desiring to have him brought from the castle to their court. (Chap. xxiii. 12,—15.)

4 But, whether Festus suspected, or had received any hint of their wicked design; or whether he thought the request to be unreasonable in itself, and derogatory to the

answered, that Paul should be kept at *Cesarea*, and that he himself would depart shortly thither.

the honour of his court at *Cesarea*; or whatever might be his inducement, God, in his merciful and holy Providence, over-ruled his mind for defeating their conspiracy; and inclined him to reply, That as he could see no sufficient cause for taking so extraordinary, unnecessary, and exceptionable a step, as sending for *Paul* back to *Jerusalem*, he should be kept in safe custody at *Cesarea*, till he might be brought to a fair trial there; and that he himself would soon go thither, and bring it on, without delay.

5 Let them therefore said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

5 Therefore, said he, let such of you, be they more or less, as are most capable of setting the cause in its true light, and managing it to the best advantage, or of giving any evidence, as witnesses against him; let any such go down to *Cesarea* along with me, and offer all that they can, in a legal course, to make good their accusations of him; and ye may depend upon it, that I will certainly grant you impartial justice against him, if any thing capital, or in a lower degree criminal, shall be proved upon him.

6 And, when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down into *Cesarea*, and the next day, sitting in the judgment-seat, commanded *Paul* to be brought.

6 And when *Festus* had spent the best part of a fortnight with them, and settled his affairs at *Jerusalem*, he set out on his journey, and returned directly to *Cesarea*: And as several principle men of the *Jews*, that were inveterate against *Paul*, went down with the governor, to carry on their malicious prosecution; he being careful to detain them no longer than needs must, that they might have no occasion to complain of further delay, called a court on the morrow, after his arrival thither, and sitting as judge on the bench, ordered *Paul* to be brought to the bar, that he might take his trial.

7 And, when he was come, the *Jews* which came down from *Jerusalem* stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against *Paul*, which they could not prove.

7 And as soon as the prisoner was arraigned in form, the *Jews* that came down from *Jerusalem* on purpose to appear against him, gathered together to spirit up one another, and intimidate the apostle; and as they stood surrounding him, they with their wonted malice, art, and fury, laid various and heavy crimes to his charge, that they might blacken him as much as possible, though they were not able to support it in any one instance, with the least shew of evidence against him, as *Paul* himself observed;

8 While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the *Jews*, neither against the temple, nor yet against

8 While, in his own defence, he pleaded, as he had before, in the presence of *Felix*, (*chap. xxiv. 12, 13.*) saying, I have been guilty of no offence against the *Jewish* law, as delivered by *Moses*; nor of any profanation of the temple at *Jerusalem*; much less have I been guilty of any seditious practices, to the injury, or disturbance

gainst Cæsar, have I offended at all.

disturbance of the civil government, under the *Roman* emperor, to whom I have constantly paid all due allegiance, as becomes a peaceable subject. I defy the very worst of mine enemies to prove any of the things of which they have accused me.

9 But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

9 Nevertheless, *Festus* being desirous, just upon his accession to the government, to ingratiate himself as much as possible with the *Jews*, by attempting to grant them the favour (*ἵνα κατὰ κατανόησιν*) which they had asked, (*ver. 3.*) replied to *Paul*, Since I am unacquainted with the nature of several articles, (*ver. 20.*) that have been mentioned; and since you are so confident of your own innocence, Are you willing to return back to *Jerusalem*, to be tried there by the *Sanhedrim* in my presence*, that I may the better judge of these things, which the *Jews* have accused you of, relating to their religion?

10 Then said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged; to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

10 Then *Paul*, finding himself in danger of being thrown into the hands of his enemies, who thirsted after his blood; and being encouraged, by the vision he had received, (*chap. xxiii. 11.*) to run all risks in going to *Rome*, insisted on his privilege as a *Roman* citizen, saying, I stand arraigned in a court of judicature, which is held by the commission of *Nero* our sovereign, who, as emperor, wears the honourable title of *Cæsar*: I own the authority of his government, and have put the issue of my cause upon it, that it may be judged according to the laws of the empire, by which it ought to be decided; nor is there any occasion for my being sent to be tried by the *Sanhedrim* at *Jerusalem*, since I have done no manner of injury to the *Jews*, as your Excellency may be well satisfied from what has now passed in your hearing.

11 For if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse

11 If indeed I do any thing contrary to law and justice, (*ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀδικία*) let me have a fair trial, and be punished according to my deserts; and if it shall be found that I have been guilty of any capital crime, I shall readily submit to whatever death the law appoints in such cases, and freely own the justice of the sentence that shall condemn me to it, without troubling the court with any plea for respite of judgment: But if there be no truth in any one of the accusations they have brought against me, as I am sure there is not, and

28

N O T E.

* Here seems to be a plain intimation, that whatever power the *Jews* now had in capital cases, it was exercised under the direction and judgment, or at least with the concu-

rence of the *Roman* governor, upon his hearing the evidence that was brought against the prisoner, as a transgressor of their laws. See the note on *chap. vi. 12.*

cuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cesar.

as sufficiently appears by this and my former trial, (*chap. xiv. 10,—21.*) no man, no, not the governor himself, who ought to protect the injured, as well as punish the guilty, has any right to put me into the power of mine enemies, especially after they have given such flagrant proofs of their malice against me. I therefore claim my privilege, as a freeman of *Rome*; and, whatever be the consequence, I appeal from all other courts to *Cesar's* immediate tribunal, that I may be judged by his imperial majesty himself, (*ver. 21.*) choosing rather to be delivered into his hands than theirs. (See the note on *chap. xxvi. 32.*)

12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cesar? unto Cesar shalt thou go.

12 Then *Festus*, having consulted (*μετα το συμβουλιν*) with his own *Roman* council*, whose business it was to assist him with their advice in points of law, and in cases of difficulty and importance; and thinking that he could not refuse this claim of privilege, in consistence with the constitution of the empire, or with honour and safety to himself, and that, by complying with it, he should get rid of a troublesome affair, without dishonouring the *Jews*, replied, Well, have you thought proper to appeal to the emperor's supreme court of judicature at *Rome*? It shall be according to your desire: To *Cesar* you shall be carried, that you may appear before his Majesty, and know his pleasure. And so all further proceedings being stopt for the present, to the disappointment of the apostle's enemies, who hoped for his death, and of his friends, who hoped for his liberty, the court broke up.

13 And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cesarea, to salute Festus.

13 But (*δι*) some time time after this, *Agrippa*, a professed Jew, who was the son of *Herod Agrippa*, and was king of large territories under the *Roman* Emperor †; he, together with his own sister *Bernice*, who had likewise been brought up in the *Jewish* religion, came to *Cesarea* to congratulate *Festus* upon his accession to the government of *Judea*, and to take the di-

versions

N O T E S.

* The word here used is not (*συμβουλιον*) that, by which the *Jewish* *Sanhedrim*, or great council, was commonly expressed; but is (*συμβουλιον*) a word of indeterminate signification; And as there is no likelihood, that the *Jewish* council would advise *Festus* to send *Paul* to *Rome*; so it is certain that the *Roman* presidents, or governors of provinces, had a council of their own, to consult with on proper occasions. See *Lardner's credibility*, &c. vol. i. p. 215, &c.

† *Herod Agrippa*, who slew the apostle *James* with the sword; *chap. xii. 1, 2.* appeared to be a zealous Jew, and educated his child, in the *Jewish* religion. The emperor

Claudius and *Nero* made this young *Agrippa*, his son, king of the tetrarchy which formerly belonged to *Philip*, (see *Luke* iii. 1. and the note there) as also of *Lyfania*, and part of *Gallilee*, &c. And, by the permission of the emperor, he had the direction of the sacred treasure, the government of the temple, and the right of nominating the high priest, and was himself a zealous observer of the *Jewish* religion, and an excellent prince, of great generosity and clemency.—*Bernice* was one of the daughters of *Herod Agrippa*; but a lady of no good character. See *ibid* vol. I. p. 32, 39,—42. and *Universal hist.* vol. IV. pag. 261, and 265.

versions of his court, and establish a good understanding with him.

14 And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix:

14 And as these royal persons continued a considerable time at *Cæsarea*, Festus, in free conversation one day with the king, related the state of Paul's case to him, saying, There is a certain noted man, who has made a great noise in the world, and was taken up on occasion of some offences that he had given to the Jews, and whom Felix, my predecessor, left in custody at his resigning the government.

15 About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him,

15 When I went to *Jerusalem*, soon after my coming into this province, the present high priest, (*ver. 2.*) together with the chief priests, and several other members of the great council, immediately applied to me about this man, telling me of various crimes which they affirmed him to have been guilty of, and earnestly desiring me to send for him thither, and to pass sentence upon him out of hand, as a capital offender.

16 To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.

16 But having seen fit to reject their proposal for bringing him back to *Jerusalem*, I told them, That as it is utterly unreasonable in itself, so it is directly contrary to the invariable and laudible customs and laws of the Romans, to adjudge any man to death, and (*ἐπιτιμῆσαι αὐτὸν ὡς ἀποκρίσει*) arbitrarily give him up to destruction, he he ever so culpable merely upon depositions on one side of the question, without first bringing him and his accusers together, and allowing him the privilege of hearing what they have to say against him, and of replying to it, for clearing himself of the crimes, that they lay to his charge: And so I ordered them that were most able to make any thing out against him, to come down to *Cæsarea*, and accuse him face to face, that he might have a fair trial. (*ver. 4. 5.*)

17 Therefore when they were come thither, without any delay on the morrow, I sat on the judgment seat, and I commanded the man to be brought forth.

17 When therefore, in compliance with this motion, several of them came down hither to prosecute him according to law, I, being desirous to detain them no longer than might be necessary, and to dispatch the affair as soon as possible, called a court the very next day; and sitting on the bench, as judge of the cause which was to be brought before me, I sent commands to the proper officers to produce the prisoner, and set him at the bar.

18 Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed:

18 And when his adversaries stood up to accuse him of the high crimes and misdemeanors alledged against him, they, to my great surprize, did not mention, much less prove, any such things as I imagined they intended, against him; nor did they so much as attempt to shew that he had been guilty of any injuries, that properly

perly fall under the cognizance of the civil magistrate, as by their hideous outcries against him I thought they would.

19 But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

19 But instead of doing any thing like this, they pressed him, with great heat and passion, about several points, that are controverted among themselves, relating to their own *religious*, or, as I should call them, *superstitious* tenets, and particularly relating to one Jesus, who was crucified and died some years ago, but whom Paul boldly and peremptorily affirmed to have risen again from the dead, and to be now alive in heaven.

20 And, because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him, whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.

20 And because, after all that was said on both sides, I thought myself an incompetent judge of such sort of disputable questions, and was doubtful in my own mind, who was in the right, and whether an affair of this nature might not more properly belong to an ecclesiastical, than civil court of judicature; I therefore asked the prisoner, whether he would be willing to go to *Jerusalem*, and be tried there in my presence by the *Jewish* Sanhedrim, who were better judges of these matters than I, and might give me further light into the merits of the cause, and so enable me to proceed upon proper evidence in doing him justice.

21 But, when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cæsar.

21 But when Paul, instead of complying with this proposal, refused to be turned over to that court, and appealed to the emperor, whose honour it is to be styled *Augustus*, that he might rather be detained for a hearing before his Majesty himself, than before them who had shewn so much inveteracy against him; I ordered him to be kept in safe custody, till I might have an opportunity of sending him to our sovereign Lord Nero at Rome; and, after such appeal, I could not well do otherwise.

22 Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To morrow said he, thou shalt hear him.

22 Then king Agrippa, who, being a Jew, could not but have heard much of Jesus, (*chap. xxvi. 26.*) said to Festus, I should be very glad to see this prisoner, and hear from his own mouth what he has to say in vindication of himself, and of his doctrine, that I might be capable of forming some judgment about them. To which Festus replied, With all my heart, Sir; You shall, if you please, have an opportunity for it to morrow, when I hope you will be so good as to favour me with your thoughts about him.

23 And on the morrow when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains,

23 Accordingly, the very next day, king Agrippa, and his sister Bernice came, and placed themselves in the judgment hall with great magnificence and splendor, being richly decked with glittering ornaments, and attended with a large and pompous retinue, which,

after

captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus's commandment. Paul was brought forth.

after all, was but making a vain shew, with a huge imagination or fancy of grandeur, (*μεγα πωλλας παντασιας*) that has nothing in it, compared with the truly noble and inward adornings of knowledge, virtue, grace, and holiness, with which *Paul* appeared in his bonds and despicable garb: And, as the designed interview had taken wind, the chief officers of the army, and the civil magistrates and principal citizens of *Cæsarea*, crowded thither, not from any desire of spiritual benefit, but to gratify their curiosity in seeing and hearing what might pass: When therefore (*) this grand assembly was gathered together, *Paul*, by *Festus* the governor's order, was brought before them, according to what Christ had foretold his servant *Ananias* concerning him. (*Chap. ix. 15.*)

23 And *Festus* said, King *Agrippa*, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at *Jerusalem*, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer.

24 And *Festus* opened the occasion of their coming together in the following speech to them, saying, O king *Agrippa*, and all of you gentlemen, that are here assembled with us*, Ye see this man, who stands before you as a prisoner; look at him, and carefully observe him, who has made so much noise amongst us, and concerning whom abundance of the *Jews*, both at *Jerusalem*, and at this city, have solicited me, with great importunity, (*μετ' οχλον μου*) to pass sentence upon him, as a capital offender, crying out with mighty vehemence against him, as a man of such pernicious principles and practices, and as such a busy promotor of them, that it is not fit for him to live any longer upon earth.

25 But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to *Augustus*, I have determined to send him.

26 But when, upon hearing both sides, I really could not find him to have been guilty of any fault, that can be deemed of a capital nature or deserving of death; and when, upon asking him, for some special reasons, whether he would consent to go to *Jerusalem*, and be judged there before me, he himself appealed to *Nero* our sovereign, (*ver. 9.—11.*) who, in honour of our two first emperors, *Julius Cæsar* and *Augustus*, is called both *Cæsar*, (*ver. 11.*) and *Augustus*, I thought it necessary, and have accordingly resolved, to send him ere long to *Rome*.

26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Where-

26 And yet, after all, I am greatly at a loss to know what to write to his Majesty concerning him, as not being able to state his case with any exactness, by reason of the various and confused representations, that have

be ex

N O T E.

* As the verb *ἑστηκω* is found in the indicative and imperative moods, I have given a view of both in the paraphrase. *Festus*, says Mr *Henry*, "spoke to all the men (*ἄνδρες* *ἀδελφοί*) in distinction from women, as if he intended a tacit reflection upon *Bernice*,

"a woman, for appearing in a meeting of this nature: He did not refer any thing to her judgment, or desire her counsel. But all you that are present, that are men, (so the words are placed,) I desire you to take cognizance of this matter."

Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have some - what to write.

27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not wishal to signify the crimes laid against him.

been made of it; nor to say, with any certainty, against what law of the government he has offended: I have therefore brought him before this honourable assembly, and particularly before yourself, O king Agrippa, who are well known to be very expert in the *Jewish* as well as *Roman* laws, (*chap. xxvi. 3.*) that, after further examination, with calmness and impartiality, I may be favoured with your advice, about what may be proper for me to write to his imperial majesty concerning him.

27 For, in my apprehension, it would be a preposterous and absurd piece of conduct in me, and might justly be censured by the emperor himself, were I to send a person under custody, to be tried before his Majesty for his life, and not to give some account, at the same time, of what sort of crimes are laid to his charge.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

So desperately wicked is the heart of man, in its enmity against Christ and the gospel, that neither length of time, nor repeated experience of its vain attempts and shameful defeats, can wear it out, or subdue it. How restless were the unbelieving *Jews* in their endeavours to destroy the apostle *Paul*, for preaching a crucified and risen Jesus! They desired an unrighteous sentence to be passed upon him, as a favour to themselves, and even contrived to murder him, when they found that no legal process could reach his life. But how did God, in his providence, watch over him, for his preservation from their malicious designs! *Festus* refuses to send for him to *Jerusalem*, at their request, and would try him at *Cæsarea*, where his enemies could prove nothing against him; and when, notwithstanding this, the governor afterwards, in complaisance to them, would have put this excellent and innocent servant of Christ into their power, *Paul* himself, under divine direction, prevents it, by an appeal to *Cæsar*, which made way for his going to *Rome*, and preaching the gospel there, as the Lord Jesus had foretold he should. But how hard is the case of Christians, when they are forced to throw themselves into the hands of a prince, as barbarous and blood-thirsty as *Nero*, to escape the fury of false pretenders to religion! However, they, like the apostle, ought to defend their integrity against unjust accusations as well as they can: And when dangers are otherwise unavoidable, how justifiable and prudent is it in them to take such advantages, as the government they live under may afford for their protection! They may expect more equity, even from a heathen judge, like *Festus*, than from blind and envious zealots, like the rulers of the *Jews*.—As no man ought to be condemned for any crime, till he and his accusers are brought face to face, that he may answer for himself; so, how mean thoughts soever the magistrate may have of Christian religion, how evidently will it always be found, upon examination, to have no iniquity in it: Nothing contrary to the welfare, peace, and good order of civil society; much less to have any thing in it, for which its preachers, or professors, can deserve death. The more it is searched into, the more its doctrines, and its wise and faithful advocates will be cleared from reproach. But, O how happy would it be, if our rulers and great men were as ready to hear the gospel, that *their own souls may live*, as Agrippa, Bernice, the officers of the army, and the principal citizens of *Cæsarea* were, to gratify *their curiosity*, by hearing what the apostle *Paul* had to say in vindication of himself, and of the great articles of his faith and ministry!

C H A P. XXVI.

Paul, being permitted to speak for himself, gives an account before king Agrippa and others, that in the younger part of his life he was a Pharisee, and a furious zealot against Christianity, 1,—11. Relates his conversion and call to the apostleship, and his preaching afterwards, 12,—23. Festus upon bearing it, counts him mad, who maintains the contrary in a modest appeal to Agrippa, 24,—26. Agrippa is almost persuaded to be a Christian, and, together with Festus, pronounces Paul to be innocent, 27,—32.

TEXT.

THEN Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself.

1 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews:

3 Especially, because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

4 My manner of life from my youth, which was at

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Festus had opened the design of his bringing the apostle Paul before king Agrippa, and the rest of the company, Agrippa called out to Paul, and said, You may now have free liberty, without danger of being unseasonably interrupted, to offer what you have to say in your own vindication from the crimes that have been laid to your charge. Thereupon Paul, reaching out his hand in a free and decent action, to intimate that he was going to speak, and desired the silent attention of the audience, made his apology (*απολογία*) for himself and his glorious cause, like a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian divine, in the following respectful, judicious, and moving manner:

2 I esteem it, O king Agrippa, a favourable turn of Providence, and it is a great satisfaction to me, that I am called at this time, to plead my cause before a prince of your great capacity and advantages, for understanding the truth and force of every particular that I shall alledge to clear myself, and the doctrines I preach, from the invidious indictments that have been preferred against me by my countrymen, the Jews.

3 And this I shall attempt with the greatest pleasure, especially, because I am well assured of your Majesty's noted proficiency in the knowledge of all the religious rites, ceremonies, and customs of the Jews, and points of controversy among them, relating to their perpetual obligation, and to the coming of the Messiah. I therefore humbly and earnestly intreat, that, as the seriousness and importance of the subject require it, you would please to hear me with clemency, candour, and patience, whilst I give you a brief account of my principles and behaviour, all along from my youth up, to this very day.

4, 5 As to the manner of my life and conversation in younger years, though I was born of Jewish parents at

Tar-

at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews,

5 Which knew me from the beginning. (if they would testify,) that, after the most straitest sect of our religion, I lived a Pharisee.

Tarsus in Cilicia; yet I was early educated among the people of mine own nation at *Jerusalem*, where I was brought up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, (chap. xii. 3.) a Rabbi of great reputation for learning and religion. This is a fact generally known among the Jews themselves, many of which were acquainted with me from my very first coming thither, and all along afterwards, during my abode there; and were they so just and fair, as to appear to my character, they could not but bear me witness, that I was not only by *profession*, but in *practice* and behaviour, a *Pharisee*, living up, with the greatest sobriety and exactness, to the rules and orders of that sect, which is, of all others, the most strict and accurate in religious observances, especially of ceremonial rites, according to the law and the prophets, and the traditions of the elders: So that it is neither through ignorance, prepossession, or libertine principles, nor from any strong habits of vice that I have altered my sentiments about some important points of a religious nature, whilst I still retain as great a regard as ever to the fundamental articles of the religion which I was brought up in.

6 And now I stand, and am judged for the hope of the promise

6 And even now I stand accused, and am judged, as a criminal, by mine adversaries, for professing and preaching, upon surest grounds, that the great blessing, which was promised to *Abraham*, and others of our pious ancestors, and was the object of their faith and hope, is now confirmed, and, in part, fulfilled, by the coming of *Jesus Christ* *, whose resurrection from the dead proved

N O T E.

* It appears from ver. 8. that the apostle here speaks of the *resurrection* and I think the connection of ver. 9. with that verse, plainly intimates that he meant the resurrection of *Christ*, for otherwise, what he there says about the things which he once thought he ought to do, contrary to the name of *Jesus*, seems to be brought in too abruptly. It likewise appears from chap. xxiv. 15. that he included a resurrection of the righteous to eternal life, which was the object of his hope; and as the resurrection of *Christ* was a grand article, which ran through the apostle's ministry, we cannot but suppose, that he mentioned their resurrection, as the fruit and consequence of his. When therefore he represents the great benefit hoped for, as a matter of promise, he seems to intend, that it was either the upshot of all the promises, or of some eminent and comprehensive promise made to the fathers, such as that given to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, that *God would be their God*; from whence our Lord inferred the resurrection of the dead, (*Matth. xxii. 31, 32*, see the note there); and, with respect

to which, God is said to have prepared them a city, *Heb. xi. 16*, or the promise to *Abraham*, that in his seed all nations should be blessed, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And this promise of the Messiah included his own resurrection, (*Psal. xvi. 10*.) and the resurrection of others to eternal life through him; for they that be of faith could not otherwise be blessed with faithful *Abraham*, and, as *Abraham's* seed, be heirs according to the promise, as the apostle says they are, *Gal. iii. 9, 29*. Accordingly *Dr Whitty* observes from *Maimonides*, that it was one of the fundamental articles of the Jews, that their *Messiah* should raise the dead, and bring them into paradise: And as it was expressly foretold, *Dan. xii. 2*, that of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, some shall awake to everlasting life; so we are assured, (*Heb. xi. 35, 39*.) that some of the ancient worthies were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection; and that these all having obtained a good report, through faith, received not the promise.

mise made of God
unto our fathers:

proved him to be the only true and expected Messiah, (*chap. xiii. 32, 33.*); and that, as he is the first-fruits of them that sleep in him, (*1 Cor. xv. 20.*) they who believe in his name shall rise again to everlasting life. (*Chap. xxiv. 14, 15, 21.*)

7 Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come; for which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

7 Unto the enjoyment of this promise of a blessed resurrection, religious people among the twelve tribes of *Israel* hope to arrive; in which hope they worship God with perpetual and intense servour, (*to exultation*) and with great frequency, (*Luke xviii. 7.*) every morning and evening, and at all proper seasons, (*Luke ii. 37.*) and yet for the sake of this hope according to the promise, which I entertain and endeavour to propagate for the good of others, I am so unhappy, O king *Agrippa*, as to be accused by the *Sadducean Jews*, as though I were therein guilty of the most heinous crime, and asserted the most monstrous absurdity.

8 Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?

8 But I would humbly ask this honourable assembly, Why should it be deemed unreasonable to believe, that the great God and Creator of all, whose power is infinite, should raise Jesus, his only begotten Son from the dead, and raise up others to an immortal life thro' him *? What! Do any of you account this to be past all possibility, or belief, while none of the *Jews* themselves, except the *Sadducees*, deny a resurrection of the dead?

9 I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

9 I myself indeed, formerly, was as much prejudiced against the notion of a crucified and risen Saviour, as any one, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, now can be; inso-much that (to my shame I speak it) I really thought it was my duty, and would be doing God good service, to use my utmost endeavours, by all means possible, for surprising the reputation, authority and interest, name and doctrine of Christ, who was commonly called, by way of contempt, *Jesus of Nazareth*.

10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death I gave

10 And this I did in the most public manner at *Jerusalem* itself; yea, so zealous and active was I therein, that I got abundance of the holy disciples of the Lord Jesus to be committed to jails, and laid under close confinement, for the profession they made of faith in him, by virtue of warrants which I obtained of the chief priests and elders against them, (*chap. xxii. 5.*) and when any of them were tried, condemned, and executed for their religion, I cried out aloud for what I called justice, and

N O T E.

* I have taken in both the ways, in which these words (*εὐχριστος*) may be rendered, according as they are read with a point between them, or not; and it is highly probable,

that the apostle might observe an air of ridicule in some of the company, at his mentioning the resurrection.

gave my voice against them.

11 And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme: and, being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them, even unto strange cities.

12 Whereupon, as I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests;

13 At mid-day, O king. I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me, and them which journeyed with me.

and gave my suffrage against them, (*ἀποδοῦναι ψήφον*) declared my approbation of the severest death that could be inflicted upon them, and justified it in all companies; a notorious instance of which appeared at the most cruel martyrdom of one *Stephen*, a man of great eminence among the Christians. (*Chap. vii. 58. and viii. 1.*)

11 I also very frequently searched out others of them, and brought them to every synagogue that lay convenient for me, where I took care to have them well scourged, and exposed to open shame; and by the terrors of persecutions, with which I indefatigably pursued them, I, alas! forced some of them, against their consciences, to renounce and blaspheme Christ's blessed name, by which they were called; as though they thought him an impostor: And, not contented with this horrible violation of all natural and sacred rights nearer home, so furiously was I enraged against them, even unto madness itself, and so vexed at heart to think that, notwithstanding all I could do, they rather gained, than lost ground, that I followed and distressed them by all possible methods of severity, even unto far distant cities, without the confines of *Judea*, where they dwelt, or were driven to seek shelter from the fury of my oppressions. From all these well-known dreadful facts, it plainly appears that there could not be a more determined and inveterate enemy to Christianity than myself; and therefore my conversion from what I then was, to what, blessed be God, I now am, must in all reason be supposed to be owing to some extraordinary cause.

12 Now, to give you a faithful account of this, it was in the following miraculous manner: Whilst I was, at a certain time, going as far as the city of *Damascus* in *Syria*, to execute the cruel commission and powers which I had received from the chief priests and the rest of the *Jewish* sanhedrim, to distress the disciples of Jesus there;

13 At noon-day, O king *Agrippa*, as I was travelling on the road thither, full of zeal and resolution to do my utmost against them, I was, all on a sudden, surprised with a most illustrious light, which darted down from heaven, with irresistible evidence of its being a divine appearance, and which shone all around me and my fellow-travellers, that went to aid and assist me in my persecuting errand; a light vastly superior to the brightest shining of the sun itself, and even obscuring its meridian splendor.

14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.

16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee

14 And when all of us were so struck and astonished at this tremendous dazzling light, that we fell prostrate to the earth in the utmost confusion and horror, I heard an articulate voice from the divine glory, calling distinctly to me by name, and saying, with great majesty and earnestness, in the *Hebrew* language, which I perfectly understood, it being my mother-tongue, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* That is, as I afterwards understood it, Why are you so daring, foolish, and impious, as to lay yourself out with such indefatigable pains to abuse and oppress my members and my cause, which I am so nearly interested in, and concerned for, that I account what is done against them to be done against myself? You thereby persecute me in them: All this is as senseless and fruitless, and as injurious to yourself, as it would be for a man to kick with his naked foot against briars and thorns, or even against goads and spurs, (*ἄπο κινερα*) whereby he would only hurt and wound himself, without suppressing or destroying them.

15 I not knowing who it was, that in this earnest and awful manner spoke to me, and yet believing it to be one of the heavenly world, answered, with trembling and astonishment, Who art thou, Lord, that speakest with such terrible rebuke? What wilt thou have me to do? (*chap. ix. 6.*) And he immediately replied, with a solemnity and endearment peculiar to himself, which pierced me to the heart, I am Jesus, the only Saviour, whom you are so desperately prejudiced against, as to persecute me, even unto death, in my members, that are intimately united and dear to me, whilst I myself, whom your own countrymen crucified, am out of your reach, and can be killed no more.

16 But, said he, with melting condescension and tenderness, to shame me out of my infidelity and cruelty, and to encourage my hopes in his mercy, Be no longer dismayed; but get up from your prostration on the ground, and stand on your legs again, as one ready to go about the better work that I shall employ you in: For I have now appeared in this miraculous and compassionate manner to you, for this very end and purpose *, as I shall

N O T E.

* By comparing chap. ix. 15. with chap. xxii. 14, 15. it appears that Christ communicated to the apostle the substance of what is here mentioned by *Ananias*, under a prophetic impulse at *Damascus*: But as it is not to be supposed that every transaction is fully related in so short a history, and we often find, that, in recording speeches some par-

ticulars are left out in one place, which are supplied in others, our Lord might say, at least, some of these things on the road, and further confirm them afterwards by *Ananias*, and still more fully explain them in the apostle's vision in the temple, at his second journey to *Jerusalem*, (see the note on chap. ix. 17.); or else for brevity's sake, the apostle's

thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,

18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and

shall soon more fully satisfy you, that I may qualify you for, and authorize you to be, one of my ministering servants, to bear a plain, undaunted, and noble testimony to the truth, both of those important things concerning me, which ye have now seen and heard, and of still many more discoveries, which I will hereafter make by further appearances to you, till you shall be thoroughly acquainted with the whole scheme of my gospel, which you shall preach to others.

17 And though the dangers and troubles that you may be exposed to in fulfilling your ministry will be great and many, (*chap. ix. 16.*) yet fear not, I will be with you, to take care of you; I will preserve your life, till I have done my work by you; rescuing you by my watchful and powerful Providence, out of the hands of the Jewish people*, who will be as inveterate against you, as you yourself have heretofore been against my disciples; and out of the hands of the most formidable enemies that you may meet with among the heathen nations, to both of which sorts of people I now (*xxv. 22.*) give you an apostolic commission, to be executed in due season; for preaching the glad tidings of salvation.

18 To open the eyes of their understandings severally †, they both needing a divine illumination, which shall attend your ministry, to give them a true discerning of spiritual things, and turn them by a thorough conversion, in the sense and temper of their hearts and course of their lives, from the darkness of blind superstition and idolatry, ignorance and error, sin and folly, to the light of saving knowledge, and to all true holiness; and from the tyranny and dominion of the prince of darkness, who rules in the hearts of the children of

N O T E S.

Stle's own historian might here relate these things, as instructions that he declared himself to have certainly received from Christ, without nicely distinguishing the different manner and time of his receiving them.

* The people, evidently mean the Jews, in distinction from the Gentiles, as they are also distinguished, ver. 23. Accordingly after the people, the Syriac version and some manuscripts read, of the Jews. Vid. Bez. and Mill. in loc.

† I do not see any necessity for confusing the sense of this verse, as interpreters commonly do, to the conversion of the Gentiles: For how strongly saith it may be descriptive of them, it is plain to me, and I think is generally allowed, that our Lord's sending the apostle, which was spoken of in the foregoing verse, related to the Jews as well as to the Gentiles. Why then should not this verse, which expresses the end for which Christ sent

him, relate to one as well as the other of that sort of people? There seems to be nothing in these passages that may not be applied to the Jews, whose guilty, dark, and enslaved circumstances, and whose conversion are described in other parts of the New Testament, in terms near akin to these. See, among others. *Matth. iv. 16, 22. Luke i. 16, 17, 74, —77. John i. 5. and iii 14,—21. and viii. 34,—45. Acts xv. 9. and Rom. ii. and iii.* And when the apostle comes to tell Agrippa in the two next verses, (ver. 19, 20,) how he complied with this order from Christ himself, he speaks of his preaching first to the Jews at Damascus and Jerusalem, and thro' all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, which has a plain reference to what Jesus here spoke of, as the end of his sending him.

and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

of disobedience, to an entire subjection and willing obedience to God, as their chief good and highest end, and to his service and his way of salvation by a Redeemer; that they may readily accept of, and obtain the free and full remission of all their sins; and may be intitled to, fitted for, and at length made actual partakers of that glorious inheritance of the children of God, (*κληρον*) which, by his sovereign disposal, is divided, as the land of *Canaan* was, by lot, among them that are renewed and made holy, as well as pardoned, through a lively and heart-purifying faith, which terminates upon me, as the only Saviour of lost sinners, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*.

18 Whereupon, O king *Agrippa*, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.

19 This heavenly light, and its attending gracious instructions and orders came with such irresistible evidence, authority, and power, to my mind and conscience, O king *Agrippa*, that I could no longer maintain my former prejudices against Christ and his gospel, or forbear yielding myself up willingly, and without reserve, to the divine call, that accompanied such a supernatural and over-bearing vision.

20 But shewed first unto them of *Damascus*, and at *Jerusalem*, and throughout all the coast of *Judea*, and then to the *Gentiles*, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

21 But in obedience to it, I immediately became a sincere convert to the Lord Jesus, and went and preached him, first of all to the *Jews* at *Damascus*, the very place to which I was going with a contrary design; and, in due time, to those at *Jerusalem*, where I had been educated, and was formerly known to be the vilest of persecutors, (*chap. ix. 20,—29.*); afterwards I likewise travelled to various towns and villages through all the country of *Judea*, that I might proclaim the glad tidings of salvation, and shew my hearty good-will to my kinsmen after the flesh: And, at length, I turned to the *Gentiles*, (*chap. xiii. 46.*) declaring to all sorts of people, according to my instructions, (*ver. 17, 18.*) that it is their indispensable duty, and highest interest, upon the encouragements of the gospel, now, after all their former ignorance, errors, and evil ways, (*μετανοειν*) to change their minds, to take conviction of their guilt and danger, and to embrace the truths of divine revelation, as I myself had done through grace; and with grief for, and hatred of all their iniquities, to turn from them to God, through a crucified and risen Saviour; (*ver. 23.*) and in consequence of this, as also in testimony of their sincerity therein to abound, in such good works as are suitable to, and becoming believing penitents.

21 For these causes

21 It was only for preaching these benevolent, holy, and heavenly doctrines, of the truth of which I was to

causes the Jews taught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.

23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should

remarkably convinced, and for the publishing of which I was so immediately authorized from heaven, that the unbelieving *Jews*, through their desperate enmity against Jesus Christ himself, and against his pure gospel, seized me in the temple at *Jerusalem*, and were going (*διακρίνωσιν*) to put me to death in a tumultuous manner, with their own hands. (*Chap. xxi. 30, 31.*)

22 Having therefore, according to my great Lord and Master's promise, (*ver. 17.*) found wonderful protection at that perilous juncture, through the superintending care and good providence of God, by means of the chief captain's timely interposing for my safety, (*chap. xxi. 31, 32.*); and having by his extraordinary inward aids and assistances, and outward appearances on my behalf, been encouraged, and supported under, and carried through, many other dangers and difficulties, I am preserved alive, and (*εστη*) have stood my ground to this very day, and still go on bearing my testimony for Christ on all occasions; which I do, without fear or shame, to lesser or greater sinners, poor and rich, to the populace, and to persons of high rank and dignity, like those of this honourable assembly, in hope that God will bless it to some of them: And, tho' the *Jews* are exasperated against me for this, I herein declare nothing, in effect, but that the divine predictions are now actually fulfilled in Jesus, which were delivered many ages ago by the holy prophets, and even by the types and figures, and prophetic hints*, contained in the law of *Moses* himself.

23 The predictions that I mean, and my countrymen are well acquainted with, are of the following purport; namely, that the promised Messiah, spoken of by the prophet *Daniel*, (*chap. ix. 26.*) should suffer many tribulations, and be cut off by death; not for himself, but for the transgressions of his people, (*Isa. liii. 8.*); and that he should be the *first* that would rise from the dead, never to die any more, (*Psal. xvi. 10, 11.* compared with *Acts xiii. 35,—37.*); and so would be the head, pattern, and author of the resurrection of others to eternal life, in which respect he would be the *first-born*.

N O T E.

* Since there is no express and literal testimony in the law to the death and resurrection of Christ; there is no doubt, says *Calvin*, on the place, but that this doctrine was delivered by tradition from the fathers, from whence the *Jews* learnt, that all the figures referred to Christ. From this hint I would observe, that the *lamb sacrifice*, and the *scape goat*, on the great day of atonement, *Lev. xvi. 7, &c.* and the *living bird*, which was *deft* in

the blood of the bird that was killed, in the cleansing of lepers, *Lev. xiv. 6.* might be looked upon as types or figures of the death and resurrection of Christ: And the gathering of the people, viz. of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to the great *Shiloh*, was a plain prophecy of the calling of the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, (*Gen. xlix. 10.*) and so it is understood by the *Chaldee paraphrasts*, and the *Jerusalem targum*. See *Ainsworth* on those places.

should shew light
unto the people,
and to the Gen-
tiles.

24 And, as he
thus spake for
himself, Festus
said with a loud
voice, Paul, thou
art beside thyself:
much learning
doth make thee
mad.

25 But he said,
I am not mad,
most noble Festus;
but speak
forth the words
of truth and so-
berness.

26 For the king
knoweth of these
things, before
whom also I speak
freely: for I am
persuaded that
none of these
things are hidden
from him, for
this

born or first-begotten from the dead, and the first-fruits
of them that sleep in him, (Rev. i. 5. Col. i. 18. and 1
Cor. xv. 20.); and that he, by his word and Spirit, should
bring the light of salvation to the people of *Israel*, and
to sinners of the *Gentiles*. (Isa. xlii. 6, 7. and xlix. 6.)

24 While the apostle was going on in this most de-
lightful part of his apology for himself, and for these
concerning truths, *Festus*, the Roman governor, who
was an utter stranger to all such sort of doctrines, was
surprized at them; and calling out aloud, to put a stop
to him, said, with an air of contempt and disdain, as
though his prisoner were to be pitied, rather than either
believed, or blamed, or further heard, Alas! *Paul*,
What strange unintelligible stuff is this, which you de-
liver with so much earnestness and warmth! You are
certainly mad, to talk at such a wild rate as you do: I
have heard indeed that you are a man of letters, (*chap.*
xvii. 3.); and now I see how conversant you have been
in the *Jewish* learning, (*ver.* 22, 23.); it seems to me,
that your hard study, and multiplicity of confused, cu-
rious, and indigested ideas of things above your reach,
have quite turned your brain.

25 But *Paul*, instead of being ruffled and provoked
at such scornful treatment, in the presence of so many
persons of distinction, replied, with admirable meekness
and composure, decency and respect, No, most noble
Festus, I am, blessed be God, far from being delirious
or crackbrained; but the words that I speak, contain
solid and important truths, founded upon the justest
evidence, and real matters of fact; and what I say a-
bout them, do not proceed from a disturbed imagina-
tion; but from a sedate and rational mind, in full
possession of itself, and under divine conduct, and is
every way worthy to be entertained by the wisest and
best of men.

26 For though your Excellency may be a stranger to
these things, for want of proper opportunities of being
let into them; yet the king, in whose royal presence I
stand, and who has been long acquainted with the *Jew-*
ish writings, and with the religious state of affairs in
Judea, (*ver.* 3.) knows that the things I have been
mentioning, are no whims or fancies of my own; and
therefore I speak of them with the greater freedom and
confidence before him: For I am well satisfied, that none
of the facts which I have insisted on, such as the death
and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and even my own con-
version, are new things to him; he cannot but have
often heard of them: For they were not secret transac-
tions

This thing was not done in a corner.

17 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.

18 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

19 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am,

tions, nor have they been hushed up or concealed; but they were publicly performed, and have been divulged in numberless places, and attested by many faithful servants and disciples of the Lord Jesus, in proof and confirmation of this main point, that he is the true Messiah.

27 Then the apostle, turning to *Agrippa*, addressed him in a close and touching manner, saying, King *Agrippa*, permit me, under favour, to appeal to your judgment and conscience, and humbly to propose this plain question, Do you, who have been brought up in the *Jewish* religion, believe the predictions recorded in the inspired writings of *Moses* and other prophets, relating to the Messiah? But pardon me that I put such a question, as though I suspected the contrary; I am persuaded from your known profession and character, that you do, and cannot but assent to them. I beseech you then to compare them impartially with what has been done and suffered by our Jesus; and see if they be not evidently and punctually fulfilled in him.

28 *Agrippa* was so sensibly impressed with this gently, and yet serious and solemn appeal to him, that, in answer to *Paul*, he said, I am, I confess, so far from thinking you mad, that on the contrary there seems to be so much force of *scripture* and *reason*, and so much likelihood, at least, of truth, in what you have offered, that you have almost made a convert of me; and were it suitable to my dignity, and the religion I have been brought up in, I could scarce help resolving to renounce *Judaism*, and embrace *Christianity*.

29 Then *Paul* replied, with inimitable beauty, tenderness, and endearment, in which the gentleman and the *Christian* equally shone, I am so thoroughly convinced of the truth, necessity, and excellence of the doctrines I preach, concerning a crucified and risen Saviour; I have such happy experience of the present supports and unutterable joys that are to be found in him and in his ways, and am so fully assured of the eternal felicity that will be the final inheritance of all his true disciples; and my heart glows with such a compassionate, and, permit me to say, generous concern for the happiness of my fellow-creatures, who must be saved, or lost for ever, that it is my earnest desire and prayer to God, that, by his grace, not only your *Majesty*, but also his *Excellency* the governor, and every one of this august assembly may be, and O that they already were, not only almost, which will do them no good if it stops there, but abundantly, yea, entirely and without reserve, in the same state and condition with myself,

I am, except these bonds.

30 And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them.

31 And, when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doth nothing worthy of death, or of bonds.

32 Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar.

as a *Christian*; excepting the sufferings in bonds, which I now undergo, though cheerfully, for the sake of Christ! May all of you be, what I am, in spiritual, holy, and heavenly dispositions and privileges, comforts and blessings; and none of you ever be subjected to the reproaches and tribulations, and this chain, which I, without any just cause, am loaded with!

30 And when he had said these moving things, and willingly would have proceeded further in his discourse, *Agrippa*, (like *Felix*, chap. xxiv. 25.) growing uneasy in his conscience, got up on a sudden, as not caring to hear any more, lest it should come still closer to him than he would know how to bear; and, upon his motion to be gone, *Festus* the governor, and *Bernice* the king's sister, and all the assembly rose and dispersed.

31 And (*ἀναχωρησάντων*) as they were going away from the court, and afterwards while they retired, they talked one to another about both the matter and manner of *Paul's* defence of himself, and of the doctrine he preached; and, upon the whole, it carried such conviction along with it, that they agreed in saying, This wonderful man, notwithstanding all the clamour that has been raised against him, has certainly been guilty of no crime that deserves death, or so much as confinement or bonds.

32 And (†) particularly king *Agrippa*, who well understood both the *Roman* and *Jewish* laws, said to *Festus*, (who seemed to be of the same mind,) I really am of opinion, that this man might, and in justice ought to have been discharged, had he not appealed to *Nero* our emperor; there is no law of God, or of the government, to forbid it*; but now to *Cæsar* he must go†. And so this great and good man had a testimony in the consciences of those who were no friends to Christian religion, that he was innocent, and that there was nothing in his doctrine for which any one ought to suffer, merely on account of his professing and preaching it.

N O T E S.

RECOI-

* There was at present no law of the empire that could affect *Paul*: For *Claudius's* edict, chap. xviii. 1. which banished the *Jews* (and perhaps included the *Christians*) from *Rome*, died with him; and *Nero* did not begin to persecute the *Christians*, till the tenth year of his reign, which was at least four, some say double that number of years, after this time; and therefore it was high prudence in *Paul* to appeal to *Cæsar*, that he might be judged by the imperial laws, rather than be delivered up to the *Jews*, as in chap. xxv. 10, 11. See Dr *Hammond* on the place.

† It is generally agreed that, by the Ro-

man law, no judge of an inferior court could discharge, any more than condemn a prisoner after an appeal to *Cæsar*, in case the prosecutors joined issue upon the appeal, and consented to it. But some are of opinion, that unless the prosecutors did so, the appeal was not absolutely binding; and that therefore *Agrippa* and *Festus*, being unwilling to disoblige the *Jews*, by setting *Paul* at liberty, made this serve for an excuse of their continuing him in custody, when they themselves knew that they might have justified the discharging him. See Mr. *Henry* on the place.

RECOLLECTIONS.

Behold, in the great apostle, what a consistency and harmony there is between Christianity and good manners, and what an amiable lustre they cast, one on the other, especially when we are called to a defence of the gospel! And how great must our satisfaction be, if the worst crime our enemies can lay to our charge, is an avowed dependence on God's promises and performances, relating to the resurrection of Christ, and of believers to eternal life through him! Why should these things be thought impossible, or unlikely for the great and blessed God to do? And yet how many blind bigots, worse than the heathens themselves, are so incensed against the professors of Christ, as to think them deserving of imprisonment and death, only for holding articles of faith, as plain and important as these! And how vile must their temper be, when nothing gratifies them more, than forcing his professed disciples, contrary to their own consciences, to blaspheme his glorious name! But behold what a wonderful change the grace of God makes upon those that were under the power of the strongest prejudices to Christ before, and might be justly deemed persecutors of him, as all their enmity to his members and cause was for his sake! He can reach and turn their hearts, who were bringing the keenest destruction upon themselves by their impotent opposition to him; and having raised them up, as monuments of distinguishing mercy, can make them the most useful and eminent preachers of his gospel, and give them a noble, yet modest and decent courage, to maintain it before the greatest men upon earth: And how much soever their former acquaintance may be ruffled against them for all this, Christ will take them under his care and protection, and will make their ministrations successful for turning sinners of all nations, degrees, and characters, from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God; and for bringing them to that faith, repentance, and holiness here, which shall certainly issue in an eternal inheritance among the saints hereafter. The sum of the gospel, which corresponds to the predictions of Moses and the prophets, and by means of which believers are brought to all this happiness, lies in the doctrines of a crucified and risen Saviour, whose light and grace make them effectual to salvation: And though some, like Festus, may think the preaching of them to be talking like madmen; yet they are, in reality, the words of the greatest truth and soberness; and it would be strange indeed, if any should deny this, that know and own the scriptures of the Old Testament, and the plainest facts of the New. But alas! How many are there that, like king Agrippa, assent to the doctrines of divine revelation, have some convictions of their excellence, and concern about sharing in their blessings; and yet never get any farther, than to be almost Christians! O happy for them, were they altogether so! Who, that has any compassion for mankind, would not wish, and beg of God, that, were it his will, all who hear of Christ, might be thoroughly brought over to him, and partake of every thing that belongs to persons of the Christian character, except the persecutions which many of them endure for his sake? But even while they suffer these, they have enough in him to support them; and all disinterested persons must allow, that there is nothing in Christian religion, for which they ought to be deprived of their liberty, much less of their lives.

C H A P. XXVII.

Paul embarks and sets sail, as a prisoner, for Rome, which may be called his fourth apostolic journey, though under confinement, 1,—8. He foretells great dangers in the voyage, but the company do not believe him, 9,—11. They meet with a threatening storm, which reduces them to the utmost extremity, 12,—20. Paul, nevertheless, assures them from God, that none of their lives should be lost, 21,—26. They suffer a terrible shipwreck, but at length they all land with safety, though with great difficulty, on a certain island, 27,—44.

TEXT.

AND, when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul, and certain other prisoners, unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.

PARAPHRASE.

FESTUS having resolved, in consequence of *Paul's* appeal to *Cæsar*, and of *Agrippa's* advice upon it, (*chap. xvi. 32.*) that he should be sent to *Nero* at his imperial seat in *Italy*, it was ordered by Providence, for wise and holy purposes, and was concluded by *Festus*, for the convenience of the shortest and least expensive passage, that the apostle and those of us, who were his companions and desirous to stick by him to the last, should go to *Rome* by sea: Accordingly they that had him in custody, during his confinement at *Cæsarea*, delivered up their charge, and committed *Paul*, together with other prisoners, who were likewise, for diverse causes, to appear at *Cæsar's* tribunal, to the care of one *Julius*, a Roman captain of an hundred soldiers, belonging to a body of troops, that went by the name of *Augustus's* legion.

2 And, entering into a ship of *Adramyttium*, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of *Asia*, one *Aristarchus* a *Macedonian*, of *Thessalonica*, being with us.

3 And the next day we touched at *Sidon*. And *Julius* courteously intreated *Paul*, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.

5 And, when we had launched from thence, we sailed under *Cyprus*, because the winds

2 And, embarking in a vessel, which came from *Adramyttium*, a sea port of *Myſia*, in the *lesser Asia*, we thrust out, and set sail, designing to coast along the shore of the *lesser Asia*, there being with us, in the ship*, another Christian friend and brother, namely, the memorable *Aristarchus* of *Thessalonica*, the metropolis of *Macedonia*, who was the apostle's companion in many of his travels and sufferings. (*Chap. xix. 29. and xx. 4.*)

3 The next day, after we went aboard, we arrived at *Sidon*, a noted city of *Phœnicia*, where, the ship making a short stay, God gave *Paul* such favour in the eyes of *Julius* the centurion, that he used him with great humanity, more like a friend than a prisoner, and had such confidence in his faithfulness and honour, as to allow him free liberty of going to visit some of his Christian brethren there, that he might have the pleasure of their company, and the benefit of their care, (*παρασκευάζειν*) in supplying him with good provisions for his present refreshment, and the remainder of his voyage.

4 And when we put off from thence, instead of sailing straight forward from east to west, and leaving *Cyprus* on the right hand, we were obliged to coast round the

NOTE.

* The last we heard of the historian *Luke*, and of *Aristarchus*, was when *Paul* went to *Jerusalem*, and was seized in the temple, (*chap. xxi.*) That *Aristarchus* went with him thither, must be supposed, because he was one of the messengers of the church at *Thessalonica*, to accompany him in carrying their charitable contributions to the poor Christians there, *chap. xx. 4.* And that *Luke* travelled with him thither, appears from his

speaking of himself as one of *Paul's* company, when he arrived at *Jerusalem*, *chap. xxi. 17.* (See the note on *chap. xx. 5.*) And as we now find both these persons with *Paul* at his going a ship-board, it is reasonable to conclude, that they either went with him, or soon followed him from *Jerusalem* to *Cæsarea*, and, probably, attended him all the time of his confinement there.

winds were contrary.

5 And, when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia.

6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein.

7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone:

8 And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called, The fair havens, nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,

the northern side of that island, between that and the continent; because the winds lay so full in our teeth, that we could not steer a direct course.

5 But afterwards sailing along, near the *Cilician* and *Pamphylian* shores, over the sea, which takes its name from those countries of the *lesser Asia*, we safely arrived at *Myra*, the metropolis of the province of *Lycia*, and the port to which the vessel was bound.

6 And there the *Roman* officer meeting with a ship that came from the famous *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, and was bound for *Italy*, with a lading of wheat and other merchandize, (*ver.* 18, 38.) he, contracting with the master for our passage, ordered us to quit the other vessel, and go on board this.

7 Then (i.) putting to sea again, we for some time made but little way for want of a favourable gale; so that, after several days, we had scarce got forward fifty leagues, not quite so far as over-against *Cnidus*, a cape and city of the peninsula of *Caria*; and the wind being so much against us, that we could not keep on a direct course, as was intended, to leave *Crete* on the left hand, we were forced to sail under that island on the other side, over-against its eastern cape, which goes by the name of the promontory of *Salmone*.

8 And after we had, with great difficulty, got about that point, we soon reached a port that lay a few leagues farther in that part of the island, and goes by the name of the *Fair havens**, and is, indeed, according to its name, a beautiful port for situation and prospect, not far from the city of *Lasea*.

9, 10 Now when a good deal of time had been wasted in proceeding only thus far, and sailing grew extremely dangerous, by means of the long and dark nights, and the tempestuous season of the year that were coming on; for autumn was by this time pretty far advanced, the annual fast of the *Jews*† on the great day of atonement, which was the tenth day of the seventh month, (*Lev.* xxiii. 27, 28.) being already past, *Paul* was strongly impressed with an apprehension of the bad consequence of venturing out to sea again, at such a perilous season: And therefore, though he all along trusted in the Lord to carry him safe to *Rome*, according to his promise, (*chap.* xxiii. 11.) yet, that he might not neglect any means

N O T E.

* The fair havens still retains that name in the island of *Crete*, which is now called *Gauda*, in the *Mediterranean* sea.

† The fast, by way of eminence, (*ver.* *versum*) seems plainly to mean the solemn

fast on the great day of atonement; and as that fell on the tenth day of the seventh month, or of the month *Tisri*, which answered partly to our *September*, and partly to our *October* it was about *Michaelmas*.

10 And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.

11 Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

12 And, because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south-west, and north-west.

13 And, when the south-wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.

14 But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous

means of preservation, nor presumptuously tempt God by unnecessarily exposing himself and others to apparent hazards, he earnestly intreated the chief persons among them to take heed what they did, saying to them, with a prophetic spirit, Gentlemen, I clearly foresee, that, if ye resolve to pursue this voyage at so incommodious and stormy a season, it will be attended with such injury, (*υβρις*) as will turn to your own shame, and make you dearly repent your folly and rashness, and with abundance of loss by a terrible shipwreck, (*πολλος ζημιαις*) not only of the cargo and vessel, but likewise, unless God wonderfully interpose to prevent it, (*ver. 23, 24.*) of our own lives, who are to set sail in her.

11 Nevertheless, the centurion, supposing that *Paul*, though an honest good man, understood little of sailing; and having a better opinion of the judgment of the commander of the vessel, and of its owner, in affairs of that nature, which peculiarly belonged to their province, who persuaded him that they might go with all safety, he gave credit to them, rather than to the admonition that *Paul* had given them.

12 And the *Fair havens*, though pleasant for situation, being a very inconvenient winter harbour, because it lay open to the north-eastern seas and storms, the majority of the ship's company agreed, while some of them were otherwise minded, that it would be best to set sail from thence, and try whether they might not make shift to reach, at least, as far as *Phenice*, and take up their winter station there, which is another port at the western end of *Crete*, and lay between two necks of land, one of which ran outward the south-west, and the other toward the north-west points of the heavens; and so, being well defended against the most dangerous winds, ships might ride there with greater safety.

13 And God, in his providence, suffering them to follow this counsel, that he might make his power known in carrying them through the greatest dangers, and might take an opportunity of honouring and distinguishing his servant *Paul*, by remarkable tokens of his favour; as soon as the south wind blew with a gentle gale, they flattering themselves that, by the help of this, they should gain their point, weighed anchor, and coasted along the shore of that island as near as they could.

14 But, to their great disappointment, the wind soon chopped about, and a terrible tempest, like a hurricane, (*αίφνης τυφωνος*) arose, and beat upon them, which is called

wind, called Euroclydon.

15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.

16 And running under a certain island which is called Claudia, we had much work to come by the boat :

17 Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the quick-sands, brake sail, and so were driven.

18 And, we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship.

19 And the third day we cast out with our own hands

called *Euroclydon* *, and may signify a wind that rises suddenly from the east, and puts the sea into a great commotion, or *Euro Aquilo*, which signifies a north-east wind.

15 And when the vessel was whirled and tossed about, (*συνπράχθιστος*) and almost swallowed up in the surging waves, and we were not able to steer a regular course, or to face and make head against the impetuous storm, we were almost at our wits end, and, staggering about like drunken men, (*Psal. cvii. 27.*) even committed the ship to the mercy of the winds and waves, and let her drive at random, wherever they might force her, in hope that, possibly, God might, some way or other, appear for our preservation.

16 And while we were hurried along, and driven under the shore of a small island, called *Clauda*, a few leagues distant from the south-western part of *Crete*, it was with the utmost difficulty that we hauled up the ship's boat, and became masters of it for such uses as occasion might require in our greatest extremity.

17 The mariners having taken up, and secured the boat, set themselves, in the best manner they could, to strengthen and preserve the ship itself, by conveying large ropes under the bottom, and girding it all around about, as tight as possible, to hold its sides together, and prevent its splitting and shattering to pieces : And when they found that the ship worked toward the *African* shore, and were afraid lest she should strike upon the noted quicksands, which lay on that coast, they dropped their sails, and so let her drive just as Providence, which rules the winds and the waves, should carry her.

18 And we being still dismally tossed about by the furious winter storms, (*χειμαρμονιστον*) now lifted up on the swelling waves toward the heavens, anon sunk down again to the depths, (*Psal. cvii. 26.*) the mariners, on the morrow, cast some bulky parts of the cargo over board, to lighten the vessel, that it might be the better fitted to rise and fall with the foaming billows, and outlive the storm. So dear were their lives to them above all the treasures of this world !

19 And on the next day after that, the danger so sensibly increased, that all hands were aloft ; and those of us that were only passengers, joined with the seamen to throw over-board, even as much of the utensils and furniture

N O T E.

* Dr. Mills tells us, that the *Alexandrian*, *Vulgate*, and *Euthiopic*, for *Ευροκλύδων* read *Ευροκλάδων*. And as that signifies the north-east, which would drive the ship out to sea,

Græci, *Bochart*, *Hommond*, and several other learned men, think that this is the wind here expressed by the *Latin* word turned into *Greek*.

hands the tackling of the ship.

10 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

21 But, after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them: and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have listened from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.

12 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

furniture of the ship itself, as could be any way spared, or was apprehended to be useless to us in our forlorn condition.

20 And when the air grew so exceeding thick and dark, that we could neither see the body of the sun by day, nor the stars by night, for the space of several natural days together, consisting of four-and-twenty hours each; and when, at the same time, boisterous weather, which made the sea roar, and the waves swell, still continued to distress us, we were reduced to the very brink of despair, and had no manner of hope that, without a miracle, any of us could escape being cast away, and perishing in the mighty waters.

21 But after we had abstained, for a great while, from our ordinary and regular meals, some having no heart to eat, thro' the terror of their minds; and others of us being moved, by a religious fear of God, to humble ourselves with fasting, before him, in hourly expectation of death; Paul stood up amongst us with great composure of spirit; and, though a prisoner, spoke with the authority and compassion of an apostle of Christ, first in a way of gentle rebuke, and then of seasonable consolation, saying particularly to them that were so eager for prosecuting the voyage, (*ver. 11, 12.*) Sirs, It would have been your prudence and interest, as well as duty, to have complied with the solemn admonition which I gave you at the *Fair havens*, about the danger of venturing out from thence to sea at this stormy season, (*ver. 8, 9, 10.*); and ye ought not to have left that port in *Crete* to expose yourselves to all this mischief and damage, (*τὸν ὑπὲρ τὰς κεφαλῶν καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν*) which I suppose ye are now ashamed of, as seeing, to your cost, how ye have brought it upon your own heads; and how all your skill in navigation, and hopes of gaining time and profit, by pushing forwards, have been miserably confounded.

22 However, I would not aggravate your sorrows, nor entertain the least resentment for the contempt which ye then put upon my advice. No, I rejoice, that, amidst all these terrors, I am able to speak a word of comfort to you; I therefore now beseech you to be of good heart, and not despair of safety by the mercy of God, notwithstanding all your former folly, and present danger: For I can certainly assure you, that not the life of any one of you all shall be lost, only the ship itself will be cast away. I speak not this from any private guess, or judgment of my own, but by special and undoubted

doubted intimation from the great God himself, whose kingdom rules over all.

23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

23 For, this very night last past, that God, whose I am, in common with all others by creation and preservation, and, in a way of more peculiar property, by his special choice and redemption, by covenant-relation, and by his subduing my heart to himself, and my own consent to be his; whose apostle also I am, and whom, by his grace, I cheerfully make it the great business of my life to serve, in preaching his gospel, and in all manner of holy conversation and godliness: This my God, I say, sent his angel, a glorious inhabitant of the heavenly world, who appeared to me in a vision, as plainly as if he had been a man standing by me:

24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

24 And he spoke to me by name, saying, *Paul*, notwithstanding all the threatening and formidable perils that now encompass you, Be not dismayed, as though the Lord Jesus had forsaken you, and would not arise to help and save you: For, as he told you, when in a former vision he himself appeared to you, (*chap. xxi. 11.*) you must, and shall be safely conducted to the *Roman* emperor, to whom you are now going, that you may preach his gospel at *Rome*: And, instead of the ship's crew being in danger of losing their lives for your sake, as the mariners were of old for the sake of a former prophet, who was flying away from the presence of the Lord, (*Jon. i. 10,—12.*) observe what I now furthermore tell you, God, in his great condescension and kindness, has, for your sake, and according to the desire of your heart, given every one of them their lives that are sailing in the ship with you; so that none of them shall be lost.

25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me.

25 I therefore beg, *Sirs*, that none of you would give way to discouragement: For I have an entire trust and confidence in God, according to his promise; and so great has been my experience of his power, goodness, and faithfulness to his word, that I firmly believe the event will perfectly answer what this heavenly messenger has told me from him.

26 Howbeit, we must be cast upon a certain island.

26 Nevertheless, I am, with equal certainty, assured, that we shall not be able to reach the port for which we are bound; but shall fall upon some island, the name of which is at present unknown, as not being revealed to me, where we must land, to escape the dangers of the sea.

27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up

27 Accordingly, after all this, and just a fortnight from the time that the terrible storm began, while, about the middle of the night, we were tossed up and down,

up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country:

28 And sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and, when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms.

29 Then, fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,

31 Paul said to the centurion, and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.

down, and carried to and fro, by the violence of the tempest, in that part of the *Mediterranean* which is the *Adriatic* sea*, the mariners apprehended that they were making toward some land; and so might possibly get ashore, if they could but escape the danger of running a-ground.

28 And to assist their judgment about it, they let down the plummet to sound the depth of the water, and found it to be twenty fathoms, which, reckoning six feet to a fathom, is one hundred and twenty feet; and soon after, when they had made a little more way, they let down the sounding line and plummet again, and found that they came into shallow water; it being then but fifteen fathoms, or ninety feet deep.

29 Then being more fully satisfied that they drew near to a shore, and being afraid lest they should strike and split upon some rock or other, in their approach to it, they dropt four anchors out of the hinder part of the ship, and lay by, earnestly longing for break of day, that they might see what situation they were in.

30 In the mean while, the sailors apprehensive of extreme danger, and not believing the assurances of preservation which the apostle had given them from God, (*ver. 22,—25.*) attempted to quit the vessel, and shift for themselves in the boat which they had hoisted into the ship some time before, (*ver. 16, 17.*); and, in order hereunto, they had let it down again into the sea, under pretence of only going into it for the convenience of dropping anchors out of the fore part of the ship, that she might ride with the greater safety.

31 But Paul (probably by divine suggestion) seeing thro' their design, and its dangerous tendency, said to the centurion and his soldiers, take heed, That these mariners be not suffered to make their escape: For God's peremptorily assuring me, (*ver. 24.*) that we shall all be preserved, supposes that it is to be done in the use of proper means, which are always inseparably connected with the end, in his purposes, promises, and performances; so that unless these men continue in the ship, to manage and work her for our common assistance, ye cannot obtain the promised safety, this being the way that God has appointed, and will own for bringing it about.

32 Then

N O T E.

* *Adria* is supposed not to be meant of the gulf of Venice which is now called the *Adriatic* sea, but of that part of the *Mediterranean* which lay between *Greece* and *Sicily*, together

with the lower parts of *Italy*. See Dr. *Wells's* geography of the New Testament, part ii. pag. 137.

32 Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

32 Then the soldiers, as well as the centurion, were so convinced of the importance of this advice, that they immediately cut the ropes by which the boat was fastened to the ship; and so let it fall into the sea, and run adrift out of their reach, to prevent the sailors leaving them at a time when their help might be most of all needful.

33 And, while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, 'This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried, and continued fasting, having taken nothing.'

34 Wherefore I pray you to take some meat; for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

33. 34 And while we were waiting for day-light, Paul exhorted and encouraged the whole company to eat and refresh themselves, saying, It is now a full fortnight, (*ver.* 27.) since ye have been looking for death, rather than life; and all that time ye have been in such confusion and terror of mind, as to have lost all inclination to food, and have continued fasting, without having taken one regular and hearty meal*. I therefore earnestly intreat you to compose yourselves, and eat as much as may be proper for the refreshment of animal nature: For, considering your great fatigues, frights, and long abstinence, your health and safety (*σώτηρας*) require it; since ye may otherwise soon sicken, languish, and sink to such a degree, as to be incapable of eating at all, or of struggling through the difficulties that lye before you: For I have such confidence in my God, that I can depend on his promise, which I mentioned to you before, (*ver.* 24.) and therefore I assure you again from him, that by his blessing, in the way of your duty, not the least harm shall befall any of you to the loss of life, or limb, which, to speak in a proverbial way, that is often used among the *Hebrews*, (*1 Sam.* xiv. 45. *2 Sam.* xiv. 11. *1 Kings* i. 52. and *Luke* xxi. 18.) shall be as entirely safe, as if not a hair of your heads were to fall to the ground.

35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of

35 And when he had spoke these encouraging things, he took bread into his hands, and, according to his religious custom at set meals, gave thanks to God, with great solemnity, for their preservation through many dangers hitherto, for his promise of further safety, and for continuing to them their necessary provision; begging that it might be sanctified to their use, and they might receive it with grateful hearts, and have proper nourishment by it to strengthen them for the toils which lay immediately before them: And this he did in

N O T E.

* But some learned writers take the literal construction and meaning of these words to be, "Expelling the fourteenth day, which is to day, ye continue without eating. So the meaning is, that they had taken no food all that day; and implies, that out of ex-

pectation of the fourteenth day (which they looked upon as a critical time, when their danger would be at the highest) they had forgot to take their usual repast; not that they had fasted fourteen days." *Blackwall's sacred classics*, vol. II. p. 172.

of them all, and when he had broke it he began to eat.

35 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat.

37 And we were in all in the ship, two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.

38 And, when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek, with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.

40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder-bands, and hoisted up the main sail to

in the fight and hearing of all the ship's crew, as not being afraid, or ashamed, to own God before heathens and soldiers, how little sense soever they might have of religion, or how much soever they might despise it: And, when he had broke the bread, he set them an example by beginning himself to eat of it.

36 Then they all, being revived and comforted, by hearing and seeing what he said and did, took food, and eat of it, likewise, till they had enough, (*ver.* 38.) in hopes that it might be the means of supporting a life, which they were so firmly assured should be continued to them.

37 And the whole company that were in the ship, including *Paul* and his friends, consisted of two hundred and seventy-six persons, who had immortal souls, that were to be mercifully preserved still in the body, and fared so well for the apostle's sake.

38 And when they had satished themselves by eating as plentiful a meal as was agreeable and convenient after so long fasting, (*ver.* 33.) they still further, to disburden the vessel, that it might draw as little water as possible in working toward the shore, threw the wheat and other provisions into the sea, as hoping to have no further occasion for any more food till they should get to land.

39 All this passed during the darkness of the night and the twilight of the morning; and when it grew broad day, they, to their great joy, discovered land, and found themselves to be very near it, though they did not know what country it was: But, looking about them, they observed a certain creek, which ran up into the shore; and hoping that it might be a little harbour fit for their purpose, they were desirous, if it might be practicable, to push forwards, and carry the vessel into it.

40 And getting up the four anchors which they had before cast out of the stern, (*ver.* 29.) they committed the vessel to the current of the wind and tide, to help her forwards as Providence should direct; and at the same time they loosened the bands that fastened her rudders*, and hauled up the mainsail, which they had struck

N O T E.

* Ships, it seems, in those times had often two rudders, which were fastened by bands or chains, one on each side the ship; when those bands were loosened, or lengthened out, the rudders sunk deeper into the water, and by their weight preserved the ship from being overset by the winds. These nariners seem to have bound the rudders as tight as

they could, while they lay at anchor, lest they should be broke off by the violence of the storm; but now they loosened their bands, that they might the better use them in steering the vessel, and it might move the more steadily and safely toward the shore. Vid. *Pol. Synops.*

to the wind, and made toward shore.

41 And, falling into a place where twofasmet, they ran the ship aground; and the fore-part stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder-part was broken with the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out and escape.

43 But the centurion willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land;

44 And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land.

struck before, (*ver.* 17.) and so, having a favourable gale, made toward the land.

41 But ^(*sc*) before they could quite reach it, they fell upon a shoal of sand, which was washed by two currents of water, one on each side; and by that means, they unavoidably and unawares ran the ship aground; and the fore part stuck so fast in the sands, that there was no bringing her off, or making her play as when she lay at anchor; and, ^(*sc*) in consequence, the hinder part was soon dashed to pieces by the violence of the waves; and so the ship foundered, and was lost, as had been foretold by Paul. (*ver.* 22.)

42 In this extremity, the soldiers that had the charge of the prisoners, were for killing them out of hand, and advised their commanding officer to it, lest any of them, that could swim, should get to shore, and make their escape, and they themselves should be called to an account for not securing them.

43 But as the centurion had a great value for Paul, whose behaviour had all along been unblameable and very engaging, and whose predictions about the loss of the ship, and there being cast on a certain island, (*ver.* 22, 26.) were already fulfilled, which encouraged his hopes, that what he had further said, about the preservation of their lives, should have its full accomplishment; he, for saving this excellent man, restrained the soldiers from executing their barbarous project, and commanded that such of them as could swim, should first of all leap into the sea, and make to land, that they might be ready to assist others, and to secure the prisoners as fast as they should arrive thither.

44 And the rest of the company, that were not able to swim, he ordered to shift, as well as they could, for themselves, some upon the planks that were on board, and others upon pieces of the ship-wreck; and, by these means, all that Paul had foretold, about the issue of this voyage, punctually came to pass; inasmuch that, by the wonderful providence of God, the whole company escaped with their lives, through the utmost dangers, and got safe and sound to shore.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How like a stormy voyage is the passage of the people of God through this world! But how seasonably and remarkably doth he interpose by his Providence on their behalf, amidst their greatest trials and dangers! He often gives them such favour in the eyes of those, from whom they might have expected hard usage, that even they shall treat them courteously, and prevent the effects of rail counsels to kill them: He communes with their souls, and speaks words of comfort to them, when gloomy terrors are all around them: He sends admonitions of danger, and messages of peace by them; commands a blessing of preservation upon

upon them, and upon others for their sakes; and over-rules the worst of tempests to their reputation and advantage; and he will ever shew, that nothing can hurt them, who are under his peculiar care and protection. How certainly doth the great God foreknow, and how easily can he inspire his servants to foretell events, that have no dependence on any stated, or necessary operation of second causes! And how infallibly are his absolute appointments and promises brought to pass, either by means that lye beyond the reach of human management, like the winds, and the waves of the sea, or that lye within its sphere, like the continuance of the mariners in the ship! But the means and end are so closely and determinately connected in divine settlements, that the end cannot be accomplished, according to the purpose of God, without the use of the means which he has appointed for it, and which our faith in his promises obliges and encourages us to use, with the utmost care and diligence, as ever we expect a performance of them. What a pleasure is it to be able to think and speak of the blessed God, as the God, whose we are, and whom we serve! What confidence may we have in his word, and what comfort and courage amidst the most formidable prospects, when he says unto us, Fear not! But how ready are carnal men to trust to their own conceited wisdom, rather than to the revealed mind and will of God! And how great are the mischief and shame, which they hereby plunge themselves into! What thanks are due to God, and how solemnly should we pay them to him for our daily food, as well as for signal preservations and deliverances, and for hopes of further mercies! But, alas! of how low account are all the merchandize and treasures of this world, and how readily are they thrown over-board, when life itself would be endangered by keeping them! Yea, how tasteless is our necessary food, when all hope of life is taken away; and how worthless is it, when we shall have no more occasion for it! What a lively emblem is all this of the distresses of an awakened conscience, and of its contempt of all things here, and of life itself, in comparison with the salvation of the soul! And how willing should we be to abandon them, that we may outride the storms of divine wrath, and of all tribulations, and get safe to heaven at last, through the Redeemer's merit, and for his sake!

C H A P. XXVIII.

Paul and all the ship's company are hospitably entertained on landing at the island, which proved to be Melita, 1, 2. He is miraculously preserved from hurt by a viper that seized his hand, 3,—6. Heals Publius's father of a fever and bloody flux, and other persons of various diseases, 7,—10. Sails, after three months abode at Melita, to Syracuse, Rhegium, and Puteoli, from whence he sets out on foot for Rome, 11,—16. On his arrival thither, he is committed to the care of a single soldier in a private lodging, where, sending for some principal Jews, he shews them that there was no just cause for his imprisonment, 17,—20. He afterwards, at an appointed meeting, preaches the gospel to a great body of them, some of which believed, while others rejected it, 21,—29. And continuing two years as a prisoner at large in his own hired house, he preaches, unmolested, to all that came to hear him, 30, 31.

TEXT.

AND when they
were escaped,
then they knew
that

PARAPHRASE.

WHEN Paul, and all the company that sailed with him, had escaped the dangers of the sea, and were safely landed in an unknown country, which, as he had foretold, proved to be a certain island, (*chap.*

that the island was called *Melita*.

1 And the barbarous people shewed us so little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer,

xxvii. 26, 39.) they soon learnt by the inhabitants, that it was called * *Melita* or *Malta*.

2 And as we came ashore in destitute and deplorable circumstances; so the people of that place †, tho' illiterate and unpolished in their manners and speech, were so far from going to plunder the wreck, as is too common in such cases, that they treated us with more than ordinary humanity and kindness: For God, whose good hand was always upon his servant *Paul*, and whose promise, (*chap.* xxvii. 24, 25.) never fails, filled their hearts with such pity towards us, that they immediately made a great fire, to dry and warm us; and took us into their houses, to shelter us against the inclemency of the season, because the weather was then very wet and cold, and we had been miserably drenched in the sea.

3 And the great apostle, from the wonted readiness of his own humble and benevolent mind, to engage in the meanest offices of service ‡, rather than from any injunction laid upon him, as a prisoner, was very active in gathering together an arm full of wood; and when he had thrown it upon the fire, a viper, which was providentially hid in the bundle, feeling the heat, leapt out from it, and fastened itself upon one of his hands.

4 And when the illiterate islanders saw this wild, fierce, and venomous creature hanging upon his hand; as they had some natural notions of the great guilt of murder, and of the justice of Providence in revenging *that*, and such like enormous sins; and as, being ignorant of a future judgment, they imagined that the punishments of the wicked were only in this life, and that all remarkable calamities were special executions of wrath upon extraordinary transgressors; so they rashly concluded in their own minds, and said one to another, without waiting for the event, 'This man, who we see by his chain is a prisoner, has certainly committed

N O T E S.

* This is a small island, lying between *Sicily* and *Africa*, in the *Mediterranean* sea, and is now called *Malta*, but formerly *Melita*, as some suppose, from its abounding with *honey*, which in the *Greek* is called *Melē*.

† *Barbarous people* does not here signify persons cruel and savage in their temper; for the whole of their behaviour was just the contrary. But it means persons that were plain and unpolite in their manners and language, and were generally unacquainted with the *Greek* tongue, and with the arts and sciences, and gentility of the more civilized nations.

Hence islanders were generally counted barbarians, as having less opportunities than others, of improving themselves by conversation: The inhabitants of *Malta* are supposed by *Dr. Lightfoot* to be *Africans*, and by *Archæus* to be *Phœnicians*; and some observe that the coast of *Africa*, which lies opposite to this island, is called *Barbary* to this day.

‡ The centurion's respect to *Paul* was so great, that we can scarce think he would put this piece of drudgery upon him, immediately after the fatigue of the shipwreck.

death, whom, tho' he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.

ted no less a crime than murder; and therefore though he has narrowly escaped death by the storm at sea, which, in all likelihood, was raised for his sake, he is now overtaken by divine vengeance, which has sent this viper to dispatch him, in a more singular and exemplary manner, and will not permit such a wretch to live any longer upon earth.

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.

5 He therefore, (*ver. 10*) to confute their false construction of this Providence, which God designed for the manifestation of his own glory, and of *Paul's* innocency and acceptableness to him, shook the serpent off from his hand into the fire, with the utmost ease and composure of mind, and did not suffer the least injury by it *

6 Howbeit, they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

6 However, the *Barbarians*, knowing the malignant and poisonous quality of the viper, looked intently at him, and expected that, as was usual in like cases, his body would have swelled with an inflammation, or that he would have immediately fallen down dead: But when they had watched a considerable time, with an expectation of one or other of these dismal effects, and saw that, on the contrary, he remained sound and well, easy and chearful, and had received no manner of hurt, they altered their opinion of him; and, going into an opposite extreme, concluded that he was so far from being a criminal, as to be more than a mortal man; and were ready to idolize him as one of their gods appearing to them in human form.

7 In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius, who received us, and lodged us three days courteously.

7 Now, (*ver. 11*) near the place of the shipwreck, lay the seat and estate of the governor of the island, *Publius* by name, who, out of respect to such an extraordinary stranger as *Paul* appeared to be, (*ver. 6.*) and out of respect to *Julius* the centurion, who had the custody of this prisoner, (*chap. xxvii. 1.*) received us all with great hospitality, civility, and kindness; and having a large heart, as well as a large purse, gave us good lodging and entertainment, at his own proper cost and charges, for three days running.

8 And it came to pass that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever, and of a bloody flux: to whom *Paul*

8 And, while we were there, it was so ordered in providence, that the governor's father lay dangerously sick of a fever, attended with a bloody-flux, which rendered his case the more threatening and hopeless, especially at his advanced years: And as *Paul* heard of it, and was always ready to requite kindnesses, and do good, he

went

N O T E.

* God preserved the apostle, in a miraculous way, from the destructive rage of this fierce and irritated animal, as he did *Daniel* from the mouths of the lions, (*Dan. vi. 11,*

27.) and our Lord hereby fulfilled his promise to his servants, that no power of serpents or scorpions should hurt them. (See the note on *Luke x. 19.*)

Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

went to the old gentleman's bed-side, and praying with him for his recovery, and laying his hands upon him with expressions of his faith in the name of Christ *, according to his appointment and promise of success, (*Mark* xvi. 17, 18.) his faith and prayer was answered in the miraculous cure of the governor's dear parent, who was immediately restored to perfect health at once.

9 So, when this was done, others also which had diseases in the island came, and were healed.

9 When therefore (v) this miracle was wrought, and known in the neighbourhood, (αἱ λαοὶ) the rest of the islanders, that were afflicted with various distempers, were so persuaded of the apostle's power to heal them, that they also came, or were brought to him, and received cures of their several maladies, in the name of the Lord Jesus.

10 Who also honoured us with many honours: and, when we departed, they laden us with such things as were necessary.

10 And, from that time forwards, our wants were liberally supplied, during our abode in the island: For the people were so affected with the important benefits which they received by the hands of *Paul*, that they thought they could never shew too much respect to him, and to us, his companions, for his sake: And when we were about to take our leave of them, and set out for *Rome*, they generously heaped their favours upon us, furnishing us with every thing that we might have occasion for to the end of our voyage.

11 And after three months we departed in a ship of *Alexandria*, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was *Castor* and *Pollux*.

11 And after we had been detained a quarter of a year at *Malta*, till the weather grew more temperate, we embarked, and set sail again for *Italy*, in another ship, which, like the former, (*chap.* xxvii. 6.) came from *Alexandria*, and had lain in harbour at this island, during the winter season, and which, bearing the images of *Castor* and *Pollux*, took its name from them †.

12 And landing at *Syracuse*, we tarried there three days.

12 And having a prosperous voyage, by the will of God, we arrived at *Syracuse*, the metropolis, and a fine haven, on the eastern coast of the island of *Sicily* ‡, where we went ashore and continued three days.

13 Then

N O T E S.

* As Christ's commission for healing diseases ran in his name, and mentioning that was the apostle's usual way of working miracles, there is no room to doubt, but that he solemnly took notice of it in this and the following cures among these barbarians, to whom he very probably preached the gospel, and that with good success; and this might be one great reason of their honouring him, and his company, with such honours as are spoken of, ver. 10. and even as were customary among the churches of Christ themselves.

† These images of *Castor* and *Pollux* were carved, or painted, in the form of two young

men, mounted on two stately white horses, each of them holding a javelin in his hand, and were reputed, by the idolatrous Gentiles, to be the twin-sons of *Jupiter* and *Leda*, and to be propitious to mariners; so that they expected the protection from these fictitious deities, which entirely depends on the good Providence of the only true God, who made the heavens, earth, and sea, and whose kingdom rules over all.

‡ As this vessel seems to have been on a trading voyage, they probably staid three days at this place, either to unlade, or take in some goods.

13 And from thence we set a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli;

14 Where we found brethren, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome.

15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii-forum, and the Three taverns; whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

13 Then, setting out from thence, we steered a rounding course, as the wind would let us, till we arrived at the first sea-port in *Italy*, which lyes directly over-against *Messina* in *Sicily*, and is called *Rhegium* *; and after one day's lying at anchor in that harbour, the wind turned to the south; and we, coasting with a favourable gale along the *Italian* shore, arrived on the morrow at *Puteoli*, a famous mart town, not far from *Neapolis* or *Naples*.

14 There, to our great comfort, we met with several Christian brethren, who received us very affectionately, and intreated us to stay a week with them, that they might have the benefit of *Paul's* preaching and conversation, and that we might enjoy one Lord's day together, which the centurion, in his great civility, consented to: And, after that, we set forward by land for *Rome*, this being the farthest port that the ship was bound to.

15 And when we left *Puteoli*, as our dear brethren at *Rome* had some intelligence of our being on the road thither, they rejoiced at the thought of seeing the face of the great apostle of the *Gentiles*, who had never been there before; but from whom they had received a most excellent and affectionate epistle, in which he expressed a longing desire to see them, and preach the gospel at that city, (*Rom. i. 10,—15.*) and so far were they from being ashamed of his bonds, that though he was coming to them as a prisoner, they were exceeding desirous to pay their respects to him, in the most public and honourable manner; and therefore many of them came to meet us; some about fifty miles from *Rome*, as far as the town called *Appii Forum*, in the famous *Appian* way; and others about thirty miles, to another place in the same high road, called the *Three taverns*, or inns for public entertainment: And when *Paul* saw them, he was not only thankful to them for their brotherly kindness, but blessed God, who had put it into their hearts to shew their love, with so much zeal, tenderness, and respect; and he encouraged himself in the Lord his God, who had sent him such cordial friends, with whom he might freely converse, and advise in any emergency, and who he might reasonably hope would own and assist him in all his difficulties and dangers. This gave him fresh spirits, and made him go forward with as much courage, as if he were to have entered

the

N O T E.

* *Rhegium* signifies a *breach*, and was so named by the *Greeks*, because they imagined that, in some former age, an inundation, or

earthquake at this place, had broke off *Sicily* from the continent.

the metropolis of the empire with all the triumphs of a conqueror, instead of the disgrace of a prisoner.

16 And, when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard : but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself, with a soldier that kept him.

16 And when we arrived at *Rome*, the centurion discharged his trust, by delivering all the prisoners up to the chief commanding officer of the imperial guards, or *Pratorian* band there, to take the custody of them : But as God gave *Joseph* favour in the sight of his keeper, (*Gen.* xxxix. 21.) and brought *Daniel* into tender love with the prince of the eunuchs, (*Dan.* i. 9.) so, partly thro' the centurion's recommendations, and partly through *Festus's* letter, who could not but own that *Paul* had committed nothing worthy of death, (*chap.* xxv. 25. 26.) the Lord gave this great apostle favour in the eyes of the captain, who, instead of putting him into the common jail with the rest of the prisoners, permitted him to hire a private lodging, (*ver.* 30.) and to dwell there alone, as a prisoner at large, with only one soldier, who was linked to him by a chain, to guard him. (See the note on *chap.* xii. 6.)

17 And it came to pass, that, after three days, Paul called the chief of the Jews together. And, when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, tho' I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans,

17 Now after *Paul* had been at this great city three days, he sent to the leading men of the *Jews*, that resided there, desiring that, as he could not have liberty of going publicly to them, they would be so good as to come to his lodging, and let him have the pleasure of speaking with them there : And when, in compliance with his request, they gave him a meeting, he addressed them in a free and engaging manner, saying, Ye men of *Israel*, and my kinsmen after the flesh, and brethren in the profession of the God of our fathers, The reason of my asking the favour of your company is, that I may have an opportunity of rectifying any misrepresentations that mine enemies may have made of me ; and that according to my constant custom, wherever there are *Jews*, I may communicate the gospel of salvation by Jesus Christ, as soon as possible, first of all to them, for whose persons and eternal happiness I am most heartily concerned : Whatever may have been suggested against me, I really have been guilty of no crime, in any thing that I have said or done, either against the rites and privileges of my own countrymen, or against the divine laws and ordinances that were delivered by *Moses* to our fathers, and religiously observed by them ; and yet I have been so unhappy as, through groundless insinuations, to fall under the displeasure of many of my *Jewish* brethren, to such a degree, as issued in my being made a prisoner at *Jerusalem*, and sent from thence to *Cesarea*, to be kept in custody, under the power

18 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.

19 But, when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of.

20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

power of Roman governors *. (Chap. xiii. 10,—35.)

18 Who, when in a fair trial they had heard all that could be urged against me, and what I had to say in my own defence, and had made the best inquiry they could into the true state of my case, would willingly have discharged me; because it plainly appeared to them, that I had done nothing to deserve death, or so much as imprisonment or bonds, as *Lyfias*, the chief captain, testified at *Jerusalem*, (chap. xiii. 29.) and as *Felix's* behaviour shewed he believed in his own conscience, (chap. xxiv. 22, &c.) and as *Festus* and king *Agrippa*, and many other principal men declared afterwards at *Cæsarea*, (chap. xxv. 23. compared with xvi. 31, 32.)

19 But when the *Jews*, from their causeless prejudices, which have been industriously fomented against me, objected to my being released, and would have had me carried back to *Jerusalem*, for another trial there, I had too much reason to suspect that this motion was made with an ill design in some against me, (chap. xxv. 3, 9, 10, 11.) and therefore I found it necessary, for my own preservation, to appeal to *Cæsar's* immediate tribunal; not that I had any intention of accusing my countrymen, or of doing them the least injury, at his bar, but only of making my own defence before him in a legal way, since I could not be discharged without it.

20 I have therefore taken the liberty of calling you together, that I might have the favour of seeing you, and of assuring you, in a personal conversation, that the only fault, which the worst of mine enemies could justly pretend to charge me with, was my believing, professing, and preaching, what has all along been the object of the hope of every true *Israelite*, and indeed, for the substance of it, is the general expectation of our nation, according to antient prophecies, at this very day; I mean, that the true *Messiah* has actually come, and died, and rose again, and that through him, there shall be a resurrection to eternal life of all that believe in him. It is, I say, merely for my attachment to, and publishing these doctrines, that I am a prisoner in bonds, as ye see me to be by this chain, which fastens me to the soldier that has me in custody. (See the note on chap. xii. 6.)

21 The

N O T E.

* It is with admirable prudence and tenderness, that the apostle passes over the outrages of the *Jews*, and their horrid conspiracies against his life, which the foregoing history acquaints us with, that he might not

seem to charge them too severely, nor might exasperate these their brethren against him, for bearing too hard upon their countrymen and friends.

21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any harm of thee.

22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for, as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

23 And, when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both

21 The *Jews*, in reply, said to him, As to what relates to your own particular practice and behaviour, we have neither received any letters from *Jerusalem* or *Judea* about you; nor have any of our *Jewish* brethren, that, on one occasion or other, have come from thence, given us any information, by word of mouth, concerning you, or ever charged you with any crime *. So we can say nothing to that; nor do we design to trouble ourselves about it.

22 But as you profess Christianity, (*ἐξ ἡμῶν*) we think it equitable, and becoming us, and should be glad to hear your sentiments about it, and particularly about what you have suggested (*ver. 20.*) of the fulfillment of those things in *Jesus Christ*, which now are, and for many ages have been, the object of *Israel's* faith and hope: For this opinion of yours has so little appearance of truth, that, as is well known, the sect, which of late years has pretended to assert it, is generally at this city, and in all places that we can hear of, cried out against, both by *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as heretical and pernicious, serving only to throw divisions and confusion among mankind.

23 And when on a day, which they had fixed with the apostle, a great number of the *Jews* came to him at his own lodging, he there explained to them the doctrine of the gospel, relating to the kingdom of grace, which shall be completed in the kingdom of glory: He shewed that this kingdom is not of a temporal and earthly, but of a spiritual, holy, and heavenly nature; and that the way of admission to its privileges and blessings is not by the works of the law, but alone through faith in Christ; and he plainly asserted, and gave evident proof, that God had *bore witness to it by signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will*, (*Heb. ii. 4.*) and by the supernatural power, that had changed the hearts and lives of multitudes, and his own among the rest: And he further reasoned with them, to convince them that *Jesus* is the Messiah, and to induce them to believe in him as such, by giving them an account of the manner and design of his life, death, and resurrection, and by comparing those important facts with what had been foretold

N O T E.

* It is highly probable that *Paul*, having appealed to *Cæsar*, the *Jews* durst not follow him to that court, lest they should render themselves obnoxious to *Nero*, the then reigning emperor, who already had no great favour for them, though as yet he suffered them to live at *Rome*. (See the first note on

chap. xxvi. 32.) And therefore they of *Judea* had sent no informations, and those of *Rome* would not venture to appear in a judicial process against him; and so *Paul* gained his end of getting out of their hands by his appeal. (chap. xxv. 11.)

both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

foretold of him in the types and figures, promises and prophecies recorded by *Moses*, and in the writings of the succeeding prophets of the church of *Israel*: The apostle's heart was so enlarged, and so thoroughly engaged in this work, that he took indefatigable pains with the company, in clearing up, and recommending these and such like grand points of the gospel, for a whole day together, continuing his discourse from morning to night.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

24 And so different were the effects of this excellent sermon upon his hearers, that some, thro' the attending power of divine grace, received the truth by faith, and in the love of it, which the apostle preached concerning Christ; whilst others of them, being left to the corruption of their own hearts, rejected it thro' unbelief.

25 And, when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by *Elias* the prophet, unto our fathers,

25 And when there was such a disagreement in their sentiments and tempers, as began to throw them into heats and quarrels among themselves, the assembly broke up; only just before they parted, the apostle, directing his speech to the unbelievers, left with them an awful passage, for their serious consideration, saying, It was with great truth and propriety, and with unerring foresight of these days, that the Holy Spirit, that divine person by whom the sacred penmen were inspired of old, spoke by the prophet *Isaiah*, (*chap. vi. 9, 10.*) to our disobedient ancestors, for their reproof, and for a warning to their posterity, who ought to dread the thought of its being fulfilled in them,

26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive.

26 Saying, Go, deliver my message to this people, and tell them from me, Ye shall certainly hear, with the hearing of the ear, again and again, and shall not be favoured with a spiritual inward illumination, to give you a right understanding of the truths delivered to you; and ye shall surely see abundance of external evidence of their divine authority, and shall be so left of God to yourselves, in his righteous judgment, as not to be convinced of their reality and importance, nor discern their inmost native glory.

27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand.

27 For, through the pride and prejudices, lusts and passions, which this people are under the power of, and willingly yield themselves up unto, their minds and hearts are perverted, blinded, and hardened; and their ears are inattentive to my word; and they have obstinately winked hard with their eyes, to shut them against the light that shines around them, lest they should be brought, by the opening of their understandings, to see such things as they are averse to, and do not care to know, and should be forced to comply with what they

derstand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him.

31 Preaching the kingdom of God,

they hear, but are resolved to reject; and lest such striking over-powering light should shine into their hearts, as they cannot tell how to resist, or get rid of, and they should be turned from their beloved sins and errors to myself, and I, by my renewing and sanctifying grace, should cure those desperate diseases of their souls, which they, insensible of their danger, take pleasure in. (See the note on *John* xii. 40.)

28 Since therefore ye have thus put the word of God from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, (see the note on *chap.* xiii. 46.) I must now plainly tell you, that the blessed doctrine of salvation, thro' the great Redeemer, is not to be preached with a confinement to the *Jews*; but, by the sovereign, gracious, wise, and holy appointment of God, is sent to *Gentile* sinners; and great multitudes of them will be so powerfully wrought upon by it, that they will listen to it, and heartily embrace it, and be admitted to all its glorious privileges and blessings, from which ye perversely exclude yourselves.

29 And when the apostle had delivered this solemn and awakening admonition, the *Jews* went away, and had warm debates among themselves about this, and the other points that he had been insisting on; some, whose hearts were touched by divine grace, contending, that this was a wise and gracious, just and righteous dispensation; and others, who were left to their own obstinacy and unbelief, disputing against it, as an open violation of their antient rights and privileges.

30 In the mean while, *Paul* continued a prisoner at large in his own house, which he rented, and in which he dwelt for the space of two full years*; during which confinement, he did not lead an idle life, but readily received all manner of persons, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, that would come to hear him; and took unwearying pains in promoting the interest of Christ, and the good of immortal souls. (See the paraphrase on *ver.* 20.)

31 With these noble views, he set forth the nature and excellency of the gospel-dispensation, and of all the blessings of grace and glory; and particularly explained, and confirmed at large; those important truths, that

N O T E.

* *Paul* had been two years a prisoner under *Felix* at *Cesarea*, *chap.* xiv. 27. and, as is generally allowed, was kept in bonds, at least another year, under *Festus* and in his tedious voyage, before he arrived at *Rome*; so that the whole of his imprisonment was five years. But as Providence now gave him greater liberty, and better opportunities, for

service, than in the former part of his confinement; so it is commonly concluded, and appears from *Eph.* iii. 1. *Col.* iv. 18. *Philip* i. 7, 13, 16 that he wrote all those epistles during this his first imprisonment at *Rome*; and it is supposed that he wrote them in order of time, as I have here placed them.

God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

that relate to the person and offices, birth, life and death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, who is both Lord and Christ, and that relate to the way of salvation, through faith in him: And this he did (*παρὰ πάσαν φόβον*) with all boldness and liberty of spirit, and in as public a manner as circumstances admitted, to the furtherance of the gospel, and the conversion of many, among whom were some of *Cæsar's* household, (*Phil. i. 12, 13. and iv. 22.*) And divine providence so over-ruled the minds of his adversaries, that he went on quietly in his work, without any molestation from the civil magistrate, from the soldier that was his keeper, or from his own countrymen, (see the note on *ver. 22.*) So that though the apostle was in bonds, the word of the Lord was not bound; but had free course; ran, and was glorified.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a memorable instance of humanity and compassion have we in a heathen and uncultivated people, who shewed great kindness to a shipwrecked company, took them into their houses, made fires to warm and dry them, and generously lodged and provided for them! And how richly was it worth their while to entertain these distressed strangers, among whom, unawares to themselves, was one of the best of men, who, in return for their hospitality, laid his hands on their governor's father, and on many others of their sick, and miraculously healed them, through the power of the Lord Jesus! But how cautious should we be of forming our judgment of persons, merely by outward dispensations of Providence! Though, from natural notions of God's justice in governing the world, the people of *Malta* rightly supposed, that divine vengeance often pursues murderers, and other notorious sinners in this life; yet they rashly concluded that *Paul* was such an one, only because a viper seized his hand: But when, contrary to their expectation, it fell off, and he received no hurt, what a surprising turn was there in their minds concerning him! They then were ready to adore him as a deity; and upon further acquaintance with him, and experience of what a blessing they had in him, they thought they could never do enough to testify their gratitude to him, and to his companions for his sake. How remarkably did God still further appear for him, in the midst of all his troubles and dangers! *Malta* is left with honour and advantage; the rest of the voyage is made prosperous by the will of God, and not by any influence of those vain idols, by whose names the ship was called: Upon the apostle's landing in *Italy*, he is comforted and encouraged by the affectionate and honourable regards of his Christian brethren, who came from *Rome* to meet him, and to own and accompany him, though a prisoner, to the grand metropolis; and upon his arrival there, God gave him such favour with the captain of the guard, that he permitted him to live privately in his own hired house, under the custody of only one soldier! And while he was thus two years a prisoner at large, what happy improvements did he make of such liberty as was allowed him! With what admirable prudence did he early send for the chief of the *Jews*, and labour to take off their prejudices against his person and ministry, that he might be the better heard in what he had to say for Christ, for whom he was then an ambassador in bonds! And, when he obtained an opportunity for it, with what perspicuity and enlargement, holy fervour and freedom of spirit, did he explain, confirm, and apply the glorious things of Christ's kingdom, as founded upon his death and resurrection, according to antient prophecies! But with what different events! Some rejected them through unbelief, and others received them with a cordial faith; and so there were divisions among them concerning

cerning Christ and his gospel, which ran so high, on the part of the infidel *Jews*, as to render *Isaiab's* awful prophecy applicable to them, as a people given up, by the righteous judgment of God, to judicial blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, according to their own criminal choice. But while some put God's salvation far from themselves, he will send it to others, as, blessed be his name, he has to the *Gentile* world; and will make it effectual to multitudes of them: And how much soever others may object against the sovereignty and righteousness of God in these dispensations, What an encouragement is it to the ministers of Christ to preach his gospel, wherever they have opportunity, to all sorts of sinners, when God assures them that some will receive it! And what a mercy is it, when he enables them to preach it with holy liberty and boldness, and suffers none of their enemies to stop their mouths!

A PRACTICAL E X P O S I T I O N O F T H E

Apostle PAUL's Epistle to the ROMANS,

In the Form of a PARAPHRASE.

The PREFACE to the Epistle to the ROMANS.

THE apostle *Paul* wrote this epistle while he was at *Corinth*, as appears from his sending it by *Phœbe*, a servant of the church at *Cenchrea*, (chap. xvi. 1.) which was a sea port belonging to *Corinth*; and is still further evident from the *salutations* he sent from *Gaius* his host, and *Erasus* the chamberlain of the city, (chap. xvi. 23. both which were inhabitants of *Corinth*, (1 *Cor.* i. 14. and 2 *Tim.* iv. 20.): And it is generally supposed to have been wrote about the year of our Lord 57, when the apostle was preparing to go by *Troas* to *Jerusalem*; an account of which journey we have in *Acts* xxi. 2, 3, &c.

Though this is placed *first* in the collection of the epistles, it was wrote after several others, as particularly after the *first* and *second* to the church at *Corinth*, and those to the *Thessalonians*, and *Galatians*; as also after the *first* to *Timothy*, and that to *Titus*. But as the apostle *Paul's* epistles to the churches are placed together in the New Testament, so this is with good propriety set the *first* of them all, because it was written to the Christians that dwelt in the famous metropolis of the *Roman* empire; but principally, because it is one of the *largest* of his epistles, and gives us the most *comprehensive* view of the import-

ant doctrines and duties of Christianity: For, in writing to other churches, which he had planted, or to which he had preached and fully opened the gospel-scheme, he insists more sparingly on the evangelical principles in which he had before instructed them. But as he, who was the great apostle of the *Gentiles*, wrote this letter to a church, chiefly consisting of *Gentile converts*, though not without a mixture of native *Jews*; and as this was a church, to which he had not, as yet, had an opportunity of *personally* ministering, as is intimated *chap. i. 10, 11. and xv. 22, 23, &c.* so he, with admirable wisdom, and deep concern for their instruction, edification, and establishment, enlarged the more copiously and particularly on the most important and distinguishing articles of the gospel-revelation; beginning, according to his usual method, with its *doctrines*; and then concluding with exhortations to *Christian duties*, that were suited to their circumstances, and to their privileges and obligations. And so this letter may be considered as a specimen of the great subjects of his *personal ministrations* to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, when he was preaching the gospel to them.

In the *doctrinal* part of this epistle, the principal point he manifestly had in view, was to lay out the way of a sinner's acceptance with God, or justification in his sight, merely by grace, through faith in the righteousness of Christ, as common to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, without distinction of nations; and to vindicate it from various objections that were raised against it by judaizing Christians, who were for making up terms of acceptance with God, by a mixture of law and gospel; and were for excluding the *uncircumcised Gentiles* from any share of the blessings of salvation, brought in by the Messiah.

To clear up, confirm, and recommend this grand design, he begins, after his introduction, which is in the first fifteen verses, with asserting the doctrine itself. For the proof of it, he shews at large, that the *Gentiles* could not be justified by *the law of nature*, nor the *Jews* by *the law of Moses*; because *every individual person of both sorts*, was a transgressor of one or other of those laws; and that therefore justification must be alone through faith in Jesus Christ: And this he further illustrates by the example of *Abraham*, who lived before the *Mosaic* law was given, and was justified, while he was uncircumcised, *chap. i. 16. to the end of chap. iv.* He then carries the argument back as far as the fall of *Adam*, which involved all mankind in sin and misery; and, in the vast fulness of his thoughts, he launches out into an account of the excellent benefits that are brought in by Christ, as *the second Adam*, and public head of all his spiritual seed, in opposition to the sin and death, condemnation and ruin, that were brought upon the whole world by the fall of the *first Adam*, the common head and parent of all mankind, *chap. v.* From thence he proceeds to represent the obligations that believers are nevertheless under, yea, and on this very account, to die unto sin, and live to God; together with their happy deliverance from the dominion of sin, from the condemning sentence of the law, and from all the dreadful consequences

quences of being under them, even unto a triumphant victory over all tribulation and death itself, and an advancement to eternal glory, *chap. vi. vii. and viii.* Then he leads us to the *original* of the whole of this dispensation, in the eternal, free purpose of God; and shews that his rejecting the *Jews* for their unbelief; and calling the *Gentiles* to a participation of the blessings of the gospel, were in correspondence to his ancient design, and are every way consistent with the divine wisdom, sovereignty, righteousness, and grace; and answers several objections against this partly delightful, and partly awful dispensation, *chap. ix. x. and xi.*

As to the *practical* part of this epistle, we have therein exhortations to a great variety of *personal* and *relative* duties, belonging to believers, as members of civil society, and as members of the church, *chap. xii. xiii. xiv. and xv. to ver. 14.* And the whole is closed with an apology for the apostle's writing to them, and a promise of making them a visit in person, if the Lord will; and with begging their prayers, and sending Christian salutations to them, and a caution against divisions, together with an affectionate benediction and doxology, *chap. xv. ver. 15. to the end of the epistle.*

Several learned expositors have, as I apprehend, too much narrowed the design and use of the *doctrinal* part of this excellent Epistle, especially as future ages are concerned in it; and have been led off from the true sense of the apostle by two mistakes. One (which relates to *justification*) is by their *confining* what he says, about the works of the law, to the *ceremonial* law, which I think, as may be shewn in notes on proper places, is to be understood of the *whole system* of the religious law of the *Jews*, inclusive of the *moral* law. The other (which relates to God's *choosing and calling* the *Gentiles*, and *casting off* the *Jews*) lyes in their *confining* what the apostle says on these points, to the respective bodies of those people, *nationally* considered, and to their *external privileges*, to the exclusion of the concernment of *particular persons*, in one or the other, with reference to their *eternal state*. Whereas I take both those views to be aimed at, in the apostle's discourse upon that solemn subject; where he begins with what is *personal*, relating to *saving* benefits, and proceeds to what is *national*, relating to *external* privileges, as may likewise be shewn in the Paraphrase and Notes on *chap. viii. 28. to the end, and chap. ix. and xi.* And the supposition of a national election to the *external privileges* of the gospel, naturally leads us to think, that there was an election of *persons* among *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, to *saving* benefits, who were to be brought to a participation of them, by means of the gospel: For this is God's appointed and ordinary means of effectually calling them, whom he has chosen to eternal life, *chap. x. 14,—17. and 2 Theff. ii. 13, 14.* And therefore the national is so far from being inconsistent with, that it is exclusive of, and supposes a *personal* election of some to holiness and glory; and is subservient to God's design of saving them, that the *national* election may not prove in the event; to be abortive as to *all*. For my part, I cannot see

see any sufficient reason, why they, that allow of one, should deny the other; since it seems as hard to account for God's chusing to send the only ordinary means of grace and salvation to one nation, rather than another, as for his chusing to make them effectual to one person rather than another.

But no expositor that I have met with, carries the *national* consideration of *ALL the glorious blessings*, mentioned in this epistle, and other parts of the New Testament, as well as those of *election* and *calling*, and makes so little of them, and so *entirely confines* them to *external* privileges, as the reverend Mr John Taylor, whose Paraphrase and Notes on the epistle to the Romans did not come to hand till mine were finished, and transcribed ready for the press. I have since perused them, and his prefixed *key to the apostolic writings*, with all the attention I am capable of, and with a sincere desire of receiving what light they might afford, for a better understanding of this important epistle: But, instead of reaping any such advantage from his laboured performance, it appears to me to be, by far, the most enervating of the apostle's whole scheme, beyond any thing I had ever seen before: And in a review of what I had prepared, for a publication, in the following sheets, there seemed to be little occasion to alter, or add to it; the principal parts of his hypothesis and interpretations having been, as I hope, sufficiently obviated, all along, in the Paraphrase and Notes.

Nevertheless, I cannot help observing here, in general, that, according to this gentleman's way of representing things in this, and a former attempt about *original sin*, human nature, in its *intellectual* and *moral* powers, and in its *spiritual* and *eternal* interests, hath suffered little, or rather nothing by the fall; and *ALL the great and glorious blessings, honours, and privileges of the gospel*, such as *election, vocation, reconciliation, salvation, pardon of sins, justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, the gift of eternal life*, and the like, *twindle* into what he calls *antecedent blessings*, by which he means no more than *external, national* privileges, that belong to *all professed Christians* among the *Gentiles, the whole body of them without exception*, (pag. 41, 93.); and even those, says he, *who for their wickedness shall perish eternally, are undoubtedly interested in them all*, (pag. 98.) This he speaks of as being after the same manner as the same blessings belonged to the *whole nation* of the *Jews* under the Old Testament; and, as he further adds, *the grace of the gospel actually extends to all mankind; and it is certain that all men actually have a share in the mercy of God and Christ Jesus, as appears from the universality of the resurrection*, (pag. 112.) So that, according to his account, there is nothing *internal* or *efficacious*, in any of these *great and glorious blessings*, to distinguish one person from another, but *all the benefit* of them, which he calls *consequent blessings*, depends upon a *man's own virtue*. Upon the whole, he tells us, (pag. 96.) that *his chief intention is to establish a double justification or salvation*, which, with him, are terms of the same import; one is *antecedent*, merely by a

profession of faith, which is common to all Christians, good and bad, (pag. 68.) ; and the other final or consequent, which is the issue of a holy and obedient life. Accordingly, he supposes that the apostle argues about the first justification in the five first chapters of this epistle, and about the second in the sixth chapter, (pag. 123.) That this is a fair and candid representation of his sense in the quoted pages, and in many other places, mostly in his own words, and never otherwise, unless for abbreviation sake, I appeal to every one that has read him.

As to his notion about *original sin*, the reader may judge of that from the sense given in the following *paraphrase* on the passages which relate to that doctrine, and from the *notes*, which are subjoined to illustrate or support it : And if what is offered throughout on this epistle, with respect to that, and other points most nearly concerned in this gentleman's scheme, be found to stand, as I trust it will, in the main at least, though I am far from pretending to infallibility ; his sense of them must, of consequence, be all wrong, and extremely pernicious to the bringing in of a quite new gospel, which the apostle never thought of. To maintain this, our *Paraphrast* is forced to alter the common, natural, well-known, and long-established use of language, which he imagines himself warranted to do, as having discovered the universal mistake of mankind, in the ideas they have always affixed to it, by comparing a great number of texts in the Old and New Testament, (pag. 114, &c.)

Among the vast variety of constructions which he would put upon the words *righteousness* and *justification*, to serve his purpose in that large collection, most of them are so exceeding arbitrary, lax, and vague, that no determinate idea can be fixed to those terms, which may signify almost whatever any one pleases. Sometimes, it seems, they mean *justification and salvation*, in a sense of his own, different from the common use of the words : At others, they signify *moral rectitude in general mercy and goodness ; saving mercy, saving goodness ; preserving, delivering goodness ; deliverance, restoration ; or the happiness that attends it ; temporal deliverance and salvation ; deliverance from death, from sin, and condemnation ; a grant of favour, or of any benefit or honour ; the donation of privileges, or honours, or, perhaps, prosperity and peace, joy and gladness*. To sum up all, he thinks they signify *ANY grant of favour, ANY instance of mercy and goodness, whereby God delivers, or exempts from ANY kind of suffering or calamity, or confers ANY favour, blessing, or privilege, whether temporal or spiritual*, (pag. 121.)

Having thus endeavoured to throw all uncertainty upon the meaning of these terms, by his numerous quotations, and his own constructions of them, he takes the liberty of fixing upon one sense of them, which is indeed least of all pointed out in his cited passages, to signify what he would make to be the most precise notion of his *first justification*, which, he says, the apostle contends for in the five first chapters of this epistle, namely, *The calling of the Gentiles, and their being admitted, upon faith, into the peculiar family and king-*
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dom of God, (pag. 125.) And he supposes, though doubtless many will be otherwise minded, that the various *senses* he has given, being duly considered, it will not appear at all strange, if the apostle applies the terms, righteousness, or justification, and being justified, to the important affair of our deliverance from the power of heathenish darkness, and our being admitted into the church and covenant of God, as we were idolatrous Gentiles;—and to all the *honours, privileges, grants, and donations, belonging to the peculiar people of God*, (pag. 121.) evidently meaning, as in other places he expresses it, *to all that profess to believe the gospel, whether they be good or bad.*

According to this opinion, the greatest debauchees, the most dissolute and profane people, that profess to believe the gospel in this Christian nation, are as much *justified, and pardoned in God's mercy and goodness, for ever to be adored*, as the holiest saint upon earth; or rather there is really *now-a-days*, no such thing as pardon and justification, with respect to *personal* offences, in our world, unless of converts from *heathenish* darkness and idolatry; no, nor was there any room for the pardon and justification of the believing *Jews* in the *apostle's days*; they having been free from *heathenish* darkness and idolatry; and so, in this author's sense, been all *nationally* pardoned and justified before: And yet the apostle *preached to them the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ*; assuring them, that by him, *all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses*, (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) Surely then, when he preached pardon and justification to the *Jews*, through faith in Christ, he meant something different from a deliverance from the power of *heathenish* darkness and idolatry; and something more, than they already were *nationally* partakers of, as the *possessing* people of God.

And if, according to this writer's supposition, (pag. 27, 295;) *all the Jews* were already pardoned and justified by the *Abrahamic* covenant, then they obtained no other pardon and justification by believing in Christ, than they, merely as *Jews*, had before. And therefore *pardon, justification, salvation, &c.* in the New Testament, must ordinarily have a different meaning from what merely relates to such privileges and blessings as were *nationally* enjoyed by the whole body of the *Jews*, without distinction; and this overthrows the foundation of our author's scheme, in his arguing from the correspondence of these, to those blessings, as though they were of the same import. And if it appears from the universality of the resurrection, that the grace of the gospel actually extends to ALL MANKIND, (as he asserts pag. 112.) then the heathen nations, that never heard the gospel, shall not only be raised at the last day; but the grace of the gospel actually extends to them also, as well as to *professing Christians*. And what can be concluded from hence, but that *all mankind*, inclusive of the *heathens* themselves, shall have a *beneficial* resurrection to life?

He makes no distinction between *justification* and *salvation*, though they are so plainly distinguished in this epistle, chap. v. 9 where it is said, *Much more being now justified by Christ's blood, we shall be sa-*

ved from wrath through him: Nor doth he make any distinction between external and effectual calling, though the apostle expressly speaks of some that were so called, according to God's purpose, as to be both justified and glorified, (*chap. viii. 28, 30.*) ; and our blessed Lord says, *Many are called, but few are chosen, (Matth. xxii. 14.)* Nor doth he distinguish between external and internal relation to Christ and his church; though our Lord himself makes an evident distinction between those that were in him by visible profession and external relation, and others, that were also in him by vital union, *John xv. 6.* and the apostle John, (*1 Epist. ii. 19.*) distinguishes between mere professors, and real Christians, saying, *They went out from us, but they were not of us: For if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us: But they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.*

Our apostle indeed speaks of pardon, justification, salvation, &c. as the common privileges of all in the churches of Christ to which he wrote, whether they consisted of Jewish, or Gentile converts; But it was not merely on account of their profession, but of the credibility of it, and so of their being, in the judgment of charity, real Christians, as it was meet for him to think of them all, (*Phil. i. 7.*) and the better part of them were so in truth. Why then might not the denomination of the whole, as to their spiritual privileges and saving benefits, be taken from the better part of them, on a charitable presumption, that every one was what he credibly professed to be, till his behaviour shewed the contrary? In which case he was to be cast out of the church, as the apostle wrote to the *Corinthians* to do by the incestuous person, (*1 Cor. v. 3, 4, 5.*) This carried an intimation, that the special blessing of the New Testament-church, signified by an external communion with it, belonged only to sincere believers, and not to mere professors, whose conversation shewed that they were destitute of the saving grace of God.

There were always sound and rotten professors in the visible church, which were signified under the Old Testament, by the good and bad figs in the prophet *Jeremiah's* vision, *chap. xxiv.* and, under the gospel-state, by the wheat and tares growing together, till the harvest, in our Lord's parable, *Matth. xiii. 24,—30.* And as it appears from the epistle to the *Romans* itself, *chap. ii. 28, 29.* and *ix. 6.* that a distinction is to be made between only visible and real Israelites, and Christians; so Every and All, to whom gospel-benefits pertain, are not to be considered as signifying all and every one to whom the apostle wrote, any otherwise than as belonging to them respectively, in one or other of those different views: For though neither all the *Israelites*, nor all the members of gospel-churches, were chosen, called, justified, sanctified &c. in a saving sense, yet many of them were so; and all these glorious privileges and blessings belonged, at present, really and effectually to these, and only presumptively, in the judgment of charity, to others. But unless there had been some, even among the *Jews* themselves, under the Old Testament-dispensation, that were

Israelites.

Israelites indeed, and so were really partakers of these benefits, in the strict and saving sense, and might humbly claim them by faith as already theirs; it can scarcely be thought that they would have been represented, as pertaining, in the visible administration of the covenant, to the whole body of that people; or that it was not with a special regard to the *circumcised in heart*, which were always, more or less, among them, that such great things were said of them. Much less can any thing like this be imagined under the N-w Testament-state, in which not *national birth*, but *religious and moral characters* are represented, as necessary to bring us into a visible covenant-relation to God, through Christ, and give us a claim to all the privileges and blessings of the gospel-dispensation.

And therefore all this writer's large collection of texts, to give a low turn to the special blessings of the New Testament-church, as if they were *only national and external*, and were *equally common* to all professing Christians, *whether good or bad*, may be easily set to rights, by a most natural and obvious supposition, that the apostle speaks of these blessings, according to the judgment of charity, as belonging to the whole body of credible professors, while he must be understood to mean, that only true believers, who are often described by distinguishing characters, were really in the highest sense, partakers of them: And it was impossible that he, who did not know *the hearts* of all professors, should speak to, or concerning them, any otherwise, than according to their credible profession of faith; which is indeed the only rule of *men's* judging concerning them, and is the only *ministerial* warrant for admitting them to all the *external* privileges of the covenant, or for pronouncing its spiritual and eternal blessings upon them; but this doth not entitle them to, or secure their salvation, unless they be in heart what they appear to be in life. Hence motives and obligations to holiness and obedience were urged upon all professing Christians, as the means of God's appointment for arriving at eternal life, according to the inseparable connection which God and the very nature of things have made between holiness here and happiness hereafter: And when the lives of any were inconsistent with their Christian profession, the apostle warned them of their danger, to excite their care and diligence, lest they should deceive their own souls, and fall short of heaven; assuring them, that the *unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God*, (1 Cor. vi. 9.)

Our author's *first, justifying* faith, and *second, working* faith, are really no other than *two different kinds* of faith, one in mere professors, and the other in sound believers, as the first is only *doctrinal, historical, or notional*; and the second is *sincere*, seated in *the heart*, as a *vital* principle there, and *productive of good works*; and so one is effectual to salvation, while the other leaves a man where it found him, as to his state before God, and title to eternal life. But why may not true Christians be said to be *savingly pardoned, justified, sanctified*, &c. through a sincere and cordial faith, in their first believing, as well as afterwards; and to be really interested, *at present*, in

all spiritual and heavenly blessings, so as to be secured, by divine grace, from ever falling short of their utmost perfection in glory? For they receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified, by one and the same faith in Christ Jesus; and all that are begotten to a lively hope, are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, (Acts xxvi. 18. and 1 Pet. i. 3.—5.)

According to this gentleman's sentiments, the *Christian*, as far as I see, has little, if any, advantage of the *heathen*, with respect to eternal salvation: For he says, the *virtuous heathen* may be eternally saved, as well as the *virtuous Christian*, and represents virtue, as proportioned to advantages, (pag. 104.) Hence it clearly follows, that *less* degrees of virtue in a *heathen*, are equal to *greater* degrees of it in a *Christian*; because the *Christian's* advantages are greater than his. Nay, according to this scheme, the *heathens* seem to have been in a better state, in some respect at least, than the *Jews* were in, under the *Mosaic* law: For the *Gentiles* were freed from the laborious and expensive services of the *Jews*, and from their bondage-frame of spirit, which arose from the dark and terrible dispensation they were under; and yet the *Gentiles*, on account of their lower degrees of virtue, stood as fair for acceptance with God as the *Jews*; and the sins of the *Jews* were more provoking, as they were committed against higher mercies, means, and obligations, than theirs: And no one *professing Christian* is more beholden than another to the wonderful grace of God, which this author so much magnifies, all along, in his *first justification, pardon, adoption, sanctification, &c.* since, according to him, all that grace lies only in God's giving these *external* blessings of the gospel, in common to all that profess to believe it, and equally interesting every one of them, whether good or bad, in all its glorious privileges upon their *professing* to believe: But I cannot find that he has any great thoughts of, or says much about any other grace than this.

He, as has been observed, says, His chief intention is to establish a double justification, (p. 96.) which he calls the *first justification*, upon *professing* to believe in this world; and the *second* or *final justification*, upon *our works*, when we have finished our course at the day of judgment. But, after all, the difference he would make between these, may, I think, be fairly accounted for, by considering the *first*, as *constitutive justification*; and the *second*, as *publicly declarative* in a *judicial* process, upon proper evidence of the sincerity of our faith, and consequently of the *reality* of our saving interest in Christ, by our works, which saving faith produces, and are necessary to be practised by those that are justified; and which, when brought to light at the great day, will shew the *impartiality* of the final sentence, that shall adjudge them to eternal life, on account of the Redeemer's righteousness, through faith in him.

And as to this author's darling notion, that the apostle argues about the *first*, or *antecedent justification*, which gives no title to eternal life, in the *first five* chapters of this epistle; and about consequent justifi-

justification, which depends on our works, in the *sixth* chapter, (pag. 123,—125.) It does not appear to me, that the apostle argues about *justification*, at all; in the *sixth* chapter; but rather about obligations to *sanctification and obedience*, as the fruit of justifying faith. And whoever attentively considers the *justification by faith*, and by *grace*, which is discoursed on particularly in the *fifth* chapter, must surely think, that it is more than a *common national privilege*, without any *saving effect*, to the whole body of *professing Christians*, whether good or bad; and that it is such a *justification*, as shall entirely issue, through *divine grace*, in final and complete *salvation*, as much as any other *justification* mentioned in this epistle, or any where else in the New Testament. For these very persons, who are thus *justified by faith*, are said already to *have peace with God, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ*; and to *have access by faith into that state of grace, wherein they stand rejoicing in hope of the glory of God*, (ver. 1, 2.) and of these very persons it is said, *That, being now justified by Christ's blood, they shall much more be saved from wrath through him; and being reconciled by his death, much more shall they be saved by his life*, (ver. 9, 10.); and *they that receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ*, (ver. 17.) Hence it is called *justification of life*; and *grace* is said to *reign through righteousness to eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord*, (ver. 18, 21.) What expressions can be more peremptory and significant than these to assure us of the eternal salvation of all those that are thus justified and reconciled to God, on their *first* believing? And yet it seems all these say nothing about a man's being entitled to heaven, and finally saved.

Upon the whole then, I am fully satisfied, that this writer's key by no means fits the wards; and never can unlock the true scheme and design of this epistle; or give us any just view of *the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to the apostle's trust*, (1 Tim. i. 11.)

C H A P. I.

The apostle Paul, by way of introduction to the whole epistle, asserts his commission, 1,—6. Salutes the saints at Rome, 7. Blesses God, and prays for them, 8,—10. Expresses his desire and purpose to see, and preach to them, 11,—15. He then enters on his main design about the gospel way of justification by faith for Jews and Gentiles, 16, 17. And sets forth the sins of the Gentiles, to shew that they could not be justified by the law of nature, 18,—32.

TEXT.

PAUL, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

PARAPHRASE.

I PAUL *, who was formerly a bitter enemy to Christianity, and furious persecutor of its holy professors, now count it my honour to be the humble, obedient, and devoted servant of Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of lost sinners; he having, not only changed my heart by his wonderful grace, but also commissioned me, by his immediate authority, since his resurrection and exaltation, to be one of his apostles †, and that particularly to the Gentiles. This then is my character, and I magnify mine office, (*chap. xi. 13.*) it being my highest ambition to be known and owned, and to be called by this name (*κλῆτος ἀποστόλος*). The delightful, honourable work ‡, to which I was freely chosen in God's eternal purpose, and designedly separated from my mother's womb, (*Gal. i. 15.*) ; for which I afterwards was richly furnished, and to which I was solemnly set apart, and gave myself up, by the special direction of the Holy Ghost, (*Acts xiii. 2.*) as well as by the immediate appointment of Christ, This noble work, I say, is that of preaching the gospel, even the glad tidings

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* For an account of Paul, and of his being generally called by this name after his conversion and call to the apostleship, see the note on *Acts vii. 58.*

† Apostles signify persons sent; and the apostles of our Lord were the prime ministers of his kingdom, who were sent immediately by himself at his first setting it up in the world. There never were, nor ever can be any successors to their special characters, privileges, and powers, in after-ages of the church: For they were only such, as had seen and heard the Lord after he was risen from the dead; and were sent to testify his resurrection, as eye and ear-witnesses, and to publish the whole scheme of the gospel, under an immediate inspiration of his Spirit: and they were furnished with miraculous powers, for confirming and vindicating the doctrines they preached, and conferring the gifts of the Holy Ghost, by laying their hands on

those that believed. And as Paul was made the great apostle of the Gentiles, he had all these qualifications for his office: He had seen the Lord after his resurrection, and heard him speak from heaven, *1 Cor. ix. 1.* and *xv. 8.* and *Acts ix. 4.* He received his authority not from men, but immediately from Christ himself, who sent him to the Gentiles, and revealed to him what he was to preach to them, *Acts xxii. 17, 18, 21.* and *xxvi. 16, 17, 18.* *Gal. i. 1, 11, 16.* and *Eph. iii. 1, 2.* And he was endued with all apostolic powers, in so much that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles, (*2 Cor. xi. 5.*) See *Miscell. sacr. essay 2.*

‡ Dr Goodwin observes, on *Eph. i. 1.* that to separate, or set apart, (*ἀποστέλλω*) is to select choice things: Therefore choice sentences are called *apophthegms*; and in this respect our apostle is called a *chosen vessel*, that is, a choice vessel to bear Christ's name, *Acts ix. 15.*

tidings of salvation, which God himself is the author of, and has made known, as the revelation of his mind and will, with reference to the gracious recovery of apostate sinners, among the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, thro' a Redeemer.

2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

2 Which blessed gospel *, though it has been but lately published in all its light, grace, and glory, is no new invention, nor the contrivance of men; but is entirely of God, who in former ages gave various hints of it by his inspired prophets, with promises of its being more fully and explicitey revealed in due time, as these are contained in the sacred oracles, which are differenced from all merely human writings, by the divine purity of their doctrines; by the holiness of their original, tendency, and design; and by the sanctifying effects which they are the means of producing in them that believe.

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh,

3 The main subject of this glorious gospel of the blessed God, relates to his own eternal, and only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the anointed Saviour, your's and mine, and the only Lord of our faith, worship, and obedience; even that wonderful and adorable person, who in two distinct natures is both God and man. As to his *human nature*, or fleshly descent, it was from that renowned patriarch *David*, of whom it was prophesied, that the Messiah should be *the fruit of his body, and sit upon his throne.* (Psal. cxxxii. 11. compared with Acts ii. 30.)

4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by

4 And as to his *divine nature*, which is absolutely spiritual, and infinitely holy in itself, and preserved his human nature from all defilement, and so may be called *the Spirit of holiness*, he was what he all along professed himself to be, and eternally had been, in the most eminent and exalted sense, even *the Son of God*, possessed of the same nature and perfections with the Father: And (οὐκ ἔκρυπτο) he was determinately avowed, openly proclaimed, and convincingly demonstrated to be so, according to the manifest proof that was given of it by the immediate exertion of his own divine power †, and

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* The apostle no sooner mentioned the gospel, but his heart was so warmed and filled with a sense of its transcendent excellence, that he went into an high encomium of it, and of Christ its chief subject, in this and several following verses.

† If the *Spirit of holiness* is here considered as expressive of the sense in which Christ was the Son of God, it evidently signifies his own divine nature, in opposition to what he was

according to the flesh; and so the antithesis is very beautiful between (κατὰ πνεῦμα) according to the Spirit here, and (κατὰ σαρκά) according to the flesh, ver. 3. But if we consider it as the principle of the power by which Christ was raised from the dead, for demonstrating him to be the Son of God, it may signify, either his own divine nature, or the Holy Spirit, the third Person in the adorable Trinity. And yet, unless his own divine power

by the resurrection from the dead :

5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name :

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ,

7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace from God our

and by the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit, which wrought in him, and undividedly concurred with him, in raising his dead body from the grave, to a glorious state of immortality.

5 By whom, as thus risen and exalted, I, together with others of my brethren, have been enriched with special communications of divine favour, and been freely honoured with the apostolic office: And the grace of apostleship, which I received from him, was designed, through his blessing upon my labours, to bring over *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, persons of all nations whatsoever, unto an obediencial subjection of their understandings, wills, and consciences, to the authority of God, in believing on his Son Jesus Christ, and unto that spiritual and holy obedience to all his commands, which is the fruit of faith in him; all which was designed for the glory of his own great name, in the salvation of their souls.

6 And, among these, ye yourselves, who dwell in the metropolis of the *Roman* empire, the head of the *Gentile* world, are called, by the grace of the Lord Jesus, to the knowledge, faith, and fellowship of the gospel; and I accordingly, as the apostle of the *Gentiles*, (*chap. xi. 13.*) look upon myself obliged to discharge my office toward you.

7 To you therefore, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, that are professors of Christ at *Rome*, and, in the judgment of charity are the objects of God's special love, which discovers itself in its happy effects upon you; even to you who bear the character of holy believers, and whose proper denomination is *saints*, which ye are called and obliged to be. To all and every one of you, my hearty prayer, affectionate salutation, and authoritative benediction, in the name of Christ, is, that the riches of free love and favour * may abound and be delightfully

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power concurred in raising him from the dead, his resurrection, abstractly considered in itself, no more proved him to be the Son of God, than the resurrection of believers by the power of God, and by his Spirit, who dwells in them, (*Rom. viii. 11.*) proves any of them to be so.

* Peace be with you, is well known to have been the common salutation, importing all prosperity, under the Old Testament; and it was used by our Lord, and by his apostles, and seventy disciples, during his abode upon earth. See *John xx. 19, 21, 26. Matth. x. 12, 13. and Luke x. 5.* But when the gospel-dispensation was set up in all its light, bless-

sings, and glory, the salutation was usually changed into *grace and peace*, to keep up our view of God's free favour, as the fountain of all grace in us, and of all our prosperity or peace. Our apostle uses it at the beginning of all his epistles to the churches, and mentions a correspondent salutation, viz. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*, as a distinguishing token, which he wrote with his own hand, at the close of every epistle, especially of such as were transcribed by amanuensis, 1 *Ths. iii. 17.* But it is observable, that at the entrance of both his epistles to *Timothy*, and of that to *Titus*, and of those only, he adds *mercy* to *grace and peace*,

our Father, and
the Lord Jesus
Christ.

lightly manifested, in plentiful communications of grace, and in all manner of prosperity, consisting of peace with God, and peace in your own consciences, and with one another, and all around you. May all blessing freely and extensively abound toward you, according to the oconomy of salvation, from God, even our covenant God and Father, as the original spring and designer of them all; and from the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Mediator, who purchased them by his blood, and conveys them by his Spirit.

8 As what I hear of the work of God among you, is matter of great rejoicing; so I, though a stranger to you, cannot but, in the first place, offer up the most cheerful thanksgivings and praises on your behalf to God, my own God, as well as yours, through Jesus Christ, by whom alone all blessings come to you; by whom I am brought into a covenant-relation to God the Father; and by whom my sacrifice of praise is acceptable to him, (*Heb. xiii. 15.* and *1 Pet. ii. 5.*) I heartily bless God for the grace bestowed upon you all, which has wrought so effectually and so visibly on you, and especially on the *Gentile* converts among you, that your receiving the gospel, and your remarkable faith in Christ, even at *Rome* itself, notwithstanding all the temptations and opposition ye meet with there, is talked of with religious wonder and joy, and with high commendation, among all the churches * through the *Roman* empire; every Christian being glad to report it, and to hear the report, wherever they live. And it cannot endear you to them more than it does to me.

9 For I can solemnly appeal to the all-seeing and heart-searching God, as the great witness of the truth of what I say; even that God, whom I serve not in pretence, or mere outward appearance, nor in bodily labour only; but sincerely, affectionately, and faithfully, with full bent of heart, and with the renewed spirit of my mind, in publishing, maintaining, recommending, and enforcing the gospel of his dear Son, which may be so called, because he is the subject and author of it. I can, I say, appeal to God himself, even as by a religious oath, that on all stated, and occasional set addresses to the throne of grace, I constantly bear you, in a very particular manner, upon my heart, and do not forget

to

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peace, saying, *Grace, mercy, and peace be with you*; which may intimate, that, as various difficulties, labours, and temptations, sufferings, and dangers of ministers, are greater than of private Christians; so they must of all need *mercy*, to pity, help, and

comfort them, and to keep them faithful, under all their throes and discouragements.

* The whole world is here put for the *Roman* empire, as it also is *Luke* ii. 1. because that empire then included the greatest part of the known and civilized nations of the world.

9 For God is
my witness, whom
I serve with my
spirit in the gos-
pel of his Son,
that without cea-
sing I make men-
tion

tion of you always in my prayers,

to mention you expressly in my daily prayers to him, that ye may be still more and more abundantly blessed with all the gifts and graces of the Spirit.

10 Making requests, (if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God,) to come unto you.

10 Yea, so strong is my affection to you, and concern for your further edification and establishment, that, among other things, I am continually begging of God, that (if it be his holy will) his infinitely wise and good providence would now, at length, remove all difficulties out of my way, and, by some means or other, give me a safe and favourable opportunity of coming to, and personally conversing with you.

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established;

11 For I find in myself a longing desire to make you a visit, that I may have the pleasure of seeing your faces, whom God has beautified with salvation; and of communicating further instructions to you, by the spirit of wisdom and knowledge, together with some new, or greater degrees of spiritual gifts, by the imposition of my hands, the better to furnish some of yourselves for ministerial work, (see 1 Cor. xii. 7.—11.); and the more abundantly to confirm you in the doctrines of the gospel, and in your most holy faith, which ye have already been made partakers of, amidst the temptations and dangers, that ye are exposed to, on every side, from the world, and from the false teachers that would pervert you.

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me.

12 My design in all this is, that we may rejoice together in the love of God to us severally, and in the affectionate expressions of our love to each other; and may have mutual satisfaction and delight, in comparing our spiritual experiences together, and plainly discovering, one to another, that God has wrought the same effectual faith both in you and me.

13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that I oftentimes purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some

13 Now, my beloved brethren in the Lord, that ye may not take these to be merely words of compliment, or only expressions of a present flash of affection, I think proper to assure you, that the desire I speak of has been long in my heart; I having often seriously intended, and endeavoured, to turn my course to you; though hitherto opposition, hardships, and necessary services in other places*, have unexpectedly prevented me, when I fain would have been with you, that I might promote the interest of Christ at Rome, and reap such spiritual fruits

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* The apostle's being let hitherto seems principally to refer to the full employment, which the providence of God had called him to, in other places among the Gentiles, where the gospel had never been preached by any one else, which he particularly takes notice of, chap. xv. 19.—21. At other times he was prevented, by the special direction of the

Spirit, and an extraordinary vision, contrary to his own design, as in Acts xvi. 6.—10. And at others, by the opposition and troubles he met with in Asia and Greece, Acts xiii. xiv. &c. and so Satan hindered him, by stirring up evil instruments against him, as he said in another case, 2 Thess. ii. 18.

some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

fruits of my ministry, in the work of conversion and edification among you, as shall abound to his glory, and to your own, as well as my account; even as, by his grace with me, has been the happy effect among other *Gentiles*, to whom I have had opportunities of preaching the gospel.

14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the barbarians, both to the wise, and to the unwise.

14 Yea, as a necessity is laid upon me, and wo is unto me, if I preach not the gospel, (1 Cor. ix. 16.) and as I have freely received my apostolic office and qualifications for this very purpose, I look upon myself obliged, in point of duty and gratitude, to improve them, as the Lord shall enable me, for the benefit of all sorts of *Gentiles*, as well as of the *Jews*; whether they be the more polite, learned, and civilized *Greeks*, among whom arts and sciences chiefly flourish; or the more rude and uncultivated nations who have little literature, and good breeding among them, and therefore are called *Barbarians*, (see the note on *Acts* xxviii. 4.) or whether they be the more prudent and sagacious, or the more weak and stupid, in either parts of these two grand divisions of the world.

15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

15 So that, upon the whole, ye may be well satisfied, that, as far as I am capable of it, and may have opportunity for it, I am heartily willing, and desirous, to run all risks of my reputation, ease, and life itself, to execute my commission, in preaching the blessed gospel of Christ to you, even at *Rome*, in the face of all opposition, contempt, and danger, from the imperial authority; from the rich, great, and learned; and from the numerous populace there; as I have already done it, not only in country towns and villages, but likewise in noted cities for learning and traffick, such as *Antioch*, *Philippi*, *Thessalonica*, *Athens*, and *Corinth*. *Acts* xv. 35. and xvi. 12. and xvii. 1, 16. and xviii. 1.

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jews first, also to the Greek.

16 For, how meanly soever many people, and especially those of chief rank and figure in the world, may think of the gospel of God's grace through Jesus Christ, and how much soever they may despise and set themselves against it, on account of the ignominious death of its author, and principal subject, and of the poverty of its professors, or on account of its artless dress, and the sublimity and mysteriousness of some of its doctrines, and the contrariety of the whole to their pride and passions, lusts and prejudices, carnal notions and secular interests; and whatever reproach and ridicule I may suffer, for espousing and publishing it, it is, nevertheless, such an excellent and illustrious scheme, for displaying the glory of all the divine perfections in united harmony

harmony, and for recovering fallen creatures to the favour and image of God, that, instead of being ashamed of it, I count it my highest honour to own and profess, preach and defend it, and that among the great and learned, as well as the vulgar and illiterate: For it is evidently clothed with divine authority, and is the means and instrument, which God has appointed, and which his almighty power works by upon the heart, to render it effectual for the eternal salvation of every true believer; both of the *Jews*, to whom it was first sent, (*Acts* iii. 26. and xiii. 46.) and likewise of the *Gentiles*, the most learned of which are the *Greeks*, to whom it was afterwards published, and great multitudes of whom have received it. (*Acts* xiv. 1. and xvii. 12.)

17 For therein
is the righteousness
of God re-
vealed

17 For, in this glorious gospel, the transcendently excellent righteousness*, which God, of his own infinite wisdom and mere grace, has appointed and provided,

N O T E.

* That which, for reasons mentioned in the paraphrase, is styled the *righteousness of God*, both here and in chap. iii. 21, 22. and x. 3. plainly relates to a *justifying* righteousness, which is the subject of the apostle's discourse; and this is called, at other times, the *righteousness of faith*, chap. iv. 13. because it is made known, received, and made over to us for righteousness, through faith. Accordingly, the apostle speaks of receiving the gift of this righteousness, (chap. v. 17) and it is said to be the *righteousness of God, which is by faith, and through the faith of Christ*, (chap. iii. 22. and ix. 30. and x. 6. and Phil. iii. 9.) and so it is distinguished from the *grace of faith*, as it evidently is in this place, where it is said to be *revealed to faith*, to intimate, that this righteousness is not faith itself, but is that which is apprehended and received by faith: And that this is the righteousness of *Christ*, which he wrought out by his obedience and sufferings unto death, appears from its being represented, as including a price of redemption and a propitiation by his blood, chap. iii. 22, 23, 25. and from its being called the *righteousness and obedience of one*, meaning *Christ*, for justification, and being said to *make many righteous*, in opposition to the *offence*, and the *disobedience of one*, meaning *Adam*, which was to condemnation, and by which many were made sinners, (chap. v. 18, 19.) And this still further appears from Christ's being spoken of, as the *end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes*, (chap. x. 4) and as *made of God righteousness to them that are in him*, or that are vitally united by faith to him, (1 Cor. i. 30.) and from their being made the *righteousness of God in him*, (1 Cor. v. 21) Accordingly to be justified by the faith of Christ,

and justified by Christ, are used as terms of the same import, (*Gal. ii. 16, 17.*) See also the note on *Rom. iv. 3.*—But it is very difficult to determine the precise sense in which this righteousness of God is said to be revealed *from faith to faith*. Some understand it to signify, that the righteousness of God is revealed from an *Old* to a *New Testament-faith*. Others, that the righteousness of God, which is by faith, is revealed in the gospel to *beget faith*. Others, that it is revealed from the *first faith*, whereby we come into a justified state, to *after-faith*, by which we continue in that state. Various other senses may be seen in expositors, (*Vid. Pol. Synops.*); but that which seems to me to be most unforced and agreeable to the context, though I do not find that any have taken notice of it, is, that the righteousness of God is revealed from the faith of the *Jew*, to whom it was first preached, and who first believed in it, to the faith of the *Gentile*, to whom it was afterwards published, and who embraced it by faith: and so this passage refers back to what the apostle had said in the close of the preceding verse, about the gospel's being the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believes, to the *Jew first, and also to the Greek*. And this sense may very well consist, and fall in with others suggested in the paraphrase, and with one part of the learned Mr *Lect's* interpretation of the phrase, who understands it to mean, that the righteousness of God is not by works, but by faith alone, according to *Gal. iii. 11.* or, that it is wholly, and all through, by faith; and so it is the same figure which the apostle used in other places, where he speaks of *free-will to iniquity, unto iniquity*; that is, wholly to iniquity, (chap. vi. 19.) and *from glory to glory*; that is, wholly glorious, (1 Cor. iii. 18.)

vealed from faith to faith : as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'

vided, approves of, accepts and imputes for justification in his sight, and which his eternal Son, who is God, (*chap. ix. 5.*) and whose name is the Lord our Righteousness, (*Jer. xxiii. 6.*) has wrought out, and brought in, by his perfect obedience and atoning sufferings, even unto death, (*Dan. ix. 24.*) This righteousness, I say, which, on these and such like accounts, may be styled the righteousness of God, is now, at length, clearly made known in all its suitableness and perfection, dignity and efficacy, from the doctrine of faith in the word, to the grace of faith in the heart, which entirely and alone apprehends and receives it for justification, without the concurrence of any of our works for that purpose, (*chap. iii. 28.*) from first to last ; from the faith of the Jew, to the faith of the Gentile ; and from the weakest and obscurest, to the strongest and clearest faith, in either of them : So that every true believer, of what nation soever, or of what degree soever his faith be, all such, and none but such, are, and shall be, discharged from condemnation, and accepted as righteous to eternal life, as was hinted in the prophet's declaration, (*Habak. ii. 4.*) which was, not that, according to the tenor of the law, *the man which doth those things shall live in them* ; but that the man, who is righteous in God's account, according to the tenor of the gospel, is brought into, and continues in, a state of spiritual life, and is entitled to eternal life, through faith in the Messiah, of whom it was prophesied, that *he would surely come, and not tarry.* (Compare *Hab. ii. 3, 4.* with *Heb. x. 37, 38.*)

19 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

18 And this way of pardon and justification is equally necessary for *Jews* and *Gentiles*, if ever either of them are made partakers of those inestimable blessings. For, to begin with the *Gentiles*, the just and terrible vengeance of the great God is denounced from heaven, the habitation of his holiness and glory, not only against the sins of the *Jews*, but of the heathens also : He has given them notice of this by the judgments which he has executed, in the course of his providence, upon sinners, and by the secret remorse, and louder clamours of their own consciences, under a sense of guilt ; and this is now further revealed to them, by express declarations under the gospel state, (*Acts xviii. 30, 31.*) ; this various and solemn warning is levelled against all impiety, with reference to God and his worship, such as the atheism, idolatry, and polytheism of the heathens ; and against all manner of immorality, with regard to others and themselves ; who wickedly and unrighteously stifle, imprison, and suppress what good notions they have of truth and falsehood,

falsehood, right and wrong; and will not act according to them, nor suffer them to have their proper influence upon their hearts and lives, as their own consciences tell them they ought to have.

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

19 Though the *Gentiles* advantages have not been equal to those of the *Jews*, yet they cannot plead perfect ignorance; because, in opposition to their flagrant impiety or *ungodliness* the very light of nature discovers some things concerning God, which are knowable, and are made known to them, and especially to some great moralists, such as *Socrates**, *Seneca*, and others among them, (*ἡ αὐτοῦ*) by the works of creation and providence: For God, who is the author of that light, and of these works, has therein clearly manifested those things concerning himself to them.

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

20 For he has not left himself without witness in the works of nature. (*Act* xiv. 17.) several of his adorable excellencies, such as his almighty power, which he has eternally and unchangeably in, and of himself; and his supreme divinity, whereby he necessarily, everlastingly, and perfectly exists, which, he being a pure spirit, are not in themselves the objects of sense, nor can be seen by corporeal eyes: These, together with his transcendent wisdom and goodness, are sensibly displayed in their effects, and have been impressed, as legible and indelible characters, on the works of his hands, and particularly in the wonderful formation of man, the top creature of this world, (*κτίσις κορυφαία*) ever since (*ἀπὸ κτίσεως*) the creation of all things; and these, being attended to with due reflection, are easily discerned (*φανερὰ ὑποβάται*) in his operations, and in the things that are thereby produced, with such magnificence and variety, beauty and order, as none but a God of infinite perfections could be the author of: So that the heathens neglect of him, and disobedience and opposition to him, are committed against so much light and knowledge, as leaves them utterly inexcusable.

21 Because that when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thank-

21 Because when, in this way, they could not but have some notions of God's being and attributes, they nevertheless did not conceive worthy of him, nor treat him like a God, suitable to his nature and perfections, by exalting him in their thoughts, and paying him that religious and spiritual homage, which they knew, or might have known, was due to him, and him only:

Not

N O T E.

* See a large quotation in Mr Henry's continuation from *Seneca*, of his self-condemnings, in the worship he paid to the ignoble rout of gods. And the story of *Socrates's* ordering a

cock to be sacrificed to *Asclepius* at his death, though he was condemned by the *Athenians* to die for deciding a plurality of gods, is well known.

thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Nor were they thankful to him, which they ought to have been, for the light he had vouchsafed to them, and for his *giving them life and breath, and all good things*; (*Acts xvii. 25.*); but they indulged their own groundless and pernicious fancies, and became exceeding corrupt in their perverse reasonings (*ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν*) concerning the nature of God, and the worship due to him; and, through the depravity of their wills and affections, their inconsiderate and insatuated minds were covered with the thick. It mists of ignorance and error.

21 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools:

22 So that, while they, and especially their *Greek* philosophers, made great pretences to wisdom and learning, above the rest of mankind, and particularly above the *Jews*, whom they despised; and while they were highly conceited, and boasted of themselves as the only men of understanding, (*φασκεύουσιν ἑαυτοὺς σοφοί*) they, by all their wisdom, knew not God, (*1 Cor. i. 21.*) but were really stupid and senseless, like perfect idiots, (*ἡμιμαθητοὶ*) in things pertaining to him and his service.

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things.

23 And whereas God is the perfect, spiritual, and uncompounded, immortal and invisible Being, *who dwells in light which no man can approach, and whom no man hath seen, or can see*, (*1 Tim. vi. 16.*) they, in the chosen blindness and depravity of their minds, have debased his glory, by ascribing deity to mutable, perishing, and contemptible creatures, and representing him by them, as though he were of their corporeal and corruptible likenesses: Yea, so foolish were their vain reasonings, and so gross their idolatry, that they have infamously sunk his dignity and glory so low, as to imagine, that there was divinity in the very meanest parts of the creation, and to worship God under the shape of, not only mortal men, but even of the fowls of the air, and the beasts that walk on four feet, and of such animals as creep on their bellies; as if he were like them *. So monstrously absurd were they in their wild imaginations about the only true God!

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, thro' the lusts of their own hearts, to

24 And for this their willful and detestable impiety and shocking idolatry, in direct contradiction to the plain notices he had given of himself, God, in his righteous judgment, withdrew his abused light and restraints, left them to themselves, and delivered them up to

N O T E.

* The apostle here manifestly refers to the idolatry of several heathen nations; among which we are told, that the *Syrians* worshipped *fishes*; and that the *Egyptians* worshipped, not only *drifted* men; but *donets*, and various kinds of *beasts*, such as *oxen*, *dogs*,

cats, *griffins*, and *apes*, and *creeping things*, such a *serpents* and *crocodiles*. *Vul. Cicer. de nat. deor. tom. iv. lib. ii. p. 337. 4to. and Virgil. Eccl. lib. viii. lin. 699. in Not. ad u-*
sum. deiph.

dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

to the vicious inclinations of their own hearts, (see the note on *John* xii. 40.) which carried them into the most flagrant immoralities, even unto an indulging of the most brutish and unnatural lusts, and going into the most abominably filthy practices of the ancient *Sodomites*, whom God destroyed by raining fire and brimstone upon them from heaven, (*Gen.* xix. 5, 24.); and as they had so notoriously dishonoured God, he suffered them, in this manner, to bring the most shameful indignity on their own bodies, between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

25 Who set up false objects of worship, and parted with the only true God for vain idols*, which, by nature, are no gods, (*Gal.* iv. 8.) and have nothing of divinity in them, (*1 Cor.* viii. 4.) and they turned the true glory, that belongs to God, who is a Spirit, into lying representations of him, as if he were corporeal; and changed the right notions of God, which he has given of himself, into wrong conceptions of him, as also the true worship of God into the most absurd and injurious idolatry: And, in this way, they paid their devotions and obedience to mere creatures, such as the sun, moon, and stars, and all their inferior dæmons, over and above the homage which they professed to offer to him, who is the sovereign Lord and Maker of all things: Yea, they regarded their false gods more than him; and so, in effect, disowned him, who is, and ever was, and will be, infinitely, necessarily, supremely, and unchangeably blessed and glorious in himself, and the fountain of all happiness to others; and, as such, is, ought to be, and for ever shall be, exalted, revered, and adored by true believers on earth, and all the saints and angels in heaven, who heartily join their *amen*, and that with the greater zeal and fervour, and detestation of the wickedness of the idolatrous world, as they have cast the most unworthy contempt upon him.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: For even

26, 27 For this reason, I say, God justly delivered them up, without restraint, to the chosen way of their own wicked hearts, and to the ungovernable workings of such scandalous lusts and passions, as it is a shame to describe

N O T E.

* *Idols*, and *idolatry* in worshipping them, are often called in scripture *lurg vanities*, *Psal.* xxi. 6. and *John* ii. 8. and *selfhood* and *lies*, *Jer.* xlii. 25. and xvi. 19, 20, and xxiii. 24. and *Hos.* vii. 1. And the makers of idols and encouragers of idolatry are called *teachers of lies*, *Habak.* ii. 18. because every idol is a false god, or makes a wrong representation of the true God; and every idolater practically declares what is utterly false concerning him. And as the idolatry of the heathen is the sub-

ject of the apostle's discourse, *that* is the *lie* into which he tells us they changed the *truth* of God: And their worshipping the creature more than the Creator (*παρα τον κτιστα*) signifies likewise their paying religious homage to their idols *besides*, and *contrary* to the Creator, though they did not generally profess to disown, and not to worship the supreme God. Thus the preposition (*παρα*) is used *for besides*, or *more than*, *Luke* iii. 23. and *for contrary to*, *Acts* xviii. 25.

even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

17 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

18 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient:

describe in their unnatural impurity and infamy: For their inordinate desires were so monstrously inflamed, as to carry even the modester sex into the vilest practices; as they also did men, who preferred a detestible use of males, to the natural and sober use of the females; and both these sexes, directly contrary to the design of the God of nature, in the first formation of their respective bodies, and contrary to all inclinations and practices that are decent and becoming human nature, and suited to the regular propagation of mankind, went into such vicious abuses of themselves, with persons of their own sex, as are shocking to think or speak of, and not fit to be named. And, by this worse than brutal uncleanness, they debased and degraded themselves to the last degree; which the great and glorious God permitted, in his just indignation, as a suitable and deserved punishment * for their wilful and notorious idolatry, whereby they had run away from him, and cast the greatest contempt and disgrace upon him; that so they might read their own shameful sin against him, in the foulest reproach, which by its own nature, deserts, and consequences, it brought upon themselves.

28 And as they were so very wicked, as to have no relish for, or inclination to search after God; but were averse in their wills and affections to him, and did not like to retain, cultivate, and improve their notions of him, as far as they had them; he, in a way of righteous retribution for this their enmity to him, and to the knowledge and reverence of their excellencies, he delivered them up, like persons disapproved and rejected by him †, to their own negligent, and undiscerning, indisposed and disaffected mind, till, under its darkening and malignant influence, they committed such iniquities with greediness, as are not only disagreeable to the nature of man, and the light of reason; but most injurious and dishonourable to themselves, and detestable in the sight of the pure and holy God.

19 Being filled with

29 They were exceeding vile indeed, abounding in all

NOTES.

* This is called the recompence of their error, that is, of their infamous idolatry: For as that sin is spoken of as a *lie*, according to the note on ver. 25. so it is said to be such a lie, as *convinces men to err*, (*Amos ii. 4.*); and idolaters are said to *live in error*, (*2 Pet. ii. 18.*) because they are thereby let into such corrupt notions and practices, as dishonour God, and carry them off from him into the way of all iniquity and ruin, and as are directly contrary to the first principles of the light of nature itself.

† As the word (*ἀποκρίνω*) here rendered *reprobate*, sometimes signifies *disapproved* or *rejected*, *1 Cor. ix. 27* and *Heb. vi. 8.* and at others, *snapt* or *void of judgment* and discerning, *2 Tim. iii. 8.* and *Tit. i. 16.* I have given such an account of it in this verse, as takes in both these senses; the last of which relates to the evil disposition of their minds and hearts against God, and the former to his displeasure on that account against them.

with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

all manner of iniquity * against the second, as well as the first table of the moral law; such as every kind of criminal conversation between men and women, (see the note on 1 Cor. v. 1.) and a base malignity of spirit, (*κακότης*) like that of the wicked one (*ὁ πονηρὸς*) as the devil is called, (1 John ii. 13.) who doth mischief for mischief's sake; and an eager desire after more of this world than God sees fit to bestow; as also an inclination to, and doing of injuries out of mere malice: (*κακία*) They likewise abounded in a repining, grudging temper at the prosperity of others; in wilfully, illegally, and maliciously destroying men's lives, without any just cause; in strifes, contentions, and quarrellings; in subtil contrivances to over-reach and defraud their neighbours, and to impose upon them with lies and falsehoods; and in an habitual custom (*κακὸς ὥς*) of doing evil to all about them; and they were sacred defamers of others by sly and artful methods, and that sometimes under pretences of friendship and pity toward them.

30 Backbiters, haters of God, despisers, proud, brattlers, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

30 They were also open slanderers of others behind their backs, or while they were not present to vindicate themselves: yea, enemies to the authority, justice, and holiness of God, and of his law and government; because they stand in direct and severe opposition to all their own beloved vices: They were likewise revilers of men, (*ὕβρις*) and outrageous, insolent, and vexatious, in their behaviour toward them, in word and deed: They were puffed up with a high conceit of their own attainments and enjoyments; vain pretenders to more than they really had; and, not contented with common ways of sinning, they contrived new sorts of wickedness, and were as industrious to find them out, and put them into practice, as if, by digging up evil, (Prov. xvi. 27.) they were searching and labouring for hid treasure: They also, who had parents living, were perverse and refractory, disrespectful and undutiful to them, and paid no manner of regard to their authority, or to their wisest and kindest counsels, cautions, and commands.

31 Without understanding, covetous-

31 Amidst all their cunning to do evil, they behaved like persons void of common sense, reason, and conscience,

N O T E

* Filled with all unrighteousness, seems to be a more general expression of their exceeding great depravity, as specified in the following instances, many of which must needs coincide with any particular view of it; and were it not that hatred of God is one of them, I should chuse to understand all unrighteousness to mean strictly all immorality, in distinction from ungodliness, as in ver. 18. But, considering that exception, I would rather

take it for all iniquity, or contrariety to what is right, as the word (*ἀδικία*) properly signifies, and is often rendered, as particularly in Luke xiv. 27. Acts viii. 23. 1 Tim. ii. 19. and Tit. iii. 8. And so it includes all the following black list of sins against God, themselves, and others, which we are told by the apostles were very predominant at that time in heathen nations; and particularly at Rome. Vid. Pol. Synops.

venant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

science, to restrain and conduct them in things pertaining to religion and morality, and to their own best interests; they were so perfidious, that no promises, contracts, oaths, or engagements to God or man, would hold them, when they had opportunity to break them: They had defaced even the common sentiments of humanity to their fellow-creatures, and their nearest akin; parents themselves, worse than brutes, lost all natural affection and concern for the children of their own bowels: yea, whatever relations of life they stood in, when once they were offended, they would never be reconciled on any reasonable terms; and they had no compassion for the miserable, nor would afford them any relief, but delighted in cruelty and oppression. What horrible enormities are these, which spread among the heathens!

31 Who knowing the judgment of God, (that they which commit such things are worthy of death,) not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

32 And that, which inexcusably aggravates all this complicated and atrocious wickedness, is, that they must needs be convinced, by the light of nature, and by the doctrines of their wisest men and philosophers, or the just ordination, law, and will of God, against all these detestable crimes, and that they have some forebodings in their own consciences of a judgment to come, when it will be found, that persons guilty of such transgressions deserve, and must suffer, the severest punishments for them, even to the worst of deaths: And yet they are such lovers of sin, as not only to go resolutely into the practice of these abominations themselves, but even to encourage, abet, and delight in those that dare be vile and bold enough to concur with themselves, and keep them in countenance by committing the same. Surely all this is abundantly sufficient to prove, that the *Gentiles*, persons of such hideous characters, can never be justified by any works of their own; but that they absolutely need a Saviour, by faith in whom alone any of them can obtain this benefit.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a great and suitable Saviour is our Lord Jesus Christ! He is the Son of God, according to his divine nature, demonstrated to be so by his resurrection from the dead! and is a descendent of *David*, according to his human nature. All the blessings of grace and peace proceed from him, and are to be asked of him, together with the Father. How excellent is the gospel, that assures us of this! It is no human or novel invention; but is the contrivance of God, and was hinted and predicted by the inspired prophets of the Old Testament. Christ himself is the immediate author and subject of it; its great design is to bring persons of all nations to a believing and obediential subjection to him; his righteousness is therein revealed to faith: and it is the power of God to the salvation of all sorts of sinners that believe in him. What an honour is it to be the servants of Jesus Christ, called by his grace into the ministry of this gospel! They are under indispensable obligations to preach it; and they need not be ashamed of it, whatever op-

position and contempt they may meet with from men on its account. And, O what an exceeding pleasure is it to them that are faithful in their Lord's work, to hear of the happy fruits of the gospel, though it be upon utter strangers to themselves! They heartily bless God, and frequently pray for them, and even long, by the will of God, to see and converse with them, that they may communicate some farther benefit to them for their edification and establishment, and may compare spiritual experiences for their mutual comfort; and they can humbly appeal to God for the sincerity of their professions of love to all the saints that are beloved of him.—What an undeniable demonstration has God given us of his being and perfections in the works of creation! With what exalted thoughts should we adore the great Creator, who is in himself completely and unchangeably blessed for ever! And how inexcusable are they, that stifle the notions he has given them of himself! But with what hideous, humbling, and affecting deformity, doth the corruption of human nature appear, as exemplified in the heathens! How vain and wicked are mankind in their imaginations; and what ungodliness and unrighteousness are they sunk into, in defiance of all the light of reason and conscience, which they wickedly smother and suppress! They do not like to retain God in their thoughts; they are not thankful to him for his benefits, nor will glorify him as God; but set up idols of their own, as competitors with him: They entertain gross conceptions of him, and make the most unworthy and debasing representations of him: They affect to dishonour him in idolatrous ways of worship by images, and pay the religious homage to creatures which is only due to the Creator: And being left to themselves, there is no iniquity so abominable, shocking, and unnatural, but they greedily run into it, and take pleasure in seeing, and making others as vile as themselves, though their own consciences, did they duly reflect, could not but tell them, that they which do such things are worthy of death. How just is it in God to leave stupid and wilful sinners to the way of their own hearts, and to inflict the severest punishment upon them for all their iniquities. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against them, in the clearest declarations of his word, in the awful judgments of his providence, and in the dictates of their own consciences: And though they profess to be wise in natural things, and are too cunning in their ways of sinning against God; yet they really are, and will one day be found to be the greatest of all fools. How impossible is it, that such abominable creatures should ever be saved by any righteousness of their own! And how concerned should we be, under all our sense of guilt and danger, to place our entire dependence on the righteousness of Christ revealed in the gospel, that we may be among the just who live by faith!

C H A P. II.

The apostle proves, in general, that the Jews were as incapable of being justified by the law of Moses, as the Gentiles were by the law of nature, 1,—16. And gives a particular account of the sins of the Jews, which confuted all their vain confidences in their external privileges, as if these could recommend them to God's acceptance, 17,—29.

TEXT.

Therefore thou art inexcusable,

PARAPHRASE.

SINCE the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, of what nation soever they be, (*chap. i. 18.*) and since the sins of the Gentiles, against their small remains of light, leave them inexcusable, and incapable of being justified by the law of nature: certainly then ye, Jews,

ble, O man, who-
soever thou art,
that judgest: for
wherein thou
judgest another
thou condemnest
thyself; for thou
that judgest doest
the same things.

*Jews**, who are extremely ready to fall in with all that has been said of the *Gentiles*, and to pass the severest judgment against them, must give an account of yourselves to God, and are liable to his wrath as well as they. You, O man, whoever you are, or whatever your pretences be, are, at least, as much inexcusable, and incapable of obtaining life by any law of works, as the *Gentiles* themselves: For your magnifying their crimes, and censuring their persons, as most vile abandoned wretches, that deserve nothing but wrath and vengeance, is, in effect, though not intentionally, a giving judgment against yourself, to your own condemnation, as one who is in the very same obnoxious circumstances: For you, who set up for a judge of them, and are so unmercifully severe in your prejudices and conclusions against them, are guilty of many of the same, or worse enormities, and that in defiance of much greater light, and with the high aggravation of a haughty, rash, and censorious spirit, in the judgment you pass upon them.

* But we are
sure that the judg-
ment of God
is according to
truth, against them
which

2 But how harsh and rigid soever you may be in your sentence upon others, and how partial and favourable soever to yourself, we, who are acquainted with the word of God, and know any thing of his nature and perfections, as infinitely holy, wise, and good, are very sure that the declarations he has made, by his word and works, of his foreboding resentments against sinners, are highly equitable, and may be depended upon as the greatest reality; and we are equally assured, that the sentence he will pass, and the judgment he will execute upon them, at the last day, will be undeniably right

N O T E.

* Some have thought that the apostle here continues to speak of the *Gentiles*, and particularly of their *philosophers*, who declaimed against, and censured the vices of others, while they themselves are guilty of the same; or of their *magistrates*, who judged and punished others for faults which were as chargeable on themselves. Others suppose, that he more generally argues against all persons, of what character soever, that are apt to be severe in condemning others for their sins, and to overlook the same, or as bad in themselves. But, though the last of these senses may be very well included in the apostle's design, I rather think, that he directly intended the *Jews*: For continuing his discourse all along to the same persons, he expressly mentions them as the immediate object of his address, ver. 17* and proceeds from thenceforward to speak to them in the following verses, under characters which amount to, and explain his meaning in, what he here says about their judging others, and at the same time doing the

like things themselves. It therefore seems evident, that he here turns his discourse from the *Gentiles* to them, who, according to Josephus's own account, in several parts of his history of the wars of the *Jews*, were at this time excelled by no nation in iniquity; but were far more wicked than the men of *Sodom*, that were consumed by fire from heaven: For they practised and encouraged unnatural impurities, and omitted no kind of wickedness, that ever was in the memory of man. And the apostle's addressing them in this and the third verse, under the appellation of *O man!* without particular specifying what man he meant, might be to introduce his design in the most inoffensive manner that might be; as also to remind them that they were of the same common depraved human nature with the *Gentiles* themselves; and to put them upon considering the force of this general truth, with a particular application to themselves as rational creatures, and as subjects of moral government, that were accountable to God.

them which com-
mit such things.

right and just, not according to outward appearances only, but according to the true state of things, and according to eternal rules of righteousness and the truth of his word, against all those, without respect of persons, of one nation more than another, that have been workers of such iniquities as are contrary to any law of his, which he has made known to them.

3 And think-
est thou this, O
man, that I judge
them which do
such things, and
dost thou think that
thou shalt escape
the judgment of
God?

3 And can any one among you, who is a man endued with reason and understanding, entirely dependent upon God, and accountable to him for all your thoughts, words, and deeds, Can any of you, I say, go into so vain, irrational, and injurious an imagination, as that you, who are so hasty and dogmatical in arraigning and condemning others, at the bar of your weak and fallible judgment, for crimes, which at the same time you yourself are guilty of, shall be exempted from, or avoid a sentence and execution of God's terrible wrath, when you shall be summoned to appear at his awful and impartial tribunal? There can be no manner of ground for such a fond expectation as this.

4 Or despisest
thou the riches of
his goodness, and
so becomest, and
long - suffering;
not knowing that
the goodness of
God leadeth thee
to repentance?

4 Or are you so sordidly ungrateful, as to slight, abuse, and pervert, not only the common bounties of his providence; but the more excellent and abundant privileges and blessings of a religious nature, which in his free favour he has bestowed upon you, above the *Gentiles*? And do you take occasion to go into your trespasses, and to insult and despise the rest of the world, because judgment is not speedily executed upon you, (*Eccles. viii. 11.*) but God mercifully bears with you, and exercises long continued patience, in deferring to punish you for your great and numerous provocations? Or are you so stupid, as not to apprehend, consider, and reflect upon, the obligations and inducements of his multiplied favours, and their tendency and design to overcome your obstinacy, and to melt your heart into the most ingenuous contrition and sorrow for your sins, with an utter abhorrence of them, and full purpose, by divine grace, to turn from them to that God, whose goodness encourages hopes of blessings, through Jesus Christ, to eternal life? This is such an aggravation of sin, as exceeds all that the heathen are capable of, who never were indulged with your light and privileges. And yet you cannot clear yourself of this heinous charge.

5 But, after thy
hardness and im-
penitent heart,
which

5 But (*κατα δὲ*) according to the wilfully contracted, as well as natural stubbornness and insensibility of your perverse heart, which is confirmed therein, by a long custom of sinning; and according to its unyielding and unrelenting temper, which persists in iniquity, and op-

† treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

poses the gospel way of deliverance from it, you are heaping up a huge stock of wrath, and daily provoking God more and more to inflict it: And this you do with as much diligence and eagerness, as if you were gathering together a valuable treasure; and by persisting in your unbelief and other sins, you are perpetually adding fuel to feed and increase the dreadful flames of divine vengeance, which at present, like a treasure, is in great measure hid with God, but is secretly preparing and reserved in his breast, against the great and terrible day of judgment, when he will pour out full vials of unmixt wrath upon impenitent and unbelieving sinners: And to shew that his resentment is not like the wrath of man, passionate, arbitrary, and causeless, he *will bring to light the hidden things of darkness*, (1 Cor. iv. 5.) and will make the equity and justice of all his proceedings therein so unexceptionably evident, that every one's own conscience, and the whole world of angels and men, shall be forced to own it to be the righteous judgment of God.

6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

6 Who will distribute rewards and punishments, with the utmost impartiality, to every individual of mankind, of what nation or profession soever he be, not according to the intallible and mistaken, censorious or self-flattering judgment of men *; but according, and in proportion to the good, or evil nature and degree of each one's works, as they really are in themselves, and in the divine account, and shall witness for, or against him, as one who is, or is not, accepted of God in Christ, through faith in him.

7 To them, who, by patient continuance in well-

7 As to those who by a patient persevering exercise of an effectual faith in the Lord Jesus †, and practice of

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* *Rendering according to his deeds* relates to the kind or quality, and *proportion* of his deeds; and so is a description of the rule of God's proceedings in judgment, and of the persons that shall receive its different awards: For though it is true, that impenitent unbelievers shall be rewarded for, as well as according to their works, and the scripture often speaks of their sins as the *deserving cause* of their punishment; yet it never uses such language with respect to the rewards of the righteous; and (*αποδοσει*) the word here used, signifies *delivering* or *giving* in a way of favour, as well as in a way of desert. (See *Math. xxvii. 58* *Luke ix. 42.* and *2 Tim. iv. 8.*) However, as the reward of grace is founded in justice, on account of what Christ has done and suffered, God being *just*, and his justice of him who believes in Jesus, (*chap.*

iii. 16.) so the final retribution to the righteous as well as to the wicked, will be a *revelation of the righteous judgment of God*; because it will be managed in an exactly impartial manner, with regard to Jews and Gentiles at the last day, according as it shall appear by their deeds, that one or other of these characters belongs to them; and will proceed on the ground of *Christ's righteousness* toward the believer, as well as on the ground of *personal merit* towards others.

† What is here rendered *well-doing*, properly signifies a *good work*, in the singular number, (*εγαγαγον*) and is opposed to *not obeying the truth*, in the following verse, which I take to be meant of not submitting to God's authority in the gospel, which is emphatically called *the truth*, *the word of truth*, and *the truth of the gospel*, (*2 Tim. ii. 13.* *Eph. i. 13.* and

well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life:

of every good work, as its fruit and evidence, and that without fainting under discouragements, or fretting at God's gracious dealings with the *Gentiles*; and who shall, in God's way and method of salvation, earnestly seek after that glory and honour which come from him only, and which shall be perfected in the state of *life and immortality*, (*αἰωνίου*) *that Christ has brought to light by the gospel*, when the body itself shall be raised incorruptible and immortal, (1 *Cor.* xv. 53, 54.) As to those, I say, who have such an high esteem of this heavenly blessedness, and are so desirous of it, in preference to all things else, as neither to be satisfied without it, nor neglect the appointed means of obtaining it, God, in the riches of his grace, will confer upon them the reward of eternal life, in full consistence with his justice, on account of that righteousness which is revealed to faith in the gospel. (*Chap.* ii. 17.)

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath;

9 Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.

8, 9 But as to those that, like the generality of the *Jews*, are of a litigious spirit, quarrelling with God and his glorious dispensation of grace towards the *Gentiles*, or with any of the important doctrines of Christ, and with his servants for ministering it to them; and that do not themselves cheerfully submit to his authority, and pay obedience to his command, in cordially receiving the truth of the gospel by faith; but on the contrary yield themselves up, as willing servants, to unbelief and all iniquity, and go into uncharitable censures of others; God in his righteous judgment, will inflict the tremendous effects of his utmost detestation and vindictive justice upon them, which will bring insupportable terrors and agonizing torments into the very soul of all those that shall then be found to have been impenitent and unbelieving transgressors, (2 *Thes.* i. 7, 8, 9); which vengeance shall be executed first of all upon the *Jews*, whose advantages have been created, even upon those *Israelites to whom pertained the adoption*, &c. (*chap.* ix. 4.) and to whom the first proposal of the gospel was made, but by whom it was obstinately refused, (*Acts* xiii. 46.); and then upon the *Gentiles*, who, rejecting Christ and the gospel, shall no more escape than the *Jews*, though one and the other shall be punished in a just proportion to their crimes, according to the light and advantages, be they more or less, which they sin against.

10 But

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and *Col.* i. 5.) and therefore *faith in Christ*, seems to be at least included, if not principally intended, in this *well-doing*: though it is not for the sake of that, or of any good works which it produces, but only for the

sake of Christ, who is believed on, that eternal life is bestowed upon any. See the note on *chap.* i. 17. and Dr. *Whitby's* notes on these verses.

10 But glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gen-
tile.

10 But, on the contrary, I say again, for the encouragement of the *Gentile*, as well as of the *Jew*, that God will graciously bestow immortal glory and honour, attended with the sweetest harmony and delight, to their utmost perfection in heaven, upon every one of the human race, who shall be found to have been a sincere believer, and a worker of that which is truly good, upon gospel principles, and to gospel ends; which blessedness God will assuredly confer on the believing *Jews*, according to his former promises, and his gracious design in first sending the gospel to them; and likewise on all those *Gentiles*, that are, or shall be converted to the faith of Christ, and so become *Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise*, (*Gal. iii. 29.*) notwithstanding their having, for so many ages before, been *strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and being without God in the world.* (*Eph. ii. 12.*)

11 For there is no respect of persons with God.

11 For in passing the final sentence, and distributing rewards and punishments, at the great day of account, God will make no partial distinctions of persons, either in their favour, or to their disadvantage, of whatever nation or parentage they be, on account of their outward condition, privileges, professions, or pretences, on one hand; or of their former ignorance and wickedness, on the other: But he will proceed exactly according to his own unerring knowledge of them, and the plain evidences that shall appear for, or against them, and according to his righteous rule of judgment concerning them; yea, he will deal impartially with all mankind, whatever their circumstances be.

12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.

12 As to the poor ignorant *heathens*, though, in their present state of darkness and idolatry they are out of the way of salvation, yet their condemnation will be less than that of the *Jews*, who shall finally persist in unbelief. For as many of them as have sinned, without the clear instructions, commands, and prohibitions of the law, published at mount *Sinai*, shall be punished only in proportion to their disadvantageous circumstances, and their non-improvement of such light as they had, and not with an extremity equal to the aggravations that attend the offences of those, who have violated the revealed law. And as to the *Jews*, who have lived under, and in the midst of the plainer light, demands and threatenings of the law of *Moses*, which was so awfully and publicly made known to them; every one of these, who has transgressed it, and rejects the only Saviour, shall be more severely dealt with in judgment answerable to the higher aggravations of his sins,
and

13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

and according to the heaviest curse of this holy law.

13 For how much soever the *Jews* boast of their law, and vainly imagine themselves to be safe for heaven, because they are acquainted with the letter of it; yet they will find, when they come to be judged by it, that it is not they who merely read, study, and hear it, that are righteous in God's account; but, according to the tenor of that very law itself*, it is only those who come up to its high demands, in perfect obedience to all its precepts, that, by virtue of its sentence, shall be acquitted from condemnation, and be intitled and adjudged to eternal life: Even as *Moses* describes the righteousness of the law, that the man which doth those things shall live by them, (chap. x. 5): But it is written, Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them, (Gal. iii. 10.) And therefore the sinning *Jews* need a better righteousness than their own to justify them in God's sight, as much as the *Gentiles* themselves, and will be undoubtedly condemned without it, by the terms of their own law, as the *Gentiles* also will be by the terms of theirs.

14 For when the *Gentiles*, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

14 For when any of the *Gentiles*, who are destitute of a supernatural revelation, and so have not the written law, do nevertheless, by the dictates of natural light, perform some duties, which, for the substance of them, are comprehended in the moral law, that was delivered by *Moses*: These heathens, though strangers to that revealed law, have a rule of action in their own minds, which has the force of a law to direct and bind them, with regard to what they ought to avoid and do, in their behaviour toward God and others, and in the government of themselves.

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their con-

15 They hereby shew that they have some remains of that natural principal of reason and reflection, which discovers the requirements and prohibitions of the law†, with respect to some general notions of good and evil, truth

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* To suppose, as some do, that the apostle here speaks of the way in which any that have transgressed the moral law are to be justified before God, is to subvert the whole design of his argument, and to make him directly contradict what he says in winding it up, viz. *That by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight*, (chap. iii. 10.) It therefore seems necessary to understand the apostle, as here speaking of the proper tenor of the law, and the only terms upon which any one can be justified by it; and so, since none can pretend to have always performed

sinless obedience, it clearly suits his main view, to prove the necessity of justification by that righteousness of God, which is revealed in the gospel, (chap. i. 17.)

† This shews that by the law, the apostle here principally intended the moral law: For the *Gentiles* were under no obligation to observe the ceremonial law; and it was only some remains of the moral law, that were written in their hearts, and shewed them their duty in many things which they did not comply with.

conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the men while accusing, or else excusing one another.)

truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and was originally written, as it were, by the wisdom, power, goodness, and holiness of God, in men's hearts. They have likewise such a practical judgment concerning themselves, with reference to a future tribunal, as is a swift and plain witness within them, whether they conform to, or violate that principle, which is instead of an external law to them; and at the same time they have reasonings in their own thoughts, whereby they pass sentence, according to the light of their consciences, and, by turns, either accuse, check, and reproach them for what they do amiss, or acquit, and applaud them for what they do well; and so they, in many instances, are conscious to themselves of their transgressing the law of nature: Unless therefore they have a better righteousness than their own, to answer for them in judgment, they will also be justly and unavoidably condemned at the bar of God.

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

16 The impartial retributions before mentioned (*ver. 12*) * shall be made in that great and awful day, in which God will call the whole world to an account, and will critically search into, bring to light, and pass judgment upon, not only the open acts, professions, and pretences, but likewise the most private management, and even the most sacred thoughts, dispositions, principles, motives, ends, and designs of all mankind; and this he will do by Jesus Christ, (*Acts xvii. 31.*) who will then visibly appear with divine majesty in human nature, as the great Judge of all, (*2 Tim. iv. 8.*) to pass a decisive and irreversible sentence upon them that sit under the gospel, according to its tenor, (*Mark xvi. 16.*) as well as upon other Jews, according to the law of Moses, and upon the heathens, according to the law of nature, (*ver. 12.*) and whose judging the whole world in righteousness, at that day, is made known by the gospel-doctrine, which is not properly my own, as if I were the author of it; but a dispensation of which is committed to me, and which I preach by revelation from Jesus Christ. (*Eph. iii. 2, 3, &c.*)

17 Behold, thou art

17 Now, to come still closer to your consciences, to whom I am most immediately speaking, (see the note on

N O T E.

* This verse, I think, stands properly in connection with the twelfth; and the three intermediate verses are to be deemed a parenthetical, as they stand in the text: For there the apostle had been speaking of the sentence that should be passed upon Jews and Gentiles; and here he tells us the time, when, and the person by whom it should be; and so, according to my gospel, may relate either (as some have supposed) to the gospel's being a

rule of judgment to those that are favoured with it, as the law of nature will be to the heathen, and the law of Moses to the Jews: Or rather, it seems by the connection to relate more directly to the day of judgment's being made known to be by Jesus Christ, in the apostle's preaching of the gospel, as this phrase signifies, *2 Tim. ii. 18.* But I have taken both senses into the paraphrase.

are called a Jew, and reſeſt in the law, and makeſt thy boaſt of God;

on ver. 1.) and to convince you of your grand miſtake in all your vain dependences on the law of *Moses*, Obſerve how the matter ſtands with relation to the chief of your *privileges*. You, who unmercifully condemn the heathens, are indeed commonly known by the character of a *Jew*, and pride yourſelf in this, as if it intitled you to all the bleſſings of your father *Abraham*, and ſecured you for eternal life: But you have only the name of a *Jew*, as you are ſo by birth and profeſſion, without being ſo really or in God's account, and in the beſt ſenſe of that term, (*Rev.* ii. 9.) ; and you mightily value yourſelf upon having the oracles of God committed to you, and being acquainted with *Moses's* law, and reſt ſatisfied in this, without looking any further for juſtification and ſalvation; you alſo, with carnal ſecurity, glory in your profeſſion of God, as your covenant God, and as the author of your religion, and the object of your worſhip; and you claim his favour, as if it were appropriated to your own nation, and *no evil could come upon you.* (*Mich.* iii. 11.)

18 And knoweſt his will, and approveſt the things that are more excellent, being inſtructed out of the law;

18 You likewiſe pretend that you underſtand the revelation which God has given you of his mind and will, and that (*δοκιμαζετε τα διαταγματα*) you try and prove, and ſo learn to diſtinguiſh truth from error, and right from wrong; and are ſkilful in, and prefer the moſt excellent and ſublime points of religion, as having been taught them by the law of *Moses*, in which you, like a catechumen, have been inſtructed, (*καταχρηματες*) from your youth up.

19 And art confident, that thou thyſelf art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkneſs,

19 And you have ſuch a fond conceit of your own nation and privileges, and of your own ſuperior knowledge, and ſuch a ſovereign contempt of the poor heathens, that when you go about to proſelyte any of them, you arrogantly take to yourſelf the high ſwelling titles, and the office, of your chief doctors and rabbies, in pretending to be a leader of the *Gentiles*, whom you contemptuouſly ſpeak of as ſtark blind; and vaunt, as if you were a great luminary (*πῶς*) to enlighten them that ſit in darkneſs.

20 An inſtructor of the fooliſh, a teacher of babes, which haſt the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

20 You ſet up for a maſterly inſtructor of them whom you look upon as the moſt ignorant, fooliſh, and ſtupid wretches; and you magiſterially take upon you to be their tutor, whom you treat as mere infants in underſtanding: In this diſdainful ſtile you ſpeak of the *Gentiles*; and in this haughy manner you exalt yourſelf, who have indeed a ſhew and appearance of divine knowledge, and pretend to underſtand the true ſenſe of the law of *Moses*, and to have a complete ſyſtem

stem and model of its injunctions and designs in your head, and in your practice, while in reality there is nothing like it.

21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?

21 To argue therefore with you about the utter insufficiency of all these things to salvation, which you so vainly trust in; How shameful and inexcusable is it, that you, who thus vaunt of your own excelling judgment, and assume to yourself the honour and authority of giving instructions and injunctions to others, take no manner of heed to them yourself? As for instance, How self-condemning is it, that you who, according to the moral law, declaim against frauds and thefts in others, should yourself be guilty of the very same crimes? (*Matth* xxiii. 3, 4, 14.)

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?

22 You, who speak of adultery as a heinous sin, and severely condemn it in the *Gentiles*, Are you nevertheless an adulterer yourself, and a contriver of means to countenance and indulge it? (*Matth* xix. 7,—9.) you, who, with the generality of the *Jews*, ever since the *Babylonish* captivity, have a detestation of idolatry, and loudly censure the heathens for it? Do you nevertheless sacrilegiously rob God, (*εὐσεβέως*) of his sacred honour and his dues, as if he were not worthy of them? this you have done, not merely in *tithes and offerings*, according to the prophet's ancient complaint, (*Malac* iii. 8.) but in still much more essential and important points*; such as *omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith*, (*Matth* xxiii. 23.) *making void the commandment of God by your traditions*, and putting him off with mere lip-service, (*Matth* xv. 6,—9.) profaning his temple and worship, (*Matth* xxi. 13.) sinking the demands of his law and justice, as if they could be satisfied by your own mean performances, (*Rom* x. 3.) and denying him the glory of all his perfections, and particularly of his grace to the *Gentiles*, as manifested through Jesus Christ in the gospel.

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, throb' breaking the law dost

23 You, that glory in having the law, and in your knowledge and observation of it, as your great privilege and honour, and as your security of eternal life, Do you, notwithstanding, cast contempt upon the holiness and authority of God, the author of it, by such violations of its moral precepts, as even the light of nature

N O T E.

* I cannot think that by *sacrilege* is here meant only the withholding, or robbing God of *tithes and offerings*: For it seems from *Matth* xxiii. 23. as if many *Jews* of that age were not remarkably guilty of this, and this is too low a thought to be mentioned as a crime of a like heinous nature with *idola-*

try. I have therefore taken in other injuries and dishonour offered to God, that are of a more aggravated kind, and better suited to the grand scope of the apostle's argument with the *Jews*; and were indeed a robbing God of his glory and his dues, to a flagrant degree.

dishonourest thou
God?

24 For the name
of God is blas-
phemed among
the Gentiles,
thru' you, as it is
written.

25 For circum-
cision verily pro-
fiteth, if thou keep
the

ture itself condemns? How can you imagine that, were God to deal with you according to your deserts, *you*, after all this dishonour to him, should escape his righteous judgment? (*ver.* 3.)

24 For the notorious transgressions of his law, that are found with some of you, in direct contradiction to your privileges and professions, bring a reproach upon his perfections and government, word and ways; and give sad occasions to the very heathens themselves to think and speak evil of him, as though he allowed and encouraged, or at least connived at, all your wickedness, and either would not, or could not prevent it in his own favourite people; and so you, of this age, bring the same scandal upon the holy and reverend name of God among his enemies, as you very well know is recorded to have been formerly done by your fathers. (2 *Sam.* xii. 14. *Isa.* lii. 5. and *Ezek.* xxxvi. 20,—23.) How then can any of *you* expect to be justified by your own works or privileges?

25 For, as to circumcision, which you chiefly glory in and have the greatest dependence upon, as though it were sufficient to secure you from condemnation*, this indeed during the Old Testament-dispensation, was one of your principle privileges, as it was the token of God's covenant, (*Gen.* xvii. 11.) and a seal of the righteousness of faith, *Rom.* iv. 11.) and so was an assuring pledge of his covenant grace, and faithfulness to his people, and as it was an instituted sign of deliverance from the guilt and power of their original corruption; and in that view it might have been esteemed as an advantage to you, on supposition that, like the true children of Abraham, you were circumcised in heart, and especially

N O T E.

* The apostle here speaks of *circumcision*, as a principal and distinguished badge of a Jew, and considers it, not as an ordinance still to be continued; but only as it was enjoined to the *Israelites* under the Old Testament-dispensation. But what he says, in this and the two following verses, about the advantage of circumcision to the Jew, who keeps the law, and the advantage of the Gentile's keeping the righteousness of the law, and fulfilling it, though he be not circumcised, is very difficult to be adjusted in a clear consistency with, and subserviency to the main scope of his argument. It is evident to me, that we cannot fairly understand his meaning to be, that sincere Jews, by their obedience to the *Mosaic law*, and honest Gentiles, by their obedience to the law of nature, were accepted of God, or justified in his sight: For this is directly subversive of the apostle's grand point

in view, which was to prove the necessity of both Jews and Gentiles believing in Christ for righteousness to eternal life, because they are all under sin, as he observes chap. iii. 9. I therefore cannot but apprehend that these passages about keeping the law, must refer either to such obedience to the moral law, as was evidential of real religion in pious Jews, and in such Gentile professors as were not circumcised; or else to a perfect conformity to all its demands, as its terms of acceptance, in case any were capable of coming up to those terms. The first of these senses seems best to comport with what the apostle says about the benefit of circumcision to the Jew, and the second with the principal design of his argument in the whole discourse; and therefore I have taken both into the paraphrase.

the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

ally in case, according to the obligation of that sacred rite, (*Gal. v. 3.*) you should have perfectly obeyed, not only the ceremonial, but also the moral law, which, among other things, forbids the *stealing, adultery, and sacrilege*, as well as the *idolatry* before-mentioned, (*ver. 20, 21, 22.*) But if you are a transgressor of the law, and live in sin, your having been circumcised in the flesh will stand you in no more stead, nor give you any more acceptance with God, than if you were a mere uncircumcised heathen.

16 Therefore, if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

26 If therefore any * uncircumcised proselyte of the gate, who truly fears God, such as *Cornelius* the *Roman* centurion, (*Acts x. 2.*) is found to be a religious observer of the duties contained in the moral law, that everlasting and unchangeable rule of righteousness; will he not be as much accepted of God, as if he had been a circumcised Jew? Certainly, as far as this depends on moral obedience, he would. Or supposing, for argument's sake, that any *Gentile* had always kept every moral precept of the law, would he not stand as well in God's account as if he had been circumcised in the flesh? He undoubtedly would, since he was under no obligation to come under that rite.

17 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?

27 And, on supposition that the *Gentile*, who continues in a natural sense uncircumcised, were to perform the moral duties of the law, in either of the aforesaid respects, would he not rise up in judgment against, and condemn you, who are so rash and forward in censuring him, (*ver. 1.*) and who, by a false dependence on your having the letter of the law, and on your being outwardly circumcised, venture to break through the obligations of the moral law itself? There is no room to imagine but that he would.

18 For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh;

28 For he is not an *Israelite* indeed, in God's account, nor a true son of *Abraham*, intitled to life by the promise, who is so only in outward profession and appearance, (*17 to purpose*) as a natural descendent from him, and externally in covenant by being one of his race: (*chap. ix. 6, 7.*) Nor is that circumcision available to any saving purposes, which is only an outward ordinance, and mark of distinction visibly imprinted in the flesh.

19 For he is a Jew, which is one in-

29 But he is a true *Israelite*, and one of *Abraham's* spiritual seed, and an heir according to the promise, whether he be Jew or *Gentile*, (*Gal. iii. 28, 29.*) who is so in

N O T E.

* The uncircumcision, in this and the next verse, is put by a metonymy for the uncircumcised; as the circumcision also is for the circumcised; in *chap. iii. 30.* and *iv. 9.*

inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men; but of God.

in the inward frame and disposition of his heart, and is turned to God through Christ: And the true circumcision, which is acceptable to God, lyes in the *purifying of the heart by faith*, (*Acts xv. 9.*) and in the *renewing of the mind* by the Holy Spirit, (*Eph. iv. 23.* and *Tit. iii. 5.*) according to the signification of that religious ceremony, (*Deut. x. 16.* and *xxx. 6.* compared with *Phil. iii. 3.* and *Col. ii. 11.*) and not in the mere *cutting off of the flesh of the foreskin*, according to the letter of the law, (*Levit. xii. 3.*) The circumcision, that is of any avail, is such an inward holy renovation of the whole soul, as is neither discerned, nor applauded by men, who can see no farther than the outside, and are chiefly taken with external professions; but as is of great price in the sight of God, who searches the heart; and will, one day, make manifest all its counsels. (*1 Pet. iii. 4.* and *1 Cor. iv. 5.*)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How inexcusable is it to be uncharitable and severe in condemning others for faults that we ourselves are guilty of! And how great is their sin and condemnation, that are workers of iniquity, under high professions of godliness! They bring a reproach upon religion, and cause the name of God to be blasphemed by his enemies: They vainly expect to escape his righteous judgment; and many, whom they condemn and vilify here, will rise up as witnesses against them hereafter, for their abuses of superior light, professions and privileges. Yea, What an *high aggravation* of sin is it to practise the crimes that we declaim against in others, and to persist in them, against all the obligations and inducements of the goodness, long-suffering, and forbearance of God to bring us to repentance! This betrays the utmost hardness of heart, and is nothing less, than heaping up daily provocations to God's wrath against the day of wrath: The consciences of such may justly accuse and condemn them. But, of all others, their guilt and punishment will be the most hideous and intolerable, that persist in sinning against the plainest light of a revealed law and gospel too, and wilfully rebel against both, to their own perdition. How certainly may we depend on a righteous and universal judgment to come, which natural principles forebode, and which the gospel assures us will be managed by Jesus Christ, as the great Judge of all! Then every secret thought, as well as every word and act, will be brought to light, whether it be good or bad; and an impartial sentence will pass upon every individual person of all nations and professions, according as the evidences of their state before God shall arise from their governing principles, tempers, and conduct; and according to the dispensation they were under, whether it were that of the light of nature, or of the *Jewish* law, or of the gospel revelation, that every one may receive answerable to the kinds and degrees of his works: For there is no respect of persons with God. But O how vastly different will the final issues of things be to the righteous and the wicked! They who with faith and patience persevere in well-doing, shall be crowned with eternal life, on such a foundation of righteousness, through Jesus Christ, as shall clear the justice of God, as well as exalt the exceeding riches of his grace: and they, that shall be found among the ungodly and disobedient, shall have justice done them, in executions of wrath, without mixture of mercy, to their unspeakable agony and confusion. Alas! what man that has sinned, and so grievously sinned as we all have, can stand before God, if he enters into judgment with him! And therefore how dangerous is it to rest in any thing short of Christ, for righteousness to eternal life! The most self-flattering, specious, and privileged professor, is as incapable of being justified

by any righteousness of his own, as the most confessedly profligate sinner: since every breach of the law destroys all grounds of confidence in it. But, after all, he is not a real Christian, who is only so in outward appearance: nor is that baptism, any more than circumcision, to be depended upon, which is only outward in the flesh: But he is a Christian indeed, who is so inwardly; and the only effectual circumcision, or baptism, is that of the heart, which, how much soever it may be unknown and despised of men, is clearly discerned, and greatly esteemed, by the holy and all-seeing God.

C H A P. III.

The apostle answers several objections against what he had delivered in the foregoing chapter: and so clears the way to his further design, 1,—8. He asserts and proves, that all mankind, Jews as well as Gentiles, are sinners, 9,—18. And applies all this to his principal point, concerning the justification of both Jews and Gentiles, as utterly unattainable by their own performances, and entirely owing to the free grace of God, through faith in the righteousness of Christ, 19,—31.

TEXT.

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?

PARAPHRASE.

IF it be so, as has been but now shewn, (*chap. ii.*) that the Jew is on the same foot with the Gentile, in point of acceptance with God, and that his being circumcised no more secures his salvation than if he had been an heathen; it may be asked by some, who have gloried in these privileges, What possible advantage then can it be to any, that they are the natural seed of Abraham, born of Jewish parents? or what signifies their having been brought under the visible seal of God's covenant and circumcision, as a people peculiarly related to him?

2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

2 To this I answer, Tho' these privileges bear no part of the grounds of any one's acceptance with God, nor can secure his salvation; yet, in the nature of means, encouragements, and helps, and in special marks of honour, the Jews have thereby many prerogatives above the Gentiles, as may be observed hereafter. (*Chap. ix. 4, 5.*) I shall, for the present, only instance in one of the chief of them, which summarily comprehends all the rest; and that is, because God himself, being eminently present with them, gave them various types, promises, and prophecies of the Messiah, and of salvation through him, as one who should spring from among themselves, and be first sent to them; and he committed the sacred writings to their use and custody; which may be called his oracles, because he himself dictated and delivered them, as infallible and important truths, to be their guide and counsellors, and a ground of faith

and hope to that people, while the rest of the world had no such revelations of his mind and will. And surely there must have been a very great honour and advantage in all this.

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

3 Though many, (see the note on *chap. xi. 25.*) yea, the greatest part of the *Jews*, to whom the glorious promises were made, and were confirmed by circumcision, did not believe in the Promised Seed, when he appeared among them, and so rejected the righteousness of God, which is brought in by him, and revealed in the gospel to faith, (*chap. i. 17.*) yet can it ever be supposed, that their ungrateful infidelity should defeat the faithfulness of God to his own word, or to them that trust in it, that he should not fulfil his promise to *Abraham*, and his spiritual seed, through all generations according to his intention toward the true *Israelites*, (*chap. ix. 6.*) and according to their dependence upon him?

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

4 Far be it from any of us * to entertain such an unworthy thought! This can never be. But (1st) let God always have the glory of being firmly believed, and readily owned to be true to his word, and faithful in performing his promises to them that trust in him; and (2^d) let every man in the whole world, if compared with him, be counted vanity and a lie, so inconstant and deceitful, as that no faith or confidence can be securely placed in him: Yea, let us abide by this principle, that God is and cannot but be true, though all men should prove to be ever so unfaithful to him, or to their fellow-creatures: And let us take occasion from hence to exalt God, and abase ourselves the more before him, according to what is written was done by *David*, (*Psal. li. 4.*) when he confessed his own treacherous iniquity with this very design, that God might appear to be just and true in all that he pronounced, in a way of threatening as well as of promise; and might stand clear of all imputations of unrighteousness or unfaithfulness, and come off with victory and honour, whenever any would presume to arraign and implead him at their bar, or would examine and censure his conduct; and whenever he shall contend, or enter into judgment with them about it.

But if our unrighteousness com-

5 But, perhaps, some contentious *Jews* among you may further urge, that if our wickedness and unbelief,

iii

N O T E.

* *God forbid* (*οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν*) properly signifies, *Let it not be*, and is used as a form of the strongest denial with abhorrence.

commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man;)

in rejecting the Messiah, puts the greater lustre on the justice of God in taking vengeance for it, and on that glorious righteousness by which he justifies the most unworthy, through faith therein, what shall we say to his excluding us from all saving benefit by Christ, and severely punishing us for our opposition to him? Is not God unjust, (*μη αδικος ο Θεος*;) in executing terrible wrath upon us for that very sin, which, in this manner, serves as a foil, to set off and enhance, and furnishes an opportunity for the brighter displays of his glory? (I personate a carnal Jewish man in proposing this as well as the other objection, according to his perverse way of reasoning about God, and forming excuses for himself.)

6 God forbid: forthen how shall God judge the world?

6 Detestable thought! (*μη γινωτο*) as if God's glorifying himself, by his over-ruling providence, in bringing light out of darkness, and good out of evil, and pursuing his design of grace towards others, notwithstanding the wickedness of some, could reflect any dishonour upon his justice in punishing the sin, which, in its own nature, is full of all malignity against him, and his way of salvation by Jesus Christ. This can never be admitted: For were God in any manner unjust, how could he judge the world in righteousness? (*Psal. xcvi. 13. and Acts xvii. 31.*) Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? (*Gen. xviii. 25.*) it is impossible but that he should, who, being God, cannot but be infinitely just in his nature and will.

7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why

7 The objections therefore mentioned but now, (*ver. 3, 5.*) against God's proceedings, are (as I have said) only the language of a vain, proud, and carnal man, like the prejudiced and unbelieving Jews, whose reasonings are all perverse: For such an one will still further urge, that if the veracity of God in fulfilling his promises to them that believe, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, hath also taken occasion to display itself, with the greater advantage, to his glory by means of my

N O T E.

* That the righteousness of God (*Θεου δικαιοσυνη*) here principally signifies his justice in punishing sin, seems plain from the close of the verse, where, in opposition hereunto, it is said, Is God unrighteous, who takes vengeance? and from the following verse, where the apostle rejects such a thought with abhorrence, saying, God forbid: For how then shall God judge the world? And yet, as the righteousness by, and for which, God justifies is most commonly, if not always, intended by the righteousness of God in this epistle, I have likewise brought that into the paraphrase. And, as far as I find, this phrase is to be taken in either the other of these senses, wherever it

occurs throughout this epistle, though it may be dubious in which of them it is to be precisely understood here, and in *ver. 25, 26.* and in the former part of *chap. x. 3.* Some learned interpreters have indeed thought, from what follows, *ver. 7.* that by the righteousness of God is meant his veracity or faithfulness: But as it does not appear to me that this phrase is used in that sense any where else in all this epistle, I rather take the 7th verse to give us another view of the Jews objecting against the faithfulness of God, different from that which was suggested and answered, *ver. 3, 4.*

why yet am I al-
so judged as a
sinner?

my infidelity, which is, indeed, giving him the lie, and of my wickedness, which is giving the lie to all my own profession of his name; and the whole of which as sin is a direct contradiction to the eternal truth of things; where is the reason and justice of my being nevertheless condemned and punished for it, as an injurious transgressor, who, in effect, have occasioned more glory than dishonour to him?

8 And not ra-
ther, (as we be
slandrously re-
ported) and as
some affirm that
we say,) Let us
do evil that good
may come: whose
damnation is just.

8 And why should I not rather lay the reins upon the neck of my corruptions, without controul, and think myself excused, and even warranted, in committing all manner of iniquity, (or) to the end that the higher glory may redound to God's faithfulness, as well as grace, in freely justifying them that believe in Jesus? This indeed some of the carnal *Jews* do, in fact, maliciously and blasphemously report, (*βλασφημῶσι*) and even confidently affirm, that we apostles and Christians say: But as we absolutely deny, and abhor all such consequences of the doctrine of grace, which we maintain; so it is, and will one day appear to be, an act of the most deserved and unquestionable justice in God, to bring everlasting destruction, both upon such unrighteous slanderers of him and us, and upon every professor of Christ's name, that shall dare to abuse this great and blessed truth of the gospel, by thinking and acting at such a scandalous rate, in direct opposition to its gracious and holy design.

9 What then?
are we better than
they? No, in no
wise: for we have
before proved
both Jews and
Gentiles, that
they are all under
sin;

9 Now then, to return to your main objection, (*ver. 1.*) though, as has been allowed, (*ver. 2.*) we, who are of the *Jewish* stock, have for many ages had the preference to the *Gentiles*, as to many excellent outward privileges; yet are we in any better condition than they, as to finding acceptance with God, on this account, under the gospel-state? No, not at all; but, upon the whole, are rather in a *worse*, as our sins are committed against greater light and mercies, means and obligations, than theirs; we therefore still need a better righteousness than our own, as much as they: For, in what has been already urged, I have proved by a detail of notorious facts, relating first to the *Gentiles*, (*chap. i.*) and then to the *Jews*, (*chap. ii.*) that both these bodies of people are universally under a just charge of guilt, and under the power of sin, which brings a sentence of condemnation upon them, and binds them over to wrath, as considered in themselves, and in their respective conditions, without gospel-grace.

10 As it is writ-
ten,

10 And for a further demonstration of this point, particularly as to the *Jews*, who, through a high conceit

ten, There is none
righteous, no not
one:

of themselves, are with the greatest difficulty brought to a conviction of their sin and danger, let me add several testimonies from their own scriptures, which they are entrusted with, and own, and glory in, as infallible and divine oracles. There they are universally accused as transgressors, according to what is written in several places, of their fathers, and that mostly in one of the purest ages in *David's* time *; and therefore cannot but too well agree to the present exceedingly corrupt generation: Thus, for instance, to describe their sad depravity by nature and practice, it is said of them, (*Psa. xiv. 1.*) There is none, that is truly righteous before God, by living up to the strict and extensive demands of his holy law: No, there is not so much as one.

11 There is
none that under-
standeth, there is
none that seeketh
after God.

11 As to their *minds and hearts*, they are so darkened and defiled, that there is none, who, in his natural state, has any true spiritual conceptions of divine things; who really understands his own wretched condition before God, and the way of finding acceptance with him; or who duly considers the revelation he has made of his mind and will in his word: Nay, their hearts are so corrupt, that there is none of them, who, in a sincere, earnest and believing manner, so much as seeks after an acquaintance and communion with God, or how he may be acceptably worshipped and glorified here, and enjoyed for ever hereafter; or who has any right inclinations and desires towards him. God himself *looked down from heaven on the children of men*, and could not find so much as one among them, that was naturally disposed to pay any such religious regards to him. (*Psal. xiv. 2.*)

12 They are
all gone out of
the way, they are

12 On the contrary, it was said, They are all apostate creatures, that have departed from God and goodness, and from the way of his commandments; and to they
are

N O T E.

* To make the apostle's quotation of the following passages pertinent to his design, it seems necessary to understand him, as applying them to the common state of the natural corruption of the Jews, as well as, or rather than of the *Gentiles*; one or other of the cited passages being applicable to every person, without exception, though some of them might have a primary reference to remarkable sinners in former days, and altogether being a strong proof of the common depravity of human nature. For if we confine these descriptions to particular persons or influential characters, there is no force in the argument from thence, that the whole body of the Jews, without exception, as well as of the *Gentiles*, were under such guilt and depravity,

as to need a better righteousness than their own, even that which is brought in by the gospel, to recommend them to the divine acceptance, which is the very thing that the apostle brings these testimonies to prove; but, on that supposition, directly contrary to the main drift of his reasoning, there might have been, notwithstanding, many persons, that did not need the righteousness of Christ to justify them, through faith in him; and none would have been put into his condemnation that was contained in the promises, when, in his winding up the argument, he tells us, ver. 19, the grand point in view was, *that every man may be judged, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

together become unprofitable; there is none that doth good, no not one.

are all, by nature, one as well as another, vile and useless God-ward; unfit and unable of themselves to bring forth any fruits of righteousness; and such is their native depravity, that there is none of them who doth any thing truly and spiritually good; no, not so much as one. (*Psal. xiv. 3.*)

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre: with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

13 From this corrupt fountain flow nothing but corrupt streams: All the *organs of their speech*, as well as all the powers of their souls, are defiled, as appears in the following particulars, the most noisome breath proceeds from the heart through their throats, and forms itself into the most offensive and pestilential words, that are as loathsome and injurious, as the steamings of a dead carcase from an open sepulchre: Their tongues are usually employed in flattery, falsehood, and deceit, (*Psal. v. 9.*); they meaning one thing, and speaking another, in imitation, and under the influence, of the father of lies: They vent malignant designs, that are too black to be openly avowed, in secret slander and reproach with their lips, which wound their neighbour, as suddenly, incurably, and unawares, as the most desperate poison of asps that is conveyed by their bite. (*Psal. cxl. 3.*)

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;

14 They likewise, in the rancour of their spirits, still more openly belch out bideous oaths and curses, and bitter provocations and revilings, as it were by whole mouthfuls, (*Psal. x. 7.*) Thus, instead of blessing God, and speaking things that are good for the use of edifying, they devote all their powers of speech, some in one way, and some in another, to his dishonour, and the injury of their neighbour.

15 Their feet are swift to shed blood.

15 And as to the other *members of the body, and the actions of life*, they are employed in a sinful manner, answerable to the depravity of their hearts, and the impurity of their language; Their feet, which should carry them to every good work, are instruments of unrighteousness, used for running about, with speed and vigour, to do all manner of mischief, even to the shedding of innocent blood. (*Prov. i. 16. and Isa. lix. 7.*)

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

16 By these means, wheresoever they go, they spread ruin and destruction in all their paths; they bring death and calamities of one kind or other, without a cause, upon the heads of the communities and persons, civil and sacred, that they have to do with: and, at last, upon their own heads, as the just reward of their iniquity. (*Isa. lix. 7.*)

17 And the way of

17 And so thoroughly perverse are they in heart and life, that they are strangers to every thing that tends to their

of peace have they
not known.

their own or others truest happiness, for this world and the next: They do not know the way of obtaining peace with God, or in their own souls; nor of promoting the blessings of solid tranquility and friendship among mankind, or between themselves and others. (*Isa. lix. 8.*)

18 There is no
fear of God be-
fore their eyes.

18 Upon the whole, as *David* justly concluded in his own mind, when he beheld the transgression of the wicked, (*Psal. xxxvi. 1.*) They have no awful holy reverence of God in their hearts; no serious sense of his divine majesty and authority, of his omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence, of his justice, holiness, and goodness, or of their own accountableness to him: no fear of offending him, or of the dreadful consequence of it; no principle of real religion to direct their views, and to restrain them from any evil, or influence them unto any good. This is the deplorable state of the *Jews*, by nature, in common with the *Gentiles*.

19 Now we know
that what things
soever the law
saith, it saith to
them

19 Now to apply all that has been insisted on at large, about the sinfulness of *Gentiles* and *Jews*, to the chief point in view, with which we set out, *chap. i. 16, 17.* We know, from the very nature and reason of things, that whatsoever * the law speaks, in a way of precept;

N O T E.

* The learned Mr *Locke* observes, that the word *law* (*νόμος*) with the article prefixed, as it is twice in this verse, signifies, by way of eminence, *the law* that was given to the *Jews* under the Old Testament; and that the word (*νόμος*) without the article, as it is twice in the next verse, there signifies law in general, which extends to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*. But since the next verse is an inference from this, if the word *law* is taken in a wider sense there than it is here, the conclusion is more general, and so contains more than the premises, which is contrary to all just rules of reasoning. I therefore apprehend, that though, when there is nothing in the context to forbid it, the article often gives an emphasis: yet in these two verses, the sense of the word *law* is the same, whether the article be prefixed to it or not. And that very critical gentleman himself, without attending to this distinction, takes the word *law* in one and the same sense, *chap. iv. 13, 14, 15, 16.* though in the three first of these verses, it is put without the article, and in the last with it. He also, and indeed the generality of expositors, make the verse before us to refer only to the immediately preceding verses, which set out the natural corruption particularly of the *Jews*; by citations from their scriptures, which speak to them; and accordingly understand the law to signify the whole of the Old Testament, including the *psalms* and the *prophets*, from whence those

quotations are made. But, though I would not wholly exclude this sense, I rather incline to understand this and the next verse as the winding up of the apostle's argument in the whole of the foregoing discourse, from *chap. i. 18.* to prove, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, are *all under sin*, and that the whole world is *become guilty before God*, (*chap. iii. 9, 19.*) Accordingly it is said in the next verse, not that no *Jews*, but that *no flesh shall be justified by the deeds of the law*. And to the *law*, in this and the following verse, seems principally to mean the *moral law*, and to include the remains of it, that were found in the consciences of the *Gentiles*, as well as that particular revelation of it which was given to the *Jews*: For the *sin* mentioned in the immediately preceding verses, and in the whole of the foregoing discourse, to which the *deeds* or *works of the law* are here opposed, were transgressions of the *moral law*, in one or other of these considerations of it: And this is the law by which the whole world stands guilty before God, as it is here expressed, and by which is the knowledge of sin, as we have it, *chap. vii. 7.* neither of which could be said of the *ceremonial law*; that not being the proper rule of duty and sin, and the *Gentiles* having never been under the *revealed law*, and, by consequence, never capable of being convicted as guilty by it. Nor doth it seem very clear, that *whatever the law says, it says to them that are under it*, to this end, that every

them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

precept, conviction, or condemnation, it says to its proper subjects that are under it, and are acquainted with it, and bound to stand or fall by it: whether they be *Gentiles*, as it is made known by the light of nature to them, in the accusings or excusings of their consciences, and in their knowledge of the judgment of God against them that do evil, (*chap. i. 32. and ii. 14.*); or whether they be *Jews*, as the law is more clearly revealed to them in the scriptures of the Old Testament, several passages of which have but now been produced for their conviction, as directly speaking of them. Whatever the *moral law* says to either of these sorts of people, it says to them severally, according as, in one or the other of these considerations, they are under it, that every plea of righteousness, on the foot of a man's own works, may be silenced and confuted, and he may have nothing to say in his own excuse, were God to proceed with the utmost severity against him, of what nation or profession soever he be; and that the whole world, whatever law they have lived under, and particularly the *Jews*, who are apt to boast of their own righteousness, may be proved and forced to own themselves to be transgressors in God's sight. They all are under a just sentence of condemnation, and have deserved, and are legally obnoxious to wrath, and to be cast at God's righteous bar, instead of having any thing of their own to recommend them to his favour, who has declared, that he will by no means clear the guilty. (*Exod. xxxiv. 7.*)

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified

20 It is therefore evident from all this, to a demonstration, that by personal obedience, either to the law of nature, or to the revealed law *, no man living up-

on

N O T E S.

mouth may be stopped, and ALL THE WORLD may become guilty before God: unless we consider it as a law, which *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* were under. However, were we to take it to signify only the law, which was peculiarly given to the *Jews*, and made known in the scriptures of the Old Testament, still the *moral law*, for several of the reasons but now hinted, must by no means be excluded: And it is plain that many, at least of the *Jews*, expected to be justified by their observation of the *moral*, as well as of the *ceremonial law*: For most of the instances of holiness, which the *Pharisee* pleaded for his justification, (*Luke xviii. 11.*) related to the *moral law*; as that he was not an extortioner, an unjust person, an adulterer, nor like the publican; and the *Scribe*, that came to Christ, spoke of the precepts of the *moral law*, as more, or better, than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices,

in point of acceptance with God (*Mark xii. 33.*)

Upon the whole then, when the apostle speaks against justification by the works of the law, I cannot but think, that it is to be understood of all good works, of what nature or kind soever, to the exclusion of all boasting, (*ver. 27.*) And this I take to be of great importance for a due conception of the nature and design of his argument. (See also the note on *chap. vii. 4.*)

* *Flesh* is here put for *man*, as it is expressed, *Psal. cxliii. 2.* from whence this is quoted; and the apostle might chuse, in this place, to use the term *flesh*, to intimate the original corruption of human nature, by reason of which it is become incapable of keeping the law, according to the sense in which he, after our Lord himself, (*John iii. 6.*) often uses it in this epistle, as in *chap. vii. 5. 18, 25.* and *chap. viii. 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 12, 13.*

ified in his sight :
for by the law is
the knowledge of
sin.

on earth, in his present state of degeneracy, can ever be justified in the account, or at the awful tribunal of the all-seeing, heart-searching, just, and holy God, whatever he may seem to be in his own eyes, or in the opinion of other men : For the law is so far from acquitting any of its subjects from condemnation, that, by its light, purity, and authority, they are convicted as sinners, and brought to see themselves to be so, thro' their want of conformity to and transgressions of, its holy, just, and good commandments, by numberless sins of omission and of commission, in thought, word, and deed, for every one of which the law pronounces a curse upon them, (*Gal. iii. 10.*) How then is it possible that the Jew, any more than the Gentile, or that any individual of mankind, be his character what it will, should be justified in God's sight, by his own doings in obedience to the law ?

21 But now the
righteousness of
God without the
law is manifested,
being witnessed by
the law and the
prophets;

21 But though every door of hope is shut up in that way ; yet, blessed be God, the sinner's case is not desperate ; another, a better, and a safer door is now opened in the gospel. Here is a clear and glorious discovery of the righteousness which God has appointed and provided, accepts and bestows for justification, and which was wrought out and brought in by, and resides, as in its original subject, in the eternal Son of God, who is himself God ; but which never was spoken of, hinted, or provided for, by the *moral law*, nor is to be obtained by obedience to its precepts, either as made known by the light of nature to the *Gentiles*, or by revelation to *Israel* : And yet it is plain that this is the righteousness, which God all along designed for justification, some notices of it having been given beforehand in the types and shadows of the *ceremonial law*, delivered by *Moses*, and in his other writings, relating to the *seed of the woman*, that should bruise the serpent's head, (*Gen. iii. 15.*) and the *seed of Abraham*, in whom all nations should be blessed, (*Gen. xxii. 18.*) as also in the after-prophecies of the Old Testament, recorded by other inspired men, which spoke of him as the *Lord our Righteousness* ; and the *Lord, in whom we have righteousness, and shall be justified* ; whose name is *Jehovah our Righteousness* ; and who should bring in *everlasting righteousness*, (*Isa. xlv. 24, 25. Jer. xxiii. 6. and Dan. ix. 24.*) so that to him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believes in him, shall receive remission of sins. (*Acts x. 43.*)

22 Even the
righteousness of
God which is by
faith

22 By this righteousness of God, I do not mean the essential rectitude of the divine nature, nor the righteousness

faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference;

ousness of any mere creature, as though God had ordained any of these for justification: But I mean the mediatorial suretiship righteousness of Jesus Christ God-man, which consists of his active and passive obedience to the law, in the room and stead of sinners, (*ver.* 24, 25. and *chap.* v. 19. and x. 4. see the notes there, and on *chap.* i. 17.) which, for its transcendent excellence and glory, as well as on other accounts, may be styled the righteousness of God, and which being received by faith in Jesus Christ, is, by the gracious constitution of God in the gospel, judicially made over, reckoned, imputed, or placed to the account of, and put like a garment of salvation upon every one that believes in him, of what nation or character soever he be: For, with respect to this great blessing, and the way of conveying it, there is no difference between *Jew* and *Gentile*, the greater and lesser sinner, or the weaker and stronger believer among either of them; but they are all alike equally and perfectly interested in it, and justified by it, and that in the same way of believing, as they all, one as well as another, must be, if ever they are saved.

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

23 For, as has been shewn at large in the foregoing discourse, *Jews* as well as *Gentiles*, all and every one of both these sorts of people, as sinners before God, and have thereby failed of and become incapable of attaining the glory of his holy image in them, the glory which they ought to have brought to him; and the glory of a beatific vision and enjoyment of him; and so neither of them have any thing of their own to glory in, as a recommendation of them to his acceptance, but must be entirely beholden for it to his rich mercy, through the righteousness of Christ.

24 Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ:

24 One as well as the other, being acquitted from condemnation, and intitled to eternal life, merely by the free and sovereign favour of God, as its original first moving cause*, without any desert in themselves, but on account, and in virtue of that righteousness of Christ, which includes an infinitely valuable price of redemption: a price that was paid by his obedience and sufferings to death, for them, and is in him as an inexhaustible fund of merit to be applied to them: And this

N O T E.

* With respect to God, justification is of mere grace, (*ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ*) and with respect to us, it is without merit: For freely (*δωρεάν*) seems to be here used, not so much to signify, that it is a free gift, as it is called (*χάρισμα*) *chap.* v. 16. and as is strongly included in its being said to be by his grace; as to shew that it is without a cause in us,

there being nothing in us to move God to it. Thus, answerable to the Hebrew word (*עוֹלָם*) it is rendered by the *Septuagint* (*δωρεάν*) without a cause, *Psal.* xxxv. 7. 19. and lxxix. 4.; and our Lord said of his enemies, referring to *Psal.* xxxv. 19. They hated me WITHOUT A CAUSE. (*δωρεάν*) *John* xv. 25.

this is fully consistent with the utmost freedom of his grace, who from the mere propension of his own love, without any obligation laid upon him, admitted of this ransom; yea, appointed, provided, and accepted it for them; and gratuitously places it to their account, and enables them to receive it through faith in his Son.

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past; through the forbearance of God,

25 Whom God the Father (*πατήρ*) has, in his eternal counsels, predetermined, and as it were presented to himself, as a fit mediator, whom he delighted in; (*Isa. xlii. 1.*) whom he has also given notices of before-hand in the types, shadows, and prophecies of the Old Testament; and has now exhibited openly in his incarnation, and proposed in the gospel, as a propitiatory sacrifice; on account of which God appears on a mercy-seat, (*ἐλεηστήριον*) that sinners of all nations and characters, may approach him with humble boldness, and find acceptance with him, in a way of believing on the atoning death and sufferings of Christ: His end and design in all which is, (*ὡς νουθεσίᾳ*) to demonstrate the glory of his justice*, together with the perfection of the Redeemer's righteousness, whereby it was satisfied, and provision was honourably made for the pardon of the sins of believing *Gentiles*, who, through the patience of God toward them, have been suffered to go on in their trespasses a great while; and also for the remission of the sins of those believers under the Old Testament, whom in his great long-suffering he bore with, in view of what Christ, as their Surety, had engaged, and in due time would come to perform in a way of satisfaction for them.

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

26 He has done all this, I say, to display now in the fulness of time, under the gospel-dispensation, his own essential rectitude, and its righteous demands, as well as the justifying righteousness brought in by Christ, which he has appointed and accepts, that he might secure the rights of his justice, as well as shew forth the riches of his grace; and so might advance the glory of both these perfections, with an entire harmony, in his justifying every one who by faith receives and depends upon the only Saviour.

27 Since

N O T E.

* That which in this and the next verse is called his righteousness, (*δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ*) and in the former part of chap. x. 3. the righteousness of God, (*ἐν θεῷ δικαιοσύνη*) is understood by many good interpreters to mean the essential righteousness or punitive justice of God; and by others, that righteousness by and for which God justifies them that believe in Jesus. The last of these senses seems to keep-up the

most uniform idea of the apostle's use of these terms, in other parts of this epistle. (See the note on ver. 5.) And yet, as the other sense here and in chap. x. 3. is very consistent with, and seems to add strength and beauty to the apostle's way of reasoning on this subject, I have included both, leaving the reader to chuse that which pleases him best, while I prefer the first.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith.

27 Since therefore all are sinners, and none are pardoned and justified, unless it be merely by the free grace of God, thro' the righteousness of Christ imputed to them in a way of believing; What room is there for any one, and particularly for any Jew that has obtained mercy, to glory in himself, and despise others, as if his acceptance with God proceeded from his being more worthy, or having done better than they? there is no shadow of pretence for any thing of this kind. But by what * doctrine is all this shut out? Is it by that which makes our justification to depend upon our own good works? No, by no means; for that would puff up our pride, and make us ascribe to ourselves some of the honour at least which is only due to God. But it is utterly excluded by that doctrine, which refers this great blessing entirely and alone to the free grace of God, through faith in the righteousness of Christ.

29 Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

28 Therefore, upon the whole, the conclusion is clear and strong, and ought to be owned to the glory of God, and the humbling of the sinner at his foot, (1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31.) that a man, of what nation or character soever is discharged from guilt and condemnation, and is accepted as righteous before God, merely thro' the righteousness of Jesus Christ, received by faith; and not at all by his own performances in obedience to any law †, no, not to the law of Moses itself in any view of it, as the righteousness that intitles to eternal life.

29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

29 Is God then, in this new and enlarged dispensation of grace, a covenant God only to the Jews, as he was in Old Testament-times? Has he not now taken the Gentiles likewise into a covenant of saving benefits, tho' for many former ages they were not his people? Yes certainly, he is now as much the God of all grace to believing Gentiles as Jews. He is alike the God of both;

30 Since,

N O T E S.

* Any doctrine of God, whether consisting of precepts or free promises, may be styled a law; because, upon its being made known, it binds the conscience, by divine authority to receive it; and when it relates to the gospel constitution, it sets out the order of God's dealings in a way of grace towards us, together with our obligations to act towards him in a way of duty. Thus the term law is often used in a lax sense for the whole of God's revealed will, and sometimes chiefly, or at least inclusively, with respect to his promises and the doctrines of grace, as in Psal. i. 2. and xix. 7. and xciv. 12. and cxix. 18, 77, 91, 97. 165. Isa. ii. 3. and Micah. iv. 2. And it seems necessary to understand it in one branch of this sense, as signifying a doctrine of pure grace: because that, which is here called the law of faith, is directly opposed to

the law of works; and is such a doctrine as excludes all boasting, neither of which is consistent with the supposition of faith's being a good work, by, and for the performance of which, in obedience to a law, we are intitled to eternal life: For then it would be a law of works, and would leave room for boasting. Vid. Gal. Bez. and Pifent.

† Justified without the deeds of the law evidently excludes from justification all works of righteousness in obedience to any law whatsoever: For these works stand opposed to all the sinful works of both Jews and Gentiles, which the apostle had been speaking of at large in this and the two foregoing chapters, and by reason of which he concluded, ver. 20 that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in God's sight.

30 Seeing it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision thro' faith.

31 Do we then make void the law thro' faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

30 Since, according to a prophecy of gospel-times, that *the Lord should be King over all the earth, and in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one*, (Zech. xiv. 9.) he is one and the same God, in a covenant way, and by the same means, to persons of all nations; even that God, who will justify the circumcised Jew by faith, and the uncircumcised Gentile through faith; *by and through* (αὐτὸν καὶ δι' αὐτόν) in this case meaning one and the same thing: So that, as was said (ver. 22.) there is no national difference as to the persons whom God will justify, or as to the way of his doing it.

31 Do we then, as some would injuriously suggest, invalidate and abrogate * the moral law, or set it aside and render it useless and insignificant, by this doctrine of faith, which excludes all works of our own from entering into our justification in God's sight? No, (καὶ γενομένη) far be it from us; we abhor the thought. Nay, on the contrary, tho' we renounce it, as a broken covenant, that cannot give life, on account of our own personal obedience to it, which is so very defective; and though we maintain that believers are delivered from its curse; yet we approve of, and confirm the authority of God in his law, and in the representations it makes of his holy nature and will: We likewise insist, that it has been highly honoured in a full answer to all its demands, on our behalf, by that glorious righteousness of Christ in which we believe for justification; and we regard it still, as a means, in the hand of the Spirit, of convincing us of sin, and of our need of this perfect righteousness, and as a complete, unchangeable and obligatory rule for life, for a spiritual and holy obedience to which, as such, the most effectual motives and assistances are afforded, by the grace of the gospel, to them that believe: And so in every valuable consideration we thoroughly establish the moral law, and make it stand (σταθεῖν) in full force, by the doctrine of justification alone through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

It is a great privilege to enjoy the word and ordinances of divine appointment, and yet exceeding dangerous to rest in them: But how much soever some may pervert and abuse them, they shall have saving effects on those that belong to God, who may be entirely depended upon, as unchangeably faithful and true, and will one day appear to be so, though all mankind should prove to be liars, and no confidence could be placed in them.—How do scripture and experience witness to the universal

N O T E.

* 'Tis plain to me that the law here intended is the moral law, as an eternal rule of righteousness, because of that the apostle had been chiefly discoursing in the greatest part of the foregoing context, (see the note

on ver. 19.) and the ceremonial law was designed to be abolished, rather than established, by the gospel; as the law, under the notion of a covenant of works with its penalty, also was.

universal depravity of the whole human race! All, in their fallen state of nature, are under the guilt and power of sin: It shews itself under various forms, in the thoughts of the heart, the words of the lips, and the actions of the life; in an estrangement from God, and an injurious behaviour toward men! and in unprofitable and destructive courses to ourselves, as well as others: So that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and there is none righteous, none that has the true fear of God, or that doth good, as of himself, and without defect, no, not one. O whose mouth must not be stopped, that reads his guilt and depravity in the light of God's law, by which is the knowledge of sin! And how clear must the evidence be to such a man's conscience, that by the deeds of the moral law itself, he never can be justified in the sight of God. But how glorious and complete is the righteousness of Christ, which is revealed, and proposed to our acceptance, in the gospel! Its infinite dignity and well-pleasingness to God, as the righteousness of a divine surety, and as answerable to all the demands of law and justice, put an exceeding glory upon it, and render it just such a righteousness as we need to recommend us to the favour of God: It includes the atonement of sin, and a free pardon to the believing sinner on its account; and is the foundation of a throne of grace for such to apply to, with holy freedom and acceptance: And the witness given to it in the Old Testament, together with the plainer discoveries of the New, are sufficient to embolden our faith and humble dependence upon it, whatever our iniquities, or our threatening and discouraging circumstances have been. How sweetly do justice and grace harmonize in a justification, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus! And how extensive is the grace of the gospel! It reaches to greater and lesser sinners, of the *Gentiles*, as well as of the *Jews*: The same God is a covenant God to one as well as another and the same way of justification is open to both, not by any works of their own, but entirely and alone through faith in the righteousness of Christ, which is made over by gracious imputation to every true believer, for the remission of past sins, and for the continuance of his state of favour with God, as it is abidingly and everlastingly upon all such, without difference. How concerned then should we be to receive this righteousness by faith, that we may stand accepted in the Beloved; and to know the grace of God in truth, that we may live under its powerful influence, and may practically shew that it doth not lead to licentiousness, nor will suffer us, on any consideration whatsoever, to do evil that good may come! While therefore we humbly renounce all trust and confidence in ourselves, and glory only in the Lord. How careful and conscientious should we be, to observe the law of our creation, as an unchangeable rule of life, and to improve the grace of the gospel, for exciting and enabling us to yield an unfeigned and impartial obedience to the moral law! Upon the whole, How groundless and unreasonable, how unjust and dishonourable, are all cavils against the veracity, holiness, and righteousness of God, and the freeness of his grace, in the justification of every one that believes in Jesus!

C H A P. IV.

The doctrine of justification by faith, as pertaining to the Gentiles as well as Jews, is further illustrated by the case of Abraham, whose faith was imputed to him for righteousness before he was circumcised, 1,—12. He received the promise for himself and his seed, through the righteousness of faith, 13,—22. And we are justified in the same way of believing as he was, 23,—25.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

WHAT shall we
say then, that
Abra-

IF it be true, as has been observed, (*chap. iii. 27, 28.*)
that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the
law, and so there is no room for any one's boasting, or
glorying

Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

glorying in himself, What shall we think of the case of *Abraham*, that renowned father of the faithful, from whom we *Jews* derive our pedigree, and our honour, according to the flesh *? Some of you will say, Had that eminent saint, and servant, and friend of God no cause of glorying in his piety and holiness, which were signified by his being circumcised in the flesh, and which put such a lustre upon his character in the eyes of all men? Can it be denied, that such an one as *he* might justly take some honour to himself?

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.

2 For if this great and good man, *Abraham*, found acceptance by, and on account of his remarkably holy works, with the addition of circumcision, he must needs have had a proper occasion for glorying in his high attainments, the cause of his justification being in himself †.—But to any such suggestion, I answer, He in reality was not justified by works before God; and so, notwithstanding all his duties of obedience and external privileges, he had no room to be proud; nor did he glory in the presence, or vaunt himself in the sight of the great and holy God, as though he were worthy of his favour; as plainly appears from what is recorded in the sacred oracles themselves about him.

3 For what faith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it

3 For what doth the scripture say with relation to this very instance? Why, it tells us that this famous *Abraham* believed in the promises which God gave him of the Messiah, as his seed, in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed, (*Gen.* xii. 3. and xv. 5, 6.) and that ‡ which he believed concerning the promised seed

NOTES.

* As pertaining to the flesh, (*κατα σάρκα*) may refer either to *Abraham's* being the father of the *Jews* according to the flesh; or rather to what advantage he himself had found by being circumcised in the flesh, and appearing remarkably holy before men.

† I take the former part of this verse to continue the words of the objectors, to enforce their argument; and what follows in the close of the verse, to be the beginning of the apostle's reply, in confutation of it.

‡ It is no uncommon thing in scripture, to put the act for the object, especially with regard to faith and hope. Thus hope signifies the object of hope, *Jer.* xiv. 8. 1 *Tim.* i. 2. and *Heb.* vi. 18. And faith is often put for the object, or doctrine of faith, or that which is believed in; as when it is said, *Paul preached the faith which once he destroyed*, (*Gal.* i. 23.) and *Felix heard him concerning the faith of Christ*, (*Acts* xxiv. 24.); and when the scripture speaks of keeping, and contending for the faith, and holding the mystery of faith, and the like. And that this is the sense in which we

are to understand the apostle, when he says here, and ver. 5. that *Abraham's* believing, and his faith, were counted for righteousness, appears from its being opposed to our works; and from the reward being reckoned of grace, and not of debt. Whereas the act of faith itself is as much a work, as any other duty commanded in the moral law, and were that to be reckoned to us for righteousness, the reward in justifying us would be a debt due to us, on account of our having performed that work, as a servant's wages is for having done his master's business. And if we compare what is said of *Abraham's* faith in the following parts of this chapter, with *Gen.* xii. 3. and xv. 5, 6. and xxii. 18. where the object of it is further explained, we shall find that his faith had a reference to Christ, the promised seed, and to what should be done by him, that all nations might be blessed in him: For *Abraham* saw Christ's day, and was old, (*John* viii. 56.) And what is here called *faith's* being imputed, or counted for righteousness, is in the next chapter, (*ver.* 9, 10,

it was counted unto him for righteousness.

4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace but of debt.

5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

seed, was graciously transferred to his account, or made over, or imputed to him, for righteousness, as if he himself had done and suffered what the Messiah, in whom he believed, was to fulfil in his room and stead.

4 Now, to argue a little upon this instance, Is it to be observed, that to the person, who performs any works to intitle him to salvation, and obtains it on that account, which was not the case of *Abraham*, the reward of being accepted and finally saved, is, indeed, to such an one, properly accounted, not a point of favour, and a gift of mere grace; but a matter of debt, as what he has a just claim to, on the foot of work, and wages due for it.

5 But, on the contrary, to the person who, though he makes conscience of every duty, has no opinion of his own ability, or merit; nor goes about to perform, plead, or rest upon any works of obedience, with this view and design, that he may obtain justification by them; but who, on the other hand, under a humble sense of his own utter insufficiency, unworthiness, and ill deserts, gives credit to, and depends upon, the faithful word and free promise of God, who, through and on account of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, graciously acquits, and accepts him * that was, and saw himself to be a vile sinner, under a just sentence of condemnation; the object of this man's faith, or that which he sees, and is persuaded of, in the promise, and embraces for his acceptance with God, is reckoned or imputed to him for justification, as if he himself had perfectly fulfilled the law. And this was *Abraham's* case, who had been an ungodly person, or an idolatrous heathen, (τοῦ εἰδωλολάτρῃ) till God called him by his grace, and freely justified him, through faith in the promised seed.

6, 7 And

N O T E S.

11, 13, 19.) called, being justified by Christ's blood, and reconciled to God by the death of his Son, to whom we have received the atonement, and the righteousness of Christ's coming upon us unto justification, and our being made or constituted righteous by his obedience. See also the notes on ver. 24 and chap. i. 16. And that the atoning righteousness of Christ should be accepted for, or imputed to us, through faith in him, is a most natural thought, if we consider that the typical sacrifices were spoken of, as accepted for, or imputed to the offerers, to make atonement for them, or not, according as they were, or were not presented to God, in the way of his appointment, Lev. i. 4. and vii. 16. and xii. 25.

* The *negatively* here relates, not to what a

man continues to be after his justification; but to what he was, and was deemed to be before it: For though sin afterwards remains, it doth not reign in him; and his being justified alters his state and character, as it did *Abraham's*; who was before a *Gentile*, and whom, as Mr. Locke observes, the apostle here points to. He is then no longer counted *ungodly*, but *righteous*: because of the non-imputation of sin, and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to him, ver. 6, 8.) For it is not said his faith is his righteousness, but (λογισται ὡς δικαιοσύνη) is so imputed, as to be unto his obtaining a justifying righteousness, (chap. x. 4, 10.) though not by his own works, as the context plainly shews.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

7 Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckon-

6, 7 And all this well agrees with the account which David, the man after God's own heart, has given in his description of that man's happiness, to whom God reckons and makes over righteousness for this purpose, without the least consideration of his own good works, as any ingredient in his justification; and without charging upon him his misdeeds, as any bar to it, saying, under a deep sense of the evil of sin, They, and they only, among all the degenerate sons of men, are truly and thoroughly blessed, who, though they are, and must own themselves to be sinners, have found favour with God unto the free forgiveness of all their transgressions*, which are both offences and debts; and whose odious crimes, which the holy God cannot but abhor, are hid from his vindictive eye: So that though their iniquities are, in their own nature, as vile and abominable as ever, yet he blots or strikes them out of their account, (*Psal. li. 9.*) by the blood, and covers them with the righteousness of Christ: He doth not mark them, so as to enter into judgment with them on that score, (*Psal. cxxx. 3, 4. and cxliii. 2.*) but casts them all behind his back, and as into the depth of the sea, (*Isa. xxxviii. 17. and Mic. vii 19.* that they may be buried in everlasting oblivion. (*Isa. xliii. 25. and Heb. viii 12.*)

8 That man is happy indeed, all blessings are entailed upon him, who, though the guilt of his iniquities has deserved divine wrath, bound him over, and rendered him obnoxious to it, according to the curse of the law; (*Gal. iii. 10.*) yet God will not condemn him for it; the Redeemer's righteousness, instead of his own sin, being placed to his account, by a gracious and judicial act of that God who alone can forgive and justify. (*Luke v. 21. and Rom. viii 33.*)

9 Now the great question is, whether this blessed privilege of free pardon, and acceptance with God, alone through faith, belongs to the Jews only, who have had the advantage of circumcision; or to the Gentiles also, who never came under that ordinance? For I have already intimated, (*ver. 3.* see the note there) that

N O T E.

* In this and the next verse, which are quoted as David's words, the apostle mentions only God's pardoning grace, under the notions of his forgiving sin, as a debt and an offence; of his covering it, as an odious deformity; and of his not imputing it, as a law obligation to punishment. And therefore when the apostle calls this, (*ver. 6.*) David's describing the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works, he plainly intimates, that an imputation of right-

eousness is supposed, or implied, as the ground of forgiveness, or of the non-imputation of sin: For imputing righteousness evidently includes that, though it is more than barely not imputing sin. And, unless we take in this thought, the apostle's reasoning seems not very clear from the imputation of righteousness in the case of Abraham, to the non-imputation of sin, in David's account of blessedness.

reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised: that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

that the object of *Abraham's* faith, as it terminated upon what the promised Messiah should do, that all nations might be blessed, was set over to him, that he might be deemed and dealt with as righteous on its account.

10 Well then, at what time, and in what circumstances, was it thus imputed to him? Was it after, or before he was circumcised? it certainly was not after, but a great while *, at least fourteen years, before; and therefore this favour was not annexed to circumcision; but the uncircumcised *Gentiles* are as capable of it as the circumcised *Jews* themselves.

11 And *Abraham* being in this manner justified, upon his first believing; it is plain that his, and his family's being circumcised, many years afterwards, was so far from being the cause, or reason, of his justification, that it was only a sign of the original corruption of human nature, and of the internal circumcision of the heart; as also of the gracious and visible distinction God had made of him and his seed from all other nations, and of his having brought him, together with his offspring, into the bond of the covenant: And it was such a sign, as was also an external, instituted seal †, not only for the confirmation of God's promises to him and his seed, and of their obligations to be the Lord's; but likewise to assure him of his being already a real partaker of that righteousness of faith which was imputed to him while he was in the uncircumcised state of *Gentilism*: And this was ordered, in the infinite wisdom of God, to the end that he, as an eminent believer, with whom God's covenant was made expressly for himself and his seed, might be a noble pattern of faith, and of justification in a way of believing; and that he, as the father of the faithful, in whom, and in whose seed, all nations were to be blessed, might be the means of conveying spiritual benefits to all that should afterwards, in imitation of him, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,

N O T E S.

* *Ismael* was conceived after *Abraham* had the promise of a seed, and believed in the Lord, who counted it to him for righteousness, as appears from *Gen. xv. 5, 6.* compared with chap. *xvii. 4, 11* and *Ismael* was thirteen years old when, upon the institution of circumcision, *Abraham* and he were circumcised, *Gen. xvii. 25, 26.* And its being said, that *Abraham* received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being yet uncircumcised, shews, that the covenant made with him, *Gen. xvii. 1, — 14.* is, for substance at least, the same

with that in *Gen. xii. 1, 3* and *xv. 5, 6.* For circumcision was a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had in the promise of the Messiah made to him, and which was counted to him for righteousness, before he was circumcised.

† A seal of the righteousness of faith carries a plain intimation, that the covenant, of which circumcision was the sign and seal, was the covenant of grace: For the righteousness of faith unto justification, which circumcision was the seal of, can belong to no other covenant.

Christ, though they be *Gentiles*, who never were circumcised in the flesh; that the righteousness of Christ might also be made over to them, by gracious imputation through faith, as it was to him, while he remained uncircumcised.

11 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

12 God's end herein also was, that *Abraham* might be, in like manner, a spiritual father to the *Jews*; not indeed to the whole nation of them that are only circumcised in the flesh, as his natural posterity; but to such of them as are likewise his spiritual children, that follow his example in the same kind of faith, for substance, which he was partaker of, while he yet continued an uncircumcised *Gentile*. This clearly shows, for the humbling of the *Jew*, and encouraging of the *Gentile*, that what God did in freely pardoning and justifying *Abraham*, through faith, was a sample of what he would do, under the gospel-dispensation, in accepting *heathens* as well as *Jews*, that should believe in Jesus: For they, which be of faith, are blessed with faithful *Abraham*; and as *Jews* and *Greeks* are all one in Christ Jesus, so they that be Christ's are *Abraham's* seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Gal. iii. 9, 28, 29.)

13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to *Abraham* or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

13 For the great promise which God made to *Abraham*, that he should be the Lord and chief of the believing world*, inclusive of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as all nations were to be blessed in him, or in Christ, his seed, (Gen. xii. 3. compared with chap. xxii. 18.) and as he, through the promised Messiah, was to be the prime heir and possessor of the blessings of this world and the next, by virtue of the covenant made with him; this promise was not given to *Abraham*, or to his covenant-seed; by the tenure, either of the law of nature, (see the note on ver. 15.) or of the law of *Moses*, which was delivered

N O T E.

* This verse is apparently brought in as an argument to prove what had been said in the two foregoing verses about *Abraham's* being the father of all them that believe, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, through the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was uncircumcised; and therefore it seems inconsistent with the nature and design of the apostle's reasoning, to understand *Abraham's* being heir of the world, literally of his being heir of the land of *Canaan*: For that was to be the inheritance of only his natural descendants, or of them that were circumcised; so that if the apostle had any reference to the promised land, it could be only as it was a type of heaven. But I take *Abraham's* being heir of the world, to be a phrase of much the

same import with his being the father of all them that believe, whether they be circumcised or not, as he was called, ver. 11. or with his being the father of many nations, as it is expressed by way of explication, and further proof, ver. 17. And as he is the head of the family, and signified in *Jewish* language, the lord and possessor of its inheritance: So *Abraham* was the heir of the believing world, that is scattered through all nations, as the promise of spiritual and heavenly blessings, as well as of a covenant-right to all temporal good things, was made first to him, and transmitted from him to them, according to the covenant made with him; and so they are blessed with him, as his heirs according to the promise, Gal. iii. 3, 9, 29.

ed to his offspring four hundred and thirty years afterwards, (*Gal. iii. 17.*); nor was it given to him, by virtue of his personal obedience to the law, in either of these considerations of it; but it was given to him, and to his spiritual seed that are dispersed all over the world, and inherit these blessings, through and by virtue of that righteousness which is received by faith.

14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect.

14 For if they that are rewarded according to the law be heirs of all these blessings, by virtue of their obedience to it, whether it be considered as the law of nature, or as the revealed law given by *Moses*; then the doctrine of justification alone through faith, to intitle them to these blessings, is set aside, disannulled, or comes to nothing; and the free promise, relating to them, is of no manner of use, and has no effect at all.

15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

15 Because, considering the degenerate state of mankind as it has been described at large in the foregoing discourse, (*chap. i. ii. iii.*) the moral law, even, as discernible by the light of nature *, and much more as revealed by *Moses*, pronounces a sentence, and exposes to an execution of wrath upon all that are under it, as a covenant of works; yea, by its strict injunctions prohibitions, and threatnings, it irritates their natural corruptions to do such things in opposition to it, as deserve wrath, (*chap. vii. 8.*) and thereupon raises terrible expectations of it, as it shews them that they are sinners, (*chap. iii. 20.*): For where there is no law, neither by internal light, nor external revelation, to bind the conscience, there can be no sin, the very motion of which is, that it is a *transgression of the law*, (*1 John iii. 4.*) And where there is no sanction to enforce it, there can be no entail of wrath, or ground of fearful expectations of

N O T E.

* I have considered the law in the two foregoing verses, as including the law of nature; because in this verse, which stands in close connection with them, I cannot think that the law is to be confined to the law merely as given by *Moses*, though that may be principally intended: For that law was not known to the *Gentiles*; and yet they certainly were under a law, by which they knew the judgement of God, that they were worthy of death; and they were a law to themselves, as having the work of the law written in their hearts, &c. (*chap. i. 32. and ii. 14, 15.*) Hence they were transgressors, as they violated the dictates of natural conscience, and were liable to punishment on that account, (*chap. ii. 12.*) Accordingly the word law (*νομος*) is put without the article in this and the two preceding verses; but the article is prefixed in the following verse, which undoubtedly speaks

of the law of *Moses*; and so we are the more strongly led to this general sense of the word law here, if there is any force in Mr *Lücke's* observation on *chap. iii. 19.* that the word law, without the article, signifies law in general, and with the article, the law of *Moses*, or at most the whole of the Old Testament; though he has not kept to his own distinction in giving the sense of these verses. (See my note on *chap. iii. 19.*) But whether that distinction may always be relied upon, or not; the nature of the apostle's discourse in this place seems to require a construction, answerable to it, as without the article, ver. 13, 14, 15. and with it, ver. 16. And it is past dispute with me, that the moral law, in whatever way it is supposed to be made known, is here principally intended; because this is eminently the law, of which sin is the transgression.

of it; But this supposes, on the contrary, that where there is a law, with a sanction, every one who breaks it is a sinner; and, as such, is obnoxious to punishment.

16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

16 Since therefore it is impossible, that any of us should be intitled to spiritual and eternal blessings, by our own obedience to the moral *, any more than to the ceremonial law, God has wisely and mercifully ordered, that they should be bestowed *gratis* upon the heirs of salvation, (*ver. 14.*) merely through faith, that it might be entirely the gift of his own free favour, and all the glory of it might be ascribed to pure, unmixed, and unmerited grace: And it is thus ordered, to this very end, that the free promise might be absolutely certain, and infallibly accomplished, to all the truly believing seed of *Abraham*, without danger of its being defeated by their own unworthiness and defects, as the promise of the first covenant was, by the disobedience of the common head and parent of mankind; and as any other promise would undoubtedly be, through the present weakness, sickleness, and depravity of human nature, were it to depend on our own obedience, as the proper condition of it; but as faith lives upon, receives all from, and ascribes all to, the free and sovereign grace of God; so grace takes its motives from itself, and not from any thing in its objects, to secure its own design, and carry it through all opposition, difficulty, and danger, that it may be effectual to every true believer, not only to those that lived under the law of *Moses*; (*τῷ νόμῳ*) but likewise to those, that, though they were not under *that* law, are heirs of *Abraham's* faith, who is the spiritual father of every one of us that believe, whether we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*.

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God who

17 This was intimated in what is recorded, (*Gen. xvii. 5.*) concerning God's changing his name from *Abraham* to *Abraham*; because (said he) I have ordained, constituted, and will actually *make thee a father of many nations*: This included his being so, in a spiritual sense, to believing *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, in the account of that God in whom he believed, according to the promise, that *in him*, meaning *in his seed*, *all the families of the earth should be blessed*, (*Gen. xii. 3.* compared with *chap. xxviii. 14.*); he, I say, believed in that God, even

N O T E.

* As the foregoing verses shew that the apostle sets aside the works of the moral law from having any concern in our justification; so he here shews, that *faith* itself doth not justify on its own account; for if justification were by faith, *as a work*, or as a principle of

love and obedience, then the more faith we have, the less would our justification be of *grace*; because there would then be proportionably the more works, for the sake of which we are justified.

who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things that be not, as though they were:

even the great *Jehovah*, who quickens the dead in trespasses and sins, and will raise the dead bodies of believers to an immortal life, according to the working of his mighty power, whereby he was able to give life to *Gentile* sinners, and to invigorate the bodies of *Abraham* and *Sarah*, when they were in a manner dead, as to the purpose of having children, in the ordinary course of nature, (*ver.* 19.) and who speaks of things that at present have no existence, and, by natural causes and appearances, are never likely to be at all, as though they already actually were; as he did, when he promised, that a son should be born of those aged persons; and that a spiritual seed should, in due season, be raised to *Abraham*, from among the idolatrous heathens, who were looked upon with contempt, as *things that were not*, (*1 Cor.* i. 28.) and who, at that time, were not the people of God.

18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

18 *Abraham*, notwithstanding all the difficulties, discouragements, and high improbabilities, that lay in the nature of things, to cut off his hope, believed, with a firm dependence on the infinite wisdom, power, faithfulness, and grace of God, that he would certainly make him the spiritual father of many nations, inclusive of the *Gentiles*, according to his word, wherein he said to him, (*Gen.* xv. 5.) *Look towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou art able to number them; so shall thy seed be.*

19 And, being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of *Sarah's* womb.

19 And as all this supposed that he himself should have a son by his wife *Sarah*, from whom a numerous posterity should descend, and from whom the Messiah, in whom all nations were to be blessed, should at length arise; and as God afterwards expressly promised this Son, by the name of *Isaac*, with whom he would establish his covenant, for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him, (*Gen.* xvii. 19.) so *Abraham's* faith, being not weak and wavering, but raised to a high pitch of steadfastness and assurance on these solid grounds, he was not discouraged by a consideration of the declining state of his own body, which had lost its natural vigor, he being at this time within one, at least, of an hundred years old; nor was he moved to the least diffidence by a consideration of the hopeless condition of *Sarah*, his wife, who had never been with child, and, being ninety years old, (*Gen.* xvii. 17.) was past her teeming age. (*Gen.* xviii. 11.)

20 He staggered not at the promise

20 Though these circumstances were a strong bar to all natural expectation of his having a son by her; yet, as God had promised it, he did not at all question, or hesitate about, or dispute in his own mind (as *discrepans*) against

gift of God thro' unbelief; but was strong in faith giving glory to God:

gainst it, through the power of unbelief, which is apt to raise objections, and to heighten improbabilities into absolute impossibilities: But upon God's making this promise, in the most peremptory and explicit manner to him, he *fell on his face* with adoring reverence, and *laughed*, not with diffidence and contempt, as Sarah did, for which she was reproved, (Gen. xviii. 10,—15.); but in an ecstasy of joy; and *said in his heart*, with believing wonder, *Shall a child be born to him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?* (Gen. xvii. 17.) his faith surmounted all difficulties arising from natural causes, and was unshaken in its reliance on the promise of God; thereby ascribing all glory to him, as infinitely gracious in making it, and faithful in performing it:

21 And being fully persuaded, that what he had promised he was able to perform,

21 He also, at the same time, was entirely satisfied in his own mind, yea, abundantly assured with the utmost confidence, (*παρρησιας*) that the Lord, who had made himself known to him, and introduced this promise with a declaration of his being *the Almighty God*, (Gen. xvii. 1.) was every way able to surmount all possible obstructions in bringing to pass what he had promised him, that the Saviour might in due season proceed from his loins.

22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

22 And therefore his faith going out in this manner unto, and terminating, or resting upon the Messiah, its great object, as set forth in the promise, in which *he saw Christ's day, and was glad*, (John viii. 96.) God graciously placed what he believed in to his account, that the righteousness of the promised seed might be his own, for all the intents and purposes of God's accepting him, as righteous in his sight, and dealing with him according to its worth and merit.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him,

23 Now this, which is recorded as so early spoken of *Abraham*, even under that obscure dispensation, in which he lived, was written, and is transmitted to us, not merely to set out the honour that was put upon him, and to let us know, in an historical manner, that he was justified, or accepted of God, by the imputation of the righteousness of faith. (*ver. 11.*)

24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him

24 But God had a much higher and more beneficial design herein: It was principally written for our learning, encouragement, and comfort, and as an example to us, to whom the same righteousness of faith shall be imputed for justification *, as it was to him, whether

we

N O T E.

* This application or improvement of all that had been said about *Abraham's* justification,

makes it evident to me, that his faith for this purpose, not only rested on the power of

him that raised up
Jesus our Lord
from the dead,

we be *Jews or Gentiles*; if, as his faith in the promise of a seed, in whom all nations should be blessed, relied on the power of God, who quickens the dead, for a performance of it, (*ver. 17.*); so we likewise believe with all our hearts in the same God, as he has now actually raised our only Lord and Saviour from the dead, that we might be effectually blessed with all spiritual blessings in him.

25 Who was
delivered for our
offences, and was
raised again for
our justification.

25 Who, that he might bring in an everlasting righteousness, (*Dan. ix. 24.*) and so might be a proper, suitable object of our faith, as we are guilty and obnoxious sinners, was in a judicial way and manner delivered up, according to the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God, (*Acts ii. 23.*) to the shameful and accursed death of the cross, as our surety, to suffer in our room and stead, for our provoking faults, as the procuring cause of his death, and to make atonement for them, as the final cause of his dying; and who, in testimony of God's having accepted his sacrifice, as a complete satisfaction to his law and justice, was raised again from the dead, and so acquitted and justified, as our public head and representative, to the end that we might be personally discharged from guilt and condemnation, and accepted to eternal life, by the imputation of his righteousness to us, in a way of believing *.

N O T E S.

of God for performing his promise, but likewise looked forward to the promised Messiah, and to what was to be done by him, for the justification both of *Abraham* himself, and of all that should believe in Christ; otherwise I cannot see how this could be an instance and sample of God's way of justifying those that should believe under the gospel state; or how there could be an analogy between *Abraham's* faith and theirs, with relation to that grand point, which is manifestly supposed in the apostle's method of reasoning about it: For I presume that none, even of those that make the *act* of faith itself our justifying righteousness, will say, that barely believing in the power of God for the performance of his promises, without a respect had therein to Christ, and to what he has done and suffered, is imputed to any of us, under the gospel-state for justification; and yet the apostle tells us, in this and the preceding and following verses, that what had been said about *Abraham's* faith being imputed to him for righteousness, was not written for his sake alone, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. This plainly sets forth Christ in his death and resurrection, as our object of justifying faith: But how can this be the same sort of faith,

with *Abraham's*, unless his also had a respect to Christ, and to what should be done by him, according to the notices he then had of these things? And we may well suppose, that he was led to some notions of them by the first promise of the seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head, and by the substitution of sacrifices in the room and stead of offenders, which he could not be wholly a stranger to, and to which he was still further led afterwards by that surprising dispensation which called him to offer up his only begotten son Isaac, but provided the ram in the thicket to be sacrificed in his stead: on which occasion God declared, that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, (*Gen. xxii. 1.—18.*) And, perhaps, he had all along some more explicit and clearer revelations of these things, than are recorded in the short history we have of him. See also the notes on *ver. 3.* and *chap. i. 16.*

* The beginning of the next chapter shows that the apostle had a regard to this way of believing, as that, in which we are made partakers of the justification, for which Christ was raised from the dead: For there, in connection with, and by way of inference from what is here said, he adds, *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,* (*chap. v. 1. &c.*)

RECOLLECTIONS.

What can we expect from the law but wrath in every reflection of our guilty minds, as transgressors of it ! But what a safe and glorious way doth the gospel open for justification, through the righteousness of Christ, received by faith ! This is the only righteousness by the imputation of which any sinner can be accepted of God to eternal life : This alone can secure the glory of his grace, and make sure the heavenly inheritance to all the spiritual seed of *Abraham*. This leaves no room for claiming it as a debt, on account of any thing we can do ; or for the least pretence of merit in ourselves, or of glorying before God, whatever our external privileges or specious appearances before men may be : But it leads us to expect all salvation merely as the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ, and to ascribe the honour of it entirely to him who justifies them that have been the most ungodly. With what humble confidence may believers rely on the righteousness of Christ for the remission of sins, and justification of life ; since he was delivered up to death for their offences, that he might make a complete atonement for them, and was raised again for their justification, through faith in him ! How well adjusted to the sinners wants, as well as to the glory of God, is this method of salvation ; and what a solid foundation is here for the most unshaken faith, against all the remonstrances of flesh and sense, and against all the obstructions, improbabilities, and discouragements in ourselves, that lye in its way ! We may fully depend upon the faithful promise of the Almighty God, who is able to perform it, and who even quickens the dead, and calls those things which be not, as though they were : We need not stagger at the promise of God through unbelief ; but may believe in hope against hope, and the more we do so, the greater glory we give to God.— O the blessedness of pardoned souls ! All their sins are freely and fully forgiven and covered, and none of them are charged to their condemnation ; but the Redeemer's righteousness is imputed to them for justification, without any consideration of their own works, as contributing towards it. And how wonderful is the grace that extends all these spiritual and eternal blessings to believing *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews* ! Righteousness is as much imputed to them as to *Abraham* himself ; and God has given them the ordinance of baptism, instead of circumcision, as a significant sign, and confirming seal of his covenant with them and their seed. But let us ever remember, that *Abraham's* blessing can be no more secured to any of us or ours by baptism, than it was to his natural seed by circumcision. It comes upon us as it did upon him and them, only through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And how thankful should we be for the holy oracles, since all that they record of *Abraham*, as well as of others, is for our sakes, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope ! As he was made the father of many nations ; so righteousness shall as certainly be imputed to every one of us who believe, as it was to him, that we, as his spiritual seed, may inherit the blessing with him.

C H A P. V.

The apostle having proved at large from the state of things before, and under the law, (chap. ii. and iii.) and even before God made his covenant with Abraham, (chap. iv.) that the justification of the Jews and Gentiles is merely by grace, through faith in Christ, proceeds to set forth its happy fruits and effects in both, 1,—11. And then carries his argument back as far as the fall of Adam itself, which involved all mankind in sin and death, and rendered every one alike incapable of being justified in any other way, than through Jesus Christ, 12,—14. And thereupon runs the parallel between the first and the second covenant-head, but shows that the grace of God, through the
righteous-

righteousness of Christ, is more efficacious to bring justification and salvation to all his spiritual seed, than Adam's sin had been to entail final condemnation and misery upon all his natural seed, 15,—21.

TEXT.

Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

PARAPHRASE.

WHETHER therefore we be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, yet being in the manner before described, (*chap. iii. and iv.*) brought into a state of justification, not for, but by means of faith in Christ, the dreadful breach is made up, which sin had opened between God and us; we are received into favour, and brought into a state of friendship with him, like *Abraham* himself: and have a peaceful serenity of soul toward God, (*ἡσυχία* *ἡσυχία*) through the atoning death and sufferings which have been followed with the most signal and open discharge of our Lord Jesus Christ, as our public head and surety, in whom we have a peculiar interest, that all the virtue of his death and resurrection, (*chap. iv. 25.*) may extend to us.

1 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

2 By and through whom, as our only mediator and peace-maker, all of us, who believe, have also had, under the conduct of the Spirit, a free introduction, (*προσάγωγον* *προσάγωγον*) and admission by faith into this excellent state of grace and of full acceptance with God, in which we stand on a sure foundation, as acquitted persons, with honour and safety, with humble confidence, holy fortitude and everlasting continuance: And, under a sense of this our happiness and security in Christ, we have matter of glorifying, incomparably better than that of *Jewish* boastings in circumcision and the law *, and do exceedingly rejoice and triumph, in an assured hope of enjoying that blessedness and glory which God himself is possessed of, has provided, and will bring us to, and in which he is exalted in the brightest displays of his own adorable perfections, counsels, and operations, and will put an inconceivable glory upon us.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that

3 And we not only rejoice with exceeding joy, in view and prospect of the immortal honours that we shall be hereafter advanced unto; but we at present triumph, even amidst all the afflictions of every kind, and all the persecutions and reproaches for the sake of Christ, that can befall us in this life; and we count them

our

NOTE.

* We rejoice (*καυχόμεθα*) is the same word that is rendered, ver. 3. *we glory*, and ver. 21. *we joy*; and it is the same word that was used to express the *Jews* boasting, or glorying in circumcision and in the law, *chap. ii. 23.* and *iii. 27.* and *iv. 2.* and so it is here used in opposition to all that sort of

glorifying, to shew that the only true ground of glorying lies, not in external privileges and legal performances, but in the blessings of the gospel, which the grace of God has brought in, through Jesus Christ, to every one that believes, whether he be *Jew* or *Gentile*.

that tribulation
worketh patience;

our glory, as being well satisfied from the word of God, the testimony of his Spirit, and our own observation, that these pressing trials of our faith, how disagreeable soever they be to flesh and sense, and how apt soever in their own nature to raise murmurings and impatience in carnal hearts, are wisely ordered, over-ruled, and blessed of God, to beget, improve, and confirm a calm submission to his will, a humble silence in bearing whatever he sees fit to lay upon us, and a possession of our own souls in peace, without fretting or repining at his hand, or angry resentments against the instruments of our troubles.

4 And pa-
tience, experience;
and experience,
hope;

4 And we find that patience, having its perfect work, operates unto, and brings in, a rich treasure of experimental acquaintance with the truth of our faith, and the uprightness of our own hearts, under all our trials; with the emptiness and vanity of this world; with the superior excellency of heavenly things; with God's wisdom, power, faithfulness, and care over us; and with the seasonable assistances of his grace to sanctify all dispensations to us, to support and comfort us under them, to carry us through them, and to make them all work together for our good; that we may be approved of God, weaned from this world, and raised in our affections to things above, and may be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and conducted safe, through many tribulations, to his heavenly kingdom: And all this happy experience still more and more encourages and confirms us in that hope of the glory of God, in which, as I said before, (*ver. 2.*) we greatly rejoice and triumph.

5 And hope
maketh not a-
shamed; because
the love of God
is shed abroad in
our hearts, by
the Holy Ghost
which is given
unto us.

5 And we are thoroughly satisfied, that this sort of hope is well grounded; that it may be cheerfully acquiesced in, and boldly avowed, without fear or shame, how much soever we may suffer from men for it; and that it will neither now, nor ever hereafter, turn to our confusion by its being disappointed; because it rests, not upon any merit in ourselves, but upon the free favour of God towards us, which, in its gracious and effectual operations, (*ἀγάπη*) is poured forth into, and abundantly fills our souls with its lovely manifestations and distinguishing fruits; and so enflames them with love to him again, by the special influence and agency of the Holy Spirit, whom God of his own good pleasure has given to dwell in our hearts, as a counsellor, comforter and sanctifier, and who, as such, bears witness with our spirits, that, notwithstanding all our own

unworthiness and provocations, and all the troubles we endure, God himself loves us.

6 For, when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

6 For, to expatiate a little upon this delightful theme, though, as has been shewn at large, with reference first to the *Gentiles*, (*chap. i. 18,—32.*) and then to the *Jews*, (*chap. ii. and iii. 1,—19.*) we were all sunk into the deepest abyss of sin, as well as misery: Yet even while we were in this deplorable condition, thro' the fall *, utterly insufficient to help or recover ourselves, and unable to resist or appease God's wrath, which we lay exposed to, or to do any thing acceptable to him: Yea, while we were not only impotent, but impious and profane, in our unmindfulness and contempt of God and religion, and of his government and glory; even then Christ, in the fulness of time, according to God's eternal appointment, and frequent predictions, types, and promises; and at the most seasonable time, which the Divine Wisdom had fixed upon, when things were come to their worst among both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and when our own need was greatest, and the glory of God's grace would be most of all displayed, with evidence and endearment, in raising up a Saviour: In this best and properest time of all others, the Lord Jesus Christ freely died in the room and stead of such impotent, contemptible, and ungodly creatures as we are. Astonishing instance of matchless love and grace, infinitely surpassing all that can be found in the most affectionate lovers that ever appeared among mankind!

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

7 For, were we to search all the world over, we should hardly meet with a single person, who would be willing to sacrifice his own life for the redemption of a harmless inoffensive man, or even of a man of integrity, faithfulness and honesty, that had been unjustly condemned to death: Yet it is possible, though doubtful, that here and there might be found one, who would have courage, gratitude, and friendship enough, in such circumstances, to deliver up himself to death in the room and stead of a public-spirited man, and a generous, compassionate, bountiful benefactor, that had been, and might still continue to be, an uncommon blessing to himself, family, friends, and country. And with what admiration and applause would such a brave, heroic,

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* Dr *Whist* shews, by several instances, that the word (*αδυναμία*) in the *Seventy*, here rendered. And though the word does not always carry this sense, yet it seems highly probable that the apostle *without strength*, answers to the Hebrew word (*בָּרָא*) which signifies to fall and stumble to our ruin, here

included this thought; since he mentions being *without strength*, as the common case of all mankind, whom he immediately after, in this and the eighth verse, calls *ungodly* and *sinners*; and since he was going to discourse at large on the fall of man, ver. 12, &c.

roic, and benevolent aft be every where thought and talked of!

8 But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

8 But the great and blessed God has displayed the glory and indearments of his love to us in a most surprising manner, infinitely transcendent to all this: He has set it off with the utmost advantage, to raise our faith and hope, admiration, love, and joy, and to make it out-shine all our instances whatsoever; in as much as, though we were so far from being either righteous or good, upright in ourselves, or profitable to God or man, that we were, by nature and practice, highly injurious to God and one another, and criminals that deserved to die, and were justly sentenced to death, and in whose destruction God would have glorified himself; yet even then, under this consideration of us, the eternal Father, in the greatness of his love, readily sent his only begotten and dearly beloved Son; and the Son freely came into our nature and world, and into our law place, to undergo the worst of deaths, as a ransom for us, that we might live for ever.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

9 Since therefore this free and abiding love of the unchangeable God has done such wonderful things for us, while we were in so hateful a condition under the power and guilt of sin; much more may we now depend upon it, with the most assured hope, that being already forgiven all trespasses, and intitled to eternal life, through faith in the blood of Christ, we shall certainly, for his sake, and on his account, be delivered from all vindictive resentments or punishment for sin, and from the wrath to come.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: much

10 For if while we were, not only *without strength, sinners and ungodly*, (ver. 6, 8.) but were likewise in a state of war with the great God; so that we, on one hand, were *alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works*, (Col. i. 25.) had revolted from him, and turned rebels and traitors against him; and bereupon the holy God, on the other hand, declared his wrath against us, in his law, in our own consciences, and in his righteous judgments. If in these obnoxious and detestable circumstances, he, in the exceeding greatness of his compassionate love, provided a ransom for us, to satisfy his justice and appease his wrath *, that he might be at peace

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* Reconciled to God by the death of his Son, in the former part of this verse, seems to relate to Christ's having worked out our reconciliation, or completed all, in a way of merit by his death, that was necessary to appease the wrath of God, and make way for

the riches of his grace to be communicated to us, in full consistence with the honour of all his perfections, and of his law and government, which the apostle had called, ver. 6. and 8. Christ's *dying for the ungodly*, and *dying for us*: But being reconciled, in the last clause

much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

peace with us, and act the part of a reconciled friend towards us, through the meritorious death of his only begotten Son; much more may we be humbly confident, upon the surest principles of reasoning, that being actually brought into a state of peace, and high friendship with God, through faith in the blood of Jesus, we shall be effectually delivered from all the miseries we were plunged into, or in danger of, by sin, and be advanced to complete salvation with eternal glory, by our risen and exalted Saviour, who ever lives to apply the virtue of his death, and to *make intercession for us.* (Chap. viii. 34.)

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

11 And we not only rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and in the advantages that result, even from our trials and afflictions*; but, upon the solid grounds but now mentioned, we rejoice with the highest satisfaction and delight in God himself, as our own God, and our chief good and glory: We rejoice in our covenant-relation to and assured interest in him, through our only Mediator, Lord and Saviour, who loved us, and gave himself for us; and by faith in whom, we have now, under gospel-discoveries, approved of, accepted, rested upon, and taken comfort in, the great and only proper reconciliation, (*την καταλλαξιν*) which was typified by the legal sacrifices, and which he has made for us by his death, (*ver. 10.*) that we, *Gentile* as well as *Jewish* believers, may be freed from condemnation on its account, and may be dealt with in this world, and for ever, according to its infinite worth and merit.

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by

12 Since therefore, under the gospel-state, *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, are in fact reconciled by the death of Christ, and have received the atonement by faith in him; (*ver. 10, 11.*); and since, as has been shewn at large, persons of all nations were on a level, even under the law, and before it, yea, before the covenant made with *Abraham*, as to their guiltiness before God, and their need of the gospel way of justification by his grace thro' Jesus Christ; let us now, in further proof of this important point, go back as far as the original apostacy, in

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clause of the verse, seems to relate to the reconciliation's taking effect upon us; or to our being brought into a state of actual reconciliation and peace with God, and justification in his sight, through faith in Christ's blood, which the apostle had spoken of, (*ver. 9.* and which in the verse after this (*ver. 11.*) he calls our *receiving the atonement.*

* *Not only so*, manifestly refers back to *ver. 2, 3.* where the apostle had said, *We re-*

joice in hope of the glory of God; and not only so, but we glory in tribulation also. &c.' And here, having in the intermediate verses shewn, how even their afflictions and trials furnished them with occasions of glorying, he resumes, and carries on his thoughts in a beautiful gradation to a further instance of their glorying in God himself, as their reconciled God, and as the sum of all their happiness, through Jesus Christ.

by sin; and so death passed upon all

in which the *Jews* were, without doubt, equally involved with the *Gentiles*: For as by the first man *Adam*, who was the father of us all, and with whom the covenant was made in innocency for himself and his posterity, sin, that worst of evils *, even the first sin committed by him, broke in upon, and was propagated from him, to all the human inhabitants of this world, and became the source of all the iniquity that has ever since been found among mankind; and as a sentence, together with the beginning of death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal †, inclusive of all the miseries of this life, and of

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* It is not said that *sin*, but *sin*, with an emphasis in the singular number, (*ἡ ἁμαρτία*) entered into the world, to intimate that it was not any after-acts of *Adam's* sinning, but his first sin, while he stood in his public capacity, that invaded all his offspring: And as this is said to be the sin of one man, though the serpent and *Eve* sinned before him, it shews that he was the covenant-head of all mankind, and that therefore his sin, and not theirs, is charged upon them; and for the same reason, as soon as *Adam's* sin had entered, then, and not before, the sentence of death was pronounced, and that not upon the serpent, or *Eve*, but only upon the man, to whom it was said, *Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*, Gen. iii. 19.

† The death which the apostle says passed upon all men, by one man's sin, is manifestly the same with that which the one man himself was exposed to by his sin, according to God's threatening, that in the day he should eat of the forbidden fruit he should surely die, (Gen. ii. 17.) And what was the death therein threatened? but a deprivation of the holy and happy life of soul and body, in the image and favour of God, and in communion with him, which he enjoyed, and should otherwise have been confirmed in with rich advantage for ever: Accordingly upon *Adam's* sin he was liable, not only to diseases and death of the body, but also to inward dread and horror of soul, under a sense of divine wrath, as appeared in his being afraid, and seeking to hide himself from the presence of the Lord; which *Eve*, his wife, also did, (Gen. iii. 8, 10.) he being a covenant head and representative to her, as well as to the posterity that should proceed from them both: And it is observable, that though her sin was before his; yet she had no horrors of conscience for it, till after he had sinned; and so entailed the covenant curse, which God had threatened to inflict, in case he should eat of the forbidden fruit, Gen. ii. 17.; and this threatening was formally delivered only to *Adam*, before *Eve* was brought forth, she being then as much naturally and

federally in him, as his offspring were. And as the death of the body by no means infers an extinction of the soul, and divine revelation assures us, that the soul survives the body; it seems necessarily to follow from hence, that this death extends, not merely to a separation of soul and body, but likewise to all the uneasiness and distress that flow from the disorderly, ungovernable, and unsatisfied principles, inclinations, and appetites, that were introduced by sin; from the loss of the image and favour of God, and of communion with him; and from a sense of guilt, and of divine displeasure on that account, with dismal despair of being ever recovered to a state of happiness again: Nor could such recovery have been expected, to prevent this death's being eternal, unless God himself, in the abundance of his own mercy, were to find out a way of relief; which, blessed be his name, he has done by our Lord Jesus Christ, who was not legally in *Adam*, as a covenant head, because *Adam* ceased to be so immediately upon his first sin, and Christ was not promised till after the fall, nor did descend from him in the ordinary way of generation. And the reason why death, in these its most dreadful forms; as well as the miseries and mortality of the present life, was not expressed in the sentence passed upon *Adam* soon after the fall, (Gen. iii. 17.—19.) seems to be; because, just before God pronounced that sentence, he had graciously promised, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, (Gen. iii. 15.); and thereby intimated, that this worst part of the threatened death should not be executed upon those who should believe in the promised Saviour; but that he should take it away from them, by his own sufferings and death in their room and stead. Accordingly our apostle having pleaded for the justification of believing *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, by the free grace of God through Jesus Christ, from a consideration of the state of things under the law, chap. iii. and even before the *Abrahamic* covenant, chap. iv. he here carries his argument back to the com-

all men, for that all of that which is to come, made its way into the world by his first sin, and so death, in all its hideous forms, passed to the whole human race through him, in whom they

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men condition of both these sorts of people, which included all mankind, ever since the fall of Adam, and in which every one of the human race were alike involved: And he slides into this part of his design in a way of inference from what he had said, in the immediately preceding verses, about reconciliation and atonement, as already made by Christ, and received by them that believe, that they might be saved from wrath thro' him. All this, together with the whole strain of the apostle's subsequent reasoning on this head, is to me a strong proof, that the death here spoken of, as coming upon the whole world of mankind, by the sin of the first man, is not to be confined, as some would fain have it, to *temporal afflictions and mortality* of the body: For this notion of death falls vastly short, not only of what Adam himself may well be supposed to have understood and was subjected to, by the original threatening, Gen. ii. 17. compared with chap. iii. 8, 10. but likewise of the manifest design of the apostle's argument, all along in this epistle, relating to the guilty state of the *Jews and Gentiles*, which made a better righteousness than their own, necessary for their justification to eternal life. For in the former part of the epistle, he had been insisting on a state of sin, in which *the whole world is become guilty before God*, (chap. iii. 19.) and which exposed them to miseries beyond a temporal death, telling us that *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*, (chap. i. 18.); that *impenitent sinners treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God*, (chap. ii. 5.); and that *as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ*, (ver. 12, 16.) which relates to what is consequent to temporal death, even to the indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, that God will render to them who obey not the truth, in opposition to the eternal life which he will give to others, (ver. 7.—10.) Accordingly the blessings spoken of, as brought in by Christ, for persons that were in these guilty and miserable circumstances, are *redemption, forgiveness of sins, and justification through the righteousness of God*, (chap. iii. 22.—25.) *peace and reconciliation with God by the death of his Son, and salvation through him*, (chap. v. 1.—10.) And all along in the latter part of this chapter, the apostle opposes *righteousness, justification, and life*, as brought in by Christ

to all his spiritual seed, to *sin, condemnation, and death*, as brought in by Adam, to all his natural offspring; and speaks of the same sort of death that came upon Adam himself, which, as has been shewn, was more than bare mortality; and it is opposed to that *eternal life to which grace reigns through righteousness, by Jesus Christ our Lord*, (ver. 21.) And then, in the following parts of this epistle, he goes on to speak of death under such a notion as carries our thoughts beyond a mere privation of this mortal life; as particularly when he says, (chap. viii. 6, 13.) *To be carnally minded is death; and if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*. Surely by these passages he meant more than that to be carnally minded issues in temporal death as its punishment; and that if we live after the flesh, we shall die corporally; for this must be our case, whether we be carnally minded, and live after the flesh, or not. But, in opposition to the death there mentioned, he speaks of a *life*, that consists in, and results from our being *spiritually minded*, which cannot but relate to a spiritual and eternal life.

Now taking things in this light, according to the plain and most natural sense of the apostle's expressions, his way of reasoning is exceeding clear and strong; and all his discourse, in this and the former, as well as latter part of the epistle, is nervous and closely connected, beautiful and harmonious, to shew what need every one of the human race, *Jews and Gentiles*, have of being justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, and by faith in him. But how flat and weak, inconclusive, incoherent, and unsuitable to his own principal view, must we make the apostle's argument, in this part of it! if we suppose that, when he carries it back to the common state of mankind, by reason of Adam's sin, he entirely drops the thought of *wrath and misery* relating to another world, to which they were exposed, as he had been representing it all along before, under the law, and prior to the covenant made with Abraham; and that he now only considers them, as subjected to *temporal afflictions and death*, under, and by means of the fall; as if their being obnoxious to these, were all the calamity that they were exposed to by it; and their justification by Jesus Christ, through faith in him, were only necessary, in the present view of the argument, on account of their being brought into a state of *affliction and mortality* by the sin of their first parent, and *what*, though believers themselves are still as liable to this sort of death as any other men.

all have sinned. they all sinned, as in their public head and representative *, in whose loins they likewise were; insomuch that they, on this account, are by legal estimation deemed sinners in him, his offence being imputed to, and punished in them. Now as this is the case of one and all in *Adam*, and shews that the *Jew* is as much under guilt, and has as much need of the gospel-salvation as the *Gentile*; so, as we shall see anon, (ver. 18, 19.) † spiritual benefits, opposite to all this ruin by the first man, are brought in by *Jesus Christ*, as a public head of recovery to one as well as another of these sorts of people, through faith in him.

13 For until
the

13 And that the death and miseries, which are brought upon all mankind, came in by *Adam's* sin, is evident: For sin ‡, with the penalty of calamities and death

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* *Adam's* posterity being in his loins, and his sin being imputed to them, may be illustrated by *Levi's* being in *Abraham's* loins, (Heb. vii. 9, 10.) and by the law of nations, which so far imputes the treason of a rebellious nobleman to his children, as to bring an attainder upon their blood, and a forfeiture of the inheritance, privilege, and honours, which would otherwise have descended to them. And as the words (ἐφ' ᾧ) here used, and rendered for *that*, are well known to signify in whom; and this sense is favoured by the preceding verb, (ἀδικεῖς) which speaks of a thing already done before we were born, and signifies *passed through*, and so intimates that death had passed through *Adam* (εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους) to all men; and as it is expressly said, 1 Cor. xv. 22. that (ἐν τῷ Ἀδᾶμ) in *Adam* all die; and this best agrees with the notion of his being a public head, which he is evidently represented to be throughout this discourse, I have therefore given that sense of these words; and yet not to the exclusion of the other, which our translation suggests, by rendering them for *that*, or in so much that they, by construction of law, are accounted to have sinned in him. But which ever way they are rendered, it is obvious that *all have sinned*, is mentioned as the reason of *death's* having passed upon all men; and in the former part of the verse, and all along in the following context, *sin* and *death* are plainly distinguished, one from the other, as cause and effect: It is therefore surprising that any should understand *all have sinned* in this verse, to signify, by a metonymy of the cause for the effect, all are so far sufferers, as to become mortal and subject to death: For if this were supposed to be the sense of these terms in ever so many other places, it seems impossible that it should be so in *this*, where *sin* is so expressly mentioned in distinction from, and as the reason or procuring cause of this effect.

† The reddition, or second part of the comparison between *Adam* and *Christ*, is put off, by a parenthesis, to ver. 18, 19. But, to relieve the mind, and prevent losing sight of it, till we get through the intermediate verses, I have suggested the thought here, which will be more enlarged upon there, and seems to be summarily included in ver. 14. where *Adam* is spoken of, in his public representative capacity, as the figure of him that was to come.

‡ By *sin's* being in the world, seems to be meant (as Mr *Lake* observes) not merely that *sin* existed, but that it also had an entail of death upon it, as its proper punishment by virtue of some law, before the law of *Moses* was given to *Israel*, with an express declaration, that this should be its wages: For, in the preceding verse, the apostle had spoken of *sin's* entering into the world, and death by *sin*; and here he tells us, that *sin* is not imputed, or charged in such a manner, as to subject any one to a penalty for it, where there is no law to bind the transgressor over to such penalty; and in the next verse (see the note there) he speaks of the death of infants as not to be accounted for, but upon the foot of their being under the sanction of some law that required it. But what law could this be, unless that which was given to *Adam*? Since there was no other law before *Moses's* time, that expressly made death the punishment of transgressing it, except that against murder after the flood, (Gen. ix. 6.) which infants could not transgress, and which, comparatively speaking, was executed but upon very few of mankind. And what *sin* can the apostle mean, when he says it was in the world before the law, but that original *sin*, which came upon, or was imputed to all mankind? Since this is the *sin*, which, as he had said in the foregoing verse, entered into the world; and since in the next verse he speaks of infants suffering

the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

death annexed to it, was always in the world, even original sin, ever since the fall of man, before there was any such thing as that revelation of the law which was given by *Moses*. But this supposes that there was some law in being, which sin was the transgression of, and by virtue of which, sin was so universally charged upon all mankind, as to subject them to the sentence and penalty of death; otherwise there would, strictly speaking, have been no sin at all, much less any room for such imputation and punishment of it. (*Chap. iv. 15.*)

14 Nevertheless, it is certain that, for about two thousand five hundred years, which intervened between *Adam's* fall and the delivery of the law by *Moses*, death, with all its dreadful and unknown attendants, exercised a terrible and universal dominion, not only over grown persons, that sinned actually, as *Adam* did, but even over infants themselves; witness those of the old world, that perished in the deluge, and those that were cut off in the tremendous destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomerrah*, as well as all the little children that were sick, convulsed, and tortured, and then died, in every generation, though none of them could have committed any actual sin * to deserve such punishment as *Adam* had done; who in his public capacity was, by the ordination of God, an eminent type, (*τύπος*) pattern, and figurative

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the sad effects of this sin, though they were never guilty of personal transgression of any law whatever.

* As the apostle had neither expressly mentioned what *Adam's* sin was, nor whether it were a transgression of a *positive*, or *moral* command; and as *infants* certainly died, as well as others, and all the natural descendants of the first man are spoken of in the following context, as subjected to death by his act of disobedience, it appears to me to be much more easy and natural, and more directly to the apostle's purpose, to understand by the *similitude of Adam's transgression*, a *similitude* as to his *personally* and *actually* sinning, than as to his transgressing a *positive* precept, in eating the forbidden fruit. And this particle, *καὶ* (*and*) over them that had not sinned after the *similitude of Adam's* transgression, is *distinctive* of them from others that had so sinned, as all his adult offspring had, like him, by actual transgression; so that death reigned over them that had no other than original sin, as well as over those that had also personally sinned; and this makes out the apostle's argument in its utmost extent and force, that death entered into the world by the sin of one man; and so passed upon all men, for that they all have sinned in him. *Vid. par. in loc.* It likewise

appears from the whole drift of the apostle's argument, that children, as the descendants of a fallen head, were sentenced, together with their representative, to the same sort of death with him; and I cannot account for the deplorable agonies and early deaths of such an innumerable multitude of them, upon any other foundation, than that of their being under the law-charge of their representative's sin. But how far the righteousness of the second *Adam* may extend to them that die in infancy, to prevent an execution of the curse in the future miseries of another world, is not for us to determine; we may quietly leave them in the hands of a merciful God, who we are sure can do them no wrong: And believing parents may with great satisfaction hope well concerning the eternal happiness of their dying infants; since they never lived to call off God's gracious covenant, into which he has taken believers and their seed, under that better head in whose all nations are blessed. But then it should be remembered, that infants needing Christ's redemption, supposes them to have been under a charge of guilt, otherwise there would have been no occasion for any redemption of them: and if they have not the benefit of redemption in this world, they have none at all, since they are afflicted and die in this.

son, who is the figure of him that was to come.

figurative representation of something that was to bear a correspondence to him, in Jesus Christ, who, in due time, was to descend from his loins in an extraordinary manner, and who *, like the first *Adam*, was to come into the world, as a covenant head and representative, for conveying life and righteousness.

15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead; much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one

15 But though *Adam*, in his public character, was such a remarkable type of Christ; yet we are not to suppose that there is no difference in the parallel between them; so that the benefit which comes to *Jew* and *Gentile*, as the gratuitous undeserved gift of divine grace, through the righteousness of Christ, is no more than what barely answers to the mischievous effects, that were deserved by, and inflicted for, the high provocation which the first man was guilty of: It indeed doth this: but this is not all; it is still more abundantly efficacious: For, as to the *causes* of the different effects produced by them severally, if it be true, as has been shewn, that through the fall (*ταπεινωμα*) of one who was merely a man, a sentence of death has passed, and dreadful destruction is, by the righteous dispensation of God, brought upon the whole multitude of his natural posterity, as the wages of his sin; much more may we conclude, from a consideration of God's superior delight in mercy, and of the incomparably greater excellence and dignity of the second federal head, who is *the Lord from heaven*, (1 Cor. xv. 47.) and so is God as well as man, that the exceeding riches of divine love and favour toward the lost and ruined race †, and the free gift of opposite blessings, which proceed entirely from God's

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* That *Adam's* being the type or figure of him that was to come, related to the public capacity which both sustained, and to the conveyances that were made by the usings of both to their respective seeds, as comprehended in, and placed under them severally, appears from the whole tenor of the following discourse, and from the apostle's speaking of *Adam*, rather than of him and *Eve*, though she was first in the transgression, as the figure of Christ, in what he was going to say concerning the effects that proceeded from one and the other. Accordingly the same apostle tells us, (1 Cor. xv. 22, 47.) that as in *Adam* all die, even so in Christ all, that are to be raised to eternal happiness, shall be made alive; and he there speaks of *Adam* and Christ, as the first and second man; as if no other man had lived in the world between them; and, all along in that chapter, he sets out the resemblance of their public character and influence, though to contrary effects, on those that stand under them respectively. See for a further account of this covenant-constitution, and of

the equity of it, serm. on faith and practice, preached at Beccles-street.

† The grace by God signifies his free favour; and the gift of grace, the benefit which is freely bestowed on many, as the fruit of mere favour. And it may be allowed that the apostle uses the term *many* in this verse, and in ver. 19. and the term *all men* in ver. 18. promiscuously. But as both these terms are often used in scripture with a greater or more restrained latitude, according to the nature of the subject and argument, (see the notes on Job. i. 7, 29. and 2 Cor. v. 17.) So they cannot be taken in the same extent, when they are applied in these verses to the *all*, and the *many* of the first and second *Adam*. For who can pronounce it, as true in fact, that the free gift comes upon every individual of mankind unto justification of life, as in ver. 18. or that they all, without exception, whether heathens, idolaters, and such as never heard of Christ, or the most notoriously infamous, and finally impenitent sinners, are, or shall be made or continued righteous, as in ver. 19.

one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

own mere grace, through this second glorious man, even Jesus Christ, has exceeded in its abundant virtue and power towards all his spiritual seed, and in giving them greater happiness than they lost by the fall, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*, whose nature he assumed, that he might be a head of recovery to them, and who are, absolutely speaking, a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, (Rev. vii. 9.)

16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.

16 And, as to the extent of the effects of these two heads, though not with respect to the number of persons that come under them, yet with respect to efficacious influence, there is this further happy difference, which redounds to the honour of the second head, that the free gift of God's grace, through Jesus Christ, is not barely a remedy answerable to the mischief of the first Adam's sin: No, it is much more than this: For the guilt and judicial sentence that passed upon all mankind to their condemnation †, was on account of one sin, which he committed, who, though a single person, represented all his posterity: But the free gift of God's grace, thro' the obedience and righteousness of Christ, is effectual, not only for the remission of that one sin, but also of innumerable other personal transgressions, whereby fallen men have still more and more revolted from God, and highly offended him; it is effectual unto their complete

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† *Condemnation* (κατακρισις) is the same word that is used for *law-condemnation* to eternal death, Rom. viii. 1. which is the only place besides, where it is found in all the New Testament. And as (κριμα) the judgement properly signifies, not an act of mere sovereignty, nor the natural consequence of sin, but a legal sentence on its account; this supposes a law-charge of guilt, and such a concern in the sin, as makes it, in a moral sense, some way ours; otherwise I cannot see how the penal sentence could be judicially and righteously pronounced and executed in any part of it, upon all Adam's seed; and therefore I have taken into the construction the idea of guilt, as well as of a law-sentence: And as judgement by one (ἐξ ἑνός) here, and (ἐξ ἑνὸς) in the next verse, may signify by one sin, as well as by one man, I have included both these senses; especially since our sin of Adam is all along spoken of in the singular number, as the original cause of all the miseries that came upon his posterity: And the plain reason of this is, because the covenant being broken by his first sin, he thereupon ceased to be a public head; and so his after-sins were not imputed to his offspring, any more than the sins of their immediate parents. Though

some are apt to think too lightly, and even make a jest of this sin of Adam, and to cavil at the judicial entail of death and condemnation upon his posterity, only for his eating an apple, as they affect indelicately to express it: Yet it was really a high aggravation, instead of an abatement of his guilt, that for so small a thing as eating an apple, which he had no occasion for, and might easily have obtained from, he would abuse the noble liberty, and moral as well as natural powers, God had given him; would be dissatisfied with his present holy and happy state; would give credit to the devil rather than to God, and so aspire after an independency on him; would voluntarily rebel against, and ungratefully fly in the face of the sovereignty and authority, wisdom and goodness of his Maker, who clearly knew had himself immediately and expressly forbid his eating of this fruit, and to this only, under the severest penalties, as the easiest test of his obedience that can be imagined. But it would carry me beyond the nature of my present work to go into a particular detail of the great heinousness and numerous aggravations of this complicated sin; which, see sermon x. on faith and practice, in Berry-street.

plete discharge from all their actual, as well as original guilt, and unto their entire freedom from all condemnation, and full acceptance with God, as righteous, through faith in this great Head and Redeemer.

17 For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

17 And this shews the *different nature* of the effects and consequences of the acts of these two public heads, which gives us the most advantageous view of Christ, and of the grace of God in him: For if by the provoking fall (*το παραπτώματι*) of one man, the common father and head of the whole human race, death, with all its terrible attendants and consequences, in this legal manner, invaded, subdued, and exercised dominion over them, by the malignant influence which is derived to them from that one man, and from his first sin; much more may we be satisfied, from God's rejoicing to exercise loving kindness in the earth, that all those, who by faith embrace, close with, and are made partakers of the rich abundance of his favour and love through Jesus Christ; and who, sensible of their own unworthiness, accept the free gift of his perfect, everlasting, and infinitely meritorious righteousness, unto justification of life, (*ver. 18. see the note on chap. i. 17.*) together with all the overflowing and superabundant blessings that are purchased by it; much more, I say, may we be assured, that all these shall have a sacred freedom from the guilt and tyranny of sin, and a noble dominion over it, in a spiritual life of grace here; and shall triumph over death and all its terrors, together with every other enemy, in an everlasting life of blessedness and glory hereafter; and this they shall do by one, who alone is the second covenant-head, even Jesus Christ, the Saviour of lost sinners.

18 Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation:

18 Therefore *, to return to what has been already suggested about the entrance of sin into the world, (*ver. 12.*) and Adam's being the figure of him that was to come, (*ver. 14.*) as by the fall (*ἡ ἑνὸς παραπτώματος*) of one man, Adam, whereby the great and holy God was highly offended, sin broke in upon the whole human race, to bring them under a sentence of law-condemnation,

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* The apostle having said, *ver. 12.* by way of inference from his foregoing discourse, *Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;* and having in the five following verses proved this point, and represented Adam as a type of Christ in his public capacity, and shewn how far the benefit of the second covenant head exceeds, or stretches beyond the sad effects of

the first; He, in this verse, resumes the first branch of the comparison, which was there laid down; and adds the other branch of it, to shew the similitude there is between these two heads, with respect to the manner of conveying their different effects; and to go on to complete the argument which he had left in perfect before. See the third note on *ver. 12.*

nation: even so by the *free gift* of one, the *free gift* of grace unto all men unto justification of life.

tion *, which exposed them to all the miseries included in the term *death*, and made them *children of wrath*, by *nature*, one as well as another, (*Eph. ii. 3.*) in as much as in Adam all died, (*1 Cor. xv. 22.*); even so, just in the same manner of conveyance from a public head, by the infinitely perfect and worthy obedience and sufferings of one, namely Jesus Christ, which together make up the complete righteousness that is demanded by the broken law, in order to the justification of a sinner, the free gift of God's grace, in making over this righteousness, with all the blessings procured by it, effectually extends to all Christ's spiritual seed, in and through him, (see the note on *ver. 15.*) even to all men, of what nation soever, that by faith *receive the abundant grace, and the gift of righteousness* before mentioned, (*ver. 17.*) unto their entire discharge from guilt and condemnation, and their full acceptance with God to eternal life: And so both these dispensations stand on a legal foot, which places the acts, as well as sufferings, of representatives, to those that were one in law with them.

19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedi-

19 For † as, on one hand, by the imputation of one man's act of aggravated disobedience to God's command in eating the forbidden fruit, vast multitudes, even all his natural descendents, were subjected to a law-charge of guilt, and so (*καρτολοι κατεσθῆναι*) were judicially constituted sinners, and condemned as such, and thereby brought under the punishment of a depraved nature, destitute of righteousness, and prone to all sin; they being involved with their covenant-head and representative in his crime ‡: So, on the contrary, by the im-

putation

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* The words, *judgment came*, are not in the original, as the *English* reader may see by their being put in different characters. And considering that the apostle here resumes the argument, begun at *ver. 12.* it seems to me, that what is lacking in this part of the sentence, might be more justly and properly filled up, by supplying from that verse, *Sin entered*, (*ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰσῆλθεν*) than by taking the supplement, *judgment came*, from *ver. 16.* For the 16th verse stands in the parenthesis which lies between the main argument, and only *judgment*; (*κρίμα*) and not *judgment came*, is to be found even there. But the *free gift*, in the latter part of this 18th verse, may more naturally be supplied from *ver. 16.* because what the apostle had there been saying, about the benefit brought in by Christ, gave a fit occasion for his returning to this second member of the comparison between the two public heads.

† The apostle's introducing this verse with

the casual particle *for*, shews that he is here proving what he said in the foregoing verse: which he doth by setting before us the legal ground of that condemnation which is the effect of the first Adam's sin, and of that justification, which is the effect of the righteousness of Christ; that this lies in the imputation of one's sin, and of the other's righteousness, to all that are included in each of those covenant heads or representatives respectively. But to make the expressions in both these verses of one and the same signification, as they do, who by *made sinners*, here, understand subjected to death by the sentence of God, and by *judgment to condemnation*, *ver. 16.* under the sentence of condemnation, is to expose the apostle's reasoning to the utmost contempt; as if he would prove *idem per idem*, the same thing by itself, or by only repeating the very same idea in other words.

‡ *Made sinners* and *made righteous*, most im-

obedience of one
shall many be
made righteous.

putation of the perfect and glorious active *, as well as passive obedience, of one eminent single person, to God and his law, namely of Christ alone, shall great multitudes, even all his spiritual seed, be judicially constituted righteous, (*δικαιοι κατασκευασται*) and be justified as such, through faith in him, (*chap. iii. 22.*) and shall be brought under a holy influence to sanctify their nature, in virtue of his righteousness imputed to them; they being comprehended in this second covenant-head, who went through this obedience unto death, as their representative, in their room and stead.

20 Moreover,
the law entered
that the offence
might abound:
But

20 And (*2^d*) in process of time, long after the entrance of sin and death, (*ver. 12.*) the *Mosaic* law, including its moral parts, was introduced by special revelation among the *Israelites*; not that they might be justified by it, but that, by its discovering how far they fell short of its holy requirements, and how their native corruption was rather irritated than suppressed, by the strict holiness of its precepts, and the severity of its curse, they might see that the fall (*το παραπτωμα*) of their first father and covenant-head had, by its malignant effects, made the power of sin to abound in them †; and might

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immediately relate to the condemnation and justification spoken of, *ver. 16, 18.* and more remotely to *depravity* and *holiness*, as the effects and consequences of the sin and righteousness that are imputed for condemnation and justification: one of which reigned unto death; and through the other of which grace reigns unto eternal life, as is observed in the winding up of the whole argument, *ver. 21.* But in whatever sense we understand our being made sinners, and made righteous, the apostle here speaks of it as brought to pass, not by any personal acts of our own, but by the disobedience of Adam, and the obedience of Christ. This is too plain to be denied; and therefore some, to serve an hypothesis, would have it, that *made sinners* signifies only *made mortal*, or *subjected to death*, by the sentence of God: But though the word *sinners* (*μααργ-ηνοι*) occurs near fifty times in the New Testament, I cannot find that it is ever once used in this sense; and the apostle, at the head of his argument in this chapter, *ver. 12.* evidently distinguishes sin from death, *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, &c.* Sin is the cause and death the effect; and therefore *sinners* and *mortal* cannot be meant one and the same thing, especially in a discourse where sin and death had been so accurately distinguished at the very beginning of it. See the second note on *ver. 12.* And how absurd is it to suppose, with a late author, that impatient sinners of mankind

shall be judicially constituted righteous, barely by being raised to life again? Since their resurrection will be to damnation, shame, and everlasting contempt, in opposition to a resurrection to everlasting life. *Dan. xii. 2.* and *John v. 29.*

* As the apostle undoubtedly meant, that by Adam's act of disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit, many were made sinners: So the beauty of the antithesis would, in great measure, be lost, if we were not to suppose that he included the *active*, as well as passive obedience of Christ, both of which were indeed one entire course of obedience unto death, (*Phil. ii. 8.*) as that, by which many shall be made righteous. And it is observable, that being made or constituted sinners, is spoken of as what all mankind already were, by the disobedience of Adam: But being made or constituted righteous, by the obedience of Christ, is spoken of as a future benefit, which shall take place upon all those that through faith come under him as their head of influence, as well as of representation.

† God's design in giving the law was, not to promote the increase of sin, or to encourage the sinner's committing it; but to demonstrate the horrible evil of sin in a clear and striking light; and to lay the conscience under an afflicting conviction of it, and that, in subservience to his further design of displaying, recommending, and setting off his grace

but where sin
abounded, grace
did much more
abound:

might be the more deeply impressed with a sense of the heinousness and provocation of that first sin, and of all their own personal transgressions, which, in consequence of it, and under its influence, they had wilfully and injuriously committed, and by which they had practically approved of, and consented to, *Adam's* act of disobedience. But so surprizing and endearing are the glorious riches of divine grace, which takes its motives and arguments from itself, and proceeds directly contrary to the ill deserts of the creature, that among those, in whom sin, with all its aggravations, had thus prevailed, and to whom, in every view, it had thus appeared to be abominable, and head-strong, and deserving of condemnation and death, the free, matchless and sovereign love and favour of God, took an advantage, in the most illustrious, extensive, and super-abounding manner, to exert and display itself in pardoning, not only that first sin, but all their multiplied actual transgressions, (*ver. 16.*) and in advancing them to higher happiness than they lost by the fall.

21 That as sin
hath reigned unto
death, even so
might grace reign
through righte-
ousness unto eter-
nal

21 And God, in his infinite wisdom, has taken this method to set off the riches and the freeness of his self-moving goodness and mercy, (*na*) to the end that, as sin ^a, through the offence of the first covenant-head, (*ver. 17.*) had in a tyrannical manner usurped the throne, exercised its cruel dominion, and gathered strength, still more and more, till it had quite mastered the whole world, and bore down all before it, unto the rendering of *Jews*, as well as *Gentiles*, dead in sin, and obnoxious, not only to temporal, but eternal death, in opposition to eternal life, (*see the note on ver. 12.*) and unto its triumphing in their destruction, and in death, (*εἰς θάνατον*) as in its proper territories: Even so, on the contrary, the riches of God's free grace might set up its throne on the ruins of sin, and might triumph, like a glorious and superior sovereign, in swaying its powerful, mild, and holy scepter, in pardoning and subduing all iniquity, and in spreading abroad the blessings of salvation, through the perfect and infinitely excellent

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grace in Christ, with the greater advantage, that the sinner might see his absolute need of it, and might be brought the more gladly and heartily to embrace it, and rejoice in it. What the apostle says, chap. vii. 7.—10. casts a good light upon this passage.

* Here sin and grace are, by a noble vigorous *prosopopœia*, said to reign, as if they were persons that exercised sovereign dominion; as *death* also was represented, *ver. 14, 17.*

and as sin and righteousness are, under the like figure, in the following chapter, from the 12th to the 20th verse. And grace reigning through righteousness, must relate to the righteousness of Christ, and not to any righteousness of our own: Otherwise there would be no room for the objection that follows, chap. vi. 1. *Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?*

nal life, by Jesus
Christ our Lord.

cellent righteousness, even the obedience and sufferings of another covenant-head, (*ver.* 18, 19.) unto a recovery to a spiritual life of communion with God, and devotedness to him here, and unto a resurrection to, and an inheritance of everlasting life, in a complete enjoyment of him hereafter, by the special and effectual mediation of Jesus, the new covenant head and surety; in whom all of us that believe, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, have a peculiar interest, as our Lord and King, who will save us.

RECOLLECTIONS.

What a happy state is the believer brought into by the gospel! He is justified through faith in the blood of Christ, and shall be saved from wrath through him, by whom he has received the atonement: He has peace and reconciliation with God, and free access into a state of grace, in which he stands with humble boldness, and everlasting continuance; and may glory even in tribulations, as they work patience, experience, and a solid well-grounded hope, which shall never make him ashamed, because a sense of divine love is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit, which is given to him: And he may now joy in God, as his own God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoice in an assured hope of his glory; since being already reconciled to God, and justified by the blood of a crucified Christ, he shall most certainly be saved from the wrath to come through him. O how endearing, matchless, and undeserved is the love of God! Though scarce a man can be found, that would lay down his life for the most excellent and generous friend; yet so amazing is the love of God, that he sent his own Son, who freely came, in due season, to undergo the worst of deaths for sinners, and to purchase all these best of blessings for them, even while they were considered as impotent, enemies, and ungodly. Alas! How were all mankind plunged into sin, condemnation, and death, by the apostacy of their first covenant-head, which involved infants in guilt and ruin, who suffer and die, as well as all the rest of his natural offspring! But blessed be God for the remedy provided in the *second Adam*, of which the *first* was a type or figure, with regard to the public capacity, in which they both, by covenant-constitution, represent all their respective seeds: By this recovering head, imputed righteousness is brought in, to take off imputed sin: Through him there is salvation for dying infants, on the foot of a new covenant, and for all adult persons that believe in him; all his spiritual seed, of what age or nation soever, shall be discharged from original guilt and condemnation, and shall be made righteous and justified unto eternal life. And, O how much greater and more effectual, are the blessings brought in by Jesus Christ, the second covenant-head, to all that hold under him, than the loss and ruin, that are entailed by the first covenant-head, on all that stand under him! These may, and shall be retrieved, with respect to multitudes of the fallen race, and *that* with a rich over-plus, and without a revocation: Their innumerable personal transgressions, as well as original sin, are forgiven; and they are intitled to an everlasting and heavenly life, through the mediatorial righteousness of Christ, as the gift of God's free and overflowing grace, and shall reign in life by Jesus Christ for ever. And what an endearing enchantment of this free favour is it, that where sin has abounded, as it eventually hath, and appears to have done, by means of God's righteous and holy law; grace much more abounds by the gospel! And that as sin hath reigned unto death, in all its terrors, relating to this world and the next; so grace reigns with uncontrollable sovereignty and power, and with the brightest glory to eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord! May we be humbled under a sense of our guilt and ruin by *Adam's* fall! and be thankful for the door of hope which is opened in Christ and his righteousness for the worst of sinners, by the super-abounding grace of God! And may we take heed of denying *imputed sin*, as ever we could not exclude ourselves from the benefit of *imputed righteousness*!

C H A P. VI.

The apostle having established the doctrine of justification by the free grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ, guards against a licentious abuse of it, by shewing the necessity of believers dying to sin, and living to God; because they are dead to the law, 1, 2. Because they are obliged to all holiness by their Christian baptism and union with Christ, 3,—10.. Because they are made alive to God, and are freed from the dominion of sin, 11,—20. And because of the contrary fruits and issues of sin and holiness, one of which is death, and the other everlasting life, 21,—23.

TEXT.

What shall we
say then?
Shall we continue
in sin, that grace
may abound?

PARAPHRASE.

IF justification depends entirely on the free grace of God; through the imputation of Christ's righteousness; and if where sin has abounded grace much more abounds, as has been argued, (*chap. v. 17,—21.*) * some may object, and say, What is the consequence of this doctrine? Doth it not lead to all licentiousness? May we not take occasion from hence to go on in a course of sin, and think ourselves at liberty to live, and even abound, in the commission of it, that the riches of free grace may be the more gloriously exalted, and illustrated, in abundantly pardoning it?

2 I roundly answer, with just abhorrence, (*see verse 10*) No, by no means †: This would be the vilest abuse of the most endearing and comfortable truth, directly contrary to its holy nature and design. For though we cannot be justified by any of our own works; yet how can we, who profess and are obliged to die unto sin, and who are really mortified in our affections to it, as

to

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* This verse is evidently brought in as an objection to what the apostle had delivered about the justification of believing Jews, as well as *Gentiles*, merely by the rich abounding of free and undeserved grace, through the righteousness of Christ, in the foregoing discourse, and particularly at the close of the last chapter, which undoubtedly refers to one as well as the other. And therefore the design of this chapter, which contains a large answer to that objection, is not to be confined to *Gentile* Christians, especially since the answer is equally applicable to the state of all believers, and the apostle all along includes himself; and since the objection was more likely to be made by the Jew than the *Gentile*.

† The objection that carnal minds are naturally apt to make against justification by God's grace, through the righteousness of Christ, is not to be answered by allowing

that our own righteousness is to be joined in part with his to justify us; for, on that supposition, there would be no room for the objection: But it is to be answered by shewing, as the apostle doth, the indispensable necessity of personal holiness, on other accounts, in them that are justified, and the inseparable connection that is fixed, by the ordination of God in the gospel, between these things, without blending them together, or confounding one with the other. While therefore we, after the apostle's example, adhere strictly to the doctrines of grace, and guard in this manner against the abuse of them, we may be satisfied that our doctrine is the same, and fully answers the same objection, with his: And while we keep both these points in view, in our dealings with God, and walking in newness of life before him, we need not fear a miscarriage in our way to heaven.

live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that, like

to the worst of evils, in case we be sincere believers; How, I say, in any consistence with our state and character, and with a sense of duty and gratitude; or with what conscience, hope, or peace, can such, as we are, go on any longer in a course of sin, or allow ourselves in the practice of any known iniquity? it is monstrously absurd to suppose such a thing.

3 For the *mortification*, together with the remission of sins, was signified and sealed in our Christian baptism: Do ye not understand the meaning and obligation of this solemn ordinance? Is it not, that as many of us as have been baptized with water into the faith, profession, and obedience of Christ, by his authority, and according to his institution; and as many of us as, correspondent thereunto, have been effectually planted into Christ, (*ver. 5.*) or united with him as members of his mystical body, were baptized into a conformity to his death, and into communion with him in the benefits purchased by it, unto the crucifying of sin? And were we not thereby brought under federal obligations to fall in with his great design in dying, which was to redeem us from all iniquity, (*Tit. ii. 14.*)

4 Therefore, to lead you still further into this argument, we are not only obliged by our baptism to be conformable to Christ's death in the crucifixion of sin; but likewise to his burial * in giving plain proofs, with continuance,

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* As the ordinance of baptism seems plainly to be sometimes represented by *sprinkling* or *pouring* water; as particularly when God is said to *save us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour*, (*Tit. iii. 5, 6.* and see the note on *Matth. iii. 6.*) So some have thought that it is here mentioned with an allusion to the laying of a body under water, and yet, that even this more naturally alludes to the throwing of earth upon the dead corpse, in which the body is entirely passive, and not at all active in going down into the grave, than to plunging it into the earth. However, were we to admit that the apostle, in this place, alludes to dipping; the most, I think, we can gather from the whole is, that baptism was sometimes administered in one of these ways, and sometimes in the other; and that it cannot be said of any of these particular modes, that it is essential to this ordinance; and therefore it is pity that there should be such warm contentions as have troubled the church of Christ, about so little and so disputable a thing as the external mode of its administration. But, after all, I am very much of opinion with Mr *Henry*, or his con-

tinuator Dr *Evans*, who, in the exposition of this passage, says, "Why this burying in baptism should so much as allude to any custom of dipping under water in baptism, any more than our baptismal crucifixion and death should have any such reference, I confess I cannot see. It is plain that it is not the sign, but the thing signified in baptism, that the apostle here calls being buried with Christ; and the expression of burying alludes to Christ's burial: As Christ was buried, that he might rise to a new and more heavenly life: So we are in baptism buried, i. e. cut off from the life of sin, that we may rise again to a new life in faith and love." And others have thought that the reference is only to the benefits of spiritual baptism, and that nothing can be concluded about the external mode of baptism from this verse more than from the next, which speaks of our being therein symbolically planted together in the likeness of Christ's death: or than from the figure of baptism saving us, as represented by the floating of Noah's ark, when the few that were in it were saved by water, 1 *Pet. iii. 20, 21.* But no mode of baptism can be signified by either of these.

like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

tinuance, that we are really dead to it, in order to our having communion with him also in his life; that as Christ's human body was quickened and raised again from the dead, by the glorious operation of God the Father, as well as by his own power; and for demonstrating that he had glorified his Father upon earth, by his obedience unto death, and was going to be glorified with, and by him, and to live to his glory in heaven*: even so, in resemblance of Christ, and by virtue derived from him, as our living head, we also, being quickened to a spiritual and heavenly life, should walk in the whole tenor of our conversation, with freedom, constancy, and progressiveness, in all holy obedience, with new principles, motives, and ends, and by a new rule to the praise and glory of God, as those that, by his almighty power and grace, are made alive to him.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

5 For if, as is signified by baptism, we have been indeed in like manner incorporated with Christ, as members of the same body with their head † or have been jointly set into him, like branches into the vine, or a cion into the stock, by vital union with him, for a participation of such virtue from him, as makes us conformable to his death, in a separation between our souls and sin, as there was between his soul and body: We shall also, by being thus grafted into him, be formed into the similitude of his risen state; and so shall not only have fellowship with him in his sufferings and death, but likewise in the quickning power of his resurrection, (*Phil. iii. 10.*) to enable us to live continually, after his likeness, in all holiness to God here, till we come to live, soul, and body, with the risen Saviour, in all his glory for ever hereafter.

6 Knowing this, that

6 This we, who are true believers, may be well assured of, to our comfort and hope; because we know, and believe, (*ver. 8*) upon the principles of the gospel-revelation, that the corruption of nature, which works with subtilty, and spreads through all the members of our bodies, and faculties of our souls, and is as antient as our beings, yea as the fall of *Adam*, from whom it is derived; but which is already broken in its strength, and daily inclining in the believer's soul, and stands opposed to that new nature which we are made partakers of

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* For by the glory (*τῇ δόξῃ*) some would read to the glory, as the phrase (*τῇ δόξῃ*) is rendered in 1 Pet. i. 3. And this sense seems most agreeable to the following context, and to the last clause of the verse before us; though it must be owned that the preposition (*ἐν*) with a genitive case, must

commonly signify by.

† Planted together, (*συνυμνησμένοι*) may relate either to all believers being *alike* ingrafted into Christ; or to their being jointly united together with him, as their head, or stock, or root of supply.

that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

of by regenerating grace : We know, I say, that what on these accounts may be called *our old man*, as it dwells in us, is mortally wounded, in order to its gradually languishing, till it shall utterly expire, in conformity to Christ's body having been crucified unto death ; and by the merit and efficacy of his crucifixion, as our Head and Redeemer : He having died for this very end and purpose, that the whole frame of indwelling sin, together with all its strength and activity in all its parts and members, may be gradually, and yet violently mortified and subdued, till it be utterly destroyed ; that we from this time forward may never willingly yield ourselves up to its inclinations and influence, and serve its interests and designs, as if it were still to have the rule and dominion over us ; but may die unto sin, and live unto righteousness. (1 Pet. ii. 24.)

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

7 For he that is thus dead to the love and reign of sin, and in conformity to his crucified head and Saviour, and to the design and obligation of his death, and by virtue derived from it, (*ἡδικαιώται*) is legally acquitted from any further claim that this tyrant might pretend to have to his obedience ; yea, he is actually set at liberty from its domineering power and command over him, and is delivered from all allowed inclinations and desires to serve it ; as is the case of those that have died out of the service of their former lords and masters, to have been willingly transmitted from theirs, to the service of another and better lord.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him :

8 Now, to argue a little upon this point, if we are so far partakers of virtue from Christ, by our union to him, as to have communion with him, and resemble him, in his death, by our being effectually dead to sin ; we are fully persuaded, upon the most rational and divinely assured grounds, (*ver. 22. and chap. viii. 13. and 2 Tim. ii. 11.*) that we shall partake of like influence from him, to engage and enable us to live a spiritual, holy, and heavenly life here, after his example, and as those that are quickened together with him, (*Eph. ii. 5.*) till we shall be raised to an immortal life of blessedness and glory, to dwell with our living head in a future state of all perfection and delights for ever.

9 Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more ; death hath no

9 This we are fully satisfied in, upon the foot of conformity to him, as knowing that the resurrection of Christ, our public head of righteousness and influence, is for eternity ; so that he will never die again, or return to a mortal life, like that which he had before upon earth, as others have done, that were raised to a temporal life, by *Elijah* and *Elisbe*, and by himself and his

no more dominion over him.

his apostles. No, death and mortality neither have, nor ever shall have, the least power over him again any more than if he had never lived a frail life in this world at all, and had never died out of it; but he, who *was dead, is now alive; and, behold, he lives for evermore.* (Rev. i. 18.)

10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God,

10 For, as to his death on the cross, to take away the power, as well as the guilt and punishment of sin, by the sacrifice of himself*; this was so effectual to answer its end, that he has no need of dying, nor will die again for that purpose, (*Heb. ix. 26, 28.*); but, as to his life, which he is risen to, it is all heavenly, immortal, and divine, above the reach of sin and death; and is all to the glory of God, which is illustriously displayed in his resurrection, and is more and more advanced by all that he doth, as our risen and exalted head and Saviour, in heaven.

11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto

11 Even so, to apply this to your own particular case †, Do ye also, who believe, judge and account yourselves, as ye ought, upon mature consideration, to be in like manner, entirely, utterly, and everlastingly dead to sin once for all, by virtue of your union and communion with your once-crucified Redeemer, and in conformity to him, who demands it, and has purchased and gives grace for it; so as never to serve sin more, nor ever to have any fellowship with the unfruitful

N O T E S.

* To say, with some, that Christ's dying to sin signifies his dying, that there might be no sin in him, is to suppose that he had sin in him before, or at least was liable to it, which can scarce be excused from blasphemy.

† Here the apostle alters the form of address. He all along, in the foregoing verses, had been laying down principles, in a categorical or affirmative stile, that carry obligations to holiness, and qualify for it: And those expositors exceedingly strain the rules of grammar, torture his expressions, and weaken the force of his argument, who would turn his assertions in ver. 5, 8. which are equivalent to promises of what true believers shall be, into declarations of what they ought to be, with respect to their likeness to Christ in his resurrection, and to their living with him. But, in this and the three following verses, he plainly goes into the exhortative form, upon the principles before laid down, to shew what good improvement they ought to make of these rich advantages for dying to sin, and living to God; and then in ver. 14. he enforces these exhortations, by assuring them that, according to the well ordered provisions of the covenant of grace, they should have such aids and assistances to invigorate their endeavours,

as should secure the event; so that sin should not have dominion over them: And, upon this bottom, he proceeds to further reasonings and exhortations to take off the force of the objection, as if they might give way to sin, *because they were not under the law, but under grace, ver. 15, &c.* Now all this will appear to be a very consistent and nervous thread of reasoning, if we consider these promises and exhortations, as directed to the body of credibly professing believers, whom the apostle looked upon in the judgment of charity, to be really what they professed to be; though some of them might be only in name and appearance, what others of them were in truth: For the exhortations were given as proper means of stirring up their diligent attention, and conscientious regard to the mentioned duties, that they might come into God's way of performing his promises, and might evidence themselves to be indeed interested in them; and the promises were given to encourage their utmost attempts, in dependence on divine grace, for complying with the exhortations; since the promises were to be fulfilled only in a method worthy of God, to them that should prove to be true believers.

to God through
Jesus Christ our
Lord.

ful works of darkness: But, on the contrary; look upon yourselves to be spiritually alive, in your hearts and affections; towards every thing that is holy and heavenly, in resemblance of your risen and exalted Head; that ye may love, serve, and glorify God, in thought, word, and deed, as being quickened with a new principle of supernatural life, which is communicated from Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine, who lives, as well as died for us.

11 Let not sin
therefore reign in
your mortal body,
that ye should ob-
bey it in the lusts
thereof.

12 As ever therefore ye would act up to the privilege, dignity, and duty of your Christian state and character, and would prove yourselves to be what ye make a profession of, take heed that sin never enthrone itself in your corruptible bodies, which, with all their pleasures and enjoyments, will soon die; and that ye never employ them in its service for executing its vile designs: Though they be liable to death by reason of sin*, as Christ's body once was, that he might make atonement for it; and though they be not yet delivered from the power of death, as his risen and glorified body now is; yet, as they are freed from the dominion of sin, (*ver. 7.*) do not subject yourselves again to its hateful tyranny, so as to yield a voluntary obedience to the corrupt desires and solicitations of the flesh, which still remain in you†.

13 Neither
yield ye your
members as in-
struments of un-
righteousness un-
to sin: but yield
yourselves unto
God, as those
that are alive
from the dead;
and your mem-
bers as instru-
ments

13 Nor do ye, at any time, voluntarily give up the members of your bodies, such as your hands or feet, your eyes, tongues, or ears‡; nor the affections of your souls, such as your love and hatred, hope and fear, to be unjustly employed, as (*οπλα*) military weapons for serving the cause of sin, and gratifying its perverse inclinations, as if *that* were the lord which ought to reign over you: But, on the contrary, present your whole selves, soul and body, (*chap. xii. 1.*) and all that ye are, and have, with full consent, and without reserve, to God, through Jesus Christ, as your rightful and only Sovereign, to whom all obedience is due; that ye may therein act like those who are indeed quickened from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, by the regenerating Spirit; and so may cheerfully yield up all the

N O T E S:

* The body seems here to be styled *mortal*, in correspondence to what had been said in the preceding verses about Christ's having died.

† The exhortation, *not to obey sin in the lusts thereof*, strongly intimates, that there were still some workings of it in believers themselves, and would be so, as long as they should continue to be mortal; and in the *lusts thereof* (*τοις ταις επιθυμιας αμαρτιας*) refers, by the gender in the Greek, to your mortal body; (*το*

σωμα υμων σωματι) and not to sin, (*η αμαρτια*) or to it (*αυτη*).

‡ The affections are to the soul what legs and arms are to the body, for motion and action, and so may, in a metaphorical sense, be called its *members* here, and in *ver. 19.* as also in *chap. vii. 5, 13.* And as these active powers of the soul are to be employed against sin, and for God, I think they may be included in the apostle's meaning. See the note on *chap. vii. 5.*

B d

ments of righteousness unto God.

the members of your bodies, and affections of your souls, which are his, (1 Cor. vi. 20.) as weapons to be used in a just and righteous manner for God, and devoted to his service, according to his commandments, and his right, in your war against sin.

13 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

14 For if ye really are what ye profess to be, it is certain, that though, while ye continue in this imperfect mortal state, the corruption of nature will work and strive for the mastery in you; and may trouble and perplex you, and sometimes surprize and wound you, and bring you into an unwilling captivity, (*chap. vii. 23.*) yet it shall never gain your approbation and full consent, nor recover an allowed and uncontrolled power, or lord it over you: For your standing is removed from under the *first* to the *second* covenant-head, which have been spoken of at large, (*chap. v. 14,—21.*); and so ye are not under the law, as a covenant of works, (see the note on *chap. vii. 4.*) to be dealt with according to its tenor; nor under its terrors, and bondage frame of spirit, in obeying it, which severely forbids, and condemns for every sin, and yet affords no effectual assistance against it, any more than a *pardon* of it: But ye are under the covenant of grace, which contains unchangeable promises, and never-failing springs of strength, assistance, and preservation from utter apostacy, and generous filial motives to all obedience, as well as free forgiveness of all your disallowed sins, through the blood of Christ; and ye are under the dominion of the gratuitous favour and love of God, which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, (*chap. v. 21.*) and are under the government of that principle of grace whereby he has put his new covenant seal into your hearts, to keep down the dominion of sin, and to prevent your totally and finally departing from him. (*Jer. xxxii. 40.*)

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but

15 What! Shall any of us then still have recourse to, and hang upon the objection which the enemies of the grace of God make, and which has been already put, and answered, (*ver. 1, &c.*)? or shall we take occasion, from this encouraging and important doctrine, to allow ourselves in any sin, or go on in the practice of it, because we are no longer under the law, as a covenant of works, but are under the sure and well-ordered covenant of grace, which puts us under the dominion of God's free favour †, that we may live under

the

N O T E.

† As grace may signify, either the covenant of grace, or God's free favour to us, or the principle of grace which is wrought in us, I have taken all these senses into the interpretation of this and the preceding verse; though I

apprehend that the first of them is principally intended, viz. Our being under the covenant of grace; which includes, or necessarily infers all the rest.

but under grace?
God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that, to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was

the power of that gracious principle, which he, according to his promise, infuses into us? Far be it from us (*see ver. 17*) to entertain such an abominable thought, so directly contrary to the perfections of God, and the whole design of his gospel, and so inconsistent with our own being under grace. (See the note on *ver. 2*.)

16 Surely ye cannot be ignorant, that, in the very nature of things, whatever lord or master ye willingly, deliberately, and with prevailing bent of heart, surrender, or give up yourselves unto, as servants to do his will and obey his commands, his proper servants ye in fact are, to whom ye so voluntarily let out, or sell yourselves and yield obedience †: And this is applicable in the present case, whether your obedience be to sin, that cruel tyrant, whose service deserves, tends to, and issues in death and ruin here, and for ever; or whether it be to holiness, by the *obedience of faith*, for bringing forth fruits of righteousness to God, to promote his interest and glory, and agreeable to his nature and will, which lead the way to eternal life, (*ver. 21,—23*); ye cannot divide your chosen services between two such opposite masters, as our Lord himself has told us, (*Mat. vi. 24*.)

17 But blessed be God that, as your holy profession declares, and it is meet for me to think of you all, it can only be said, with respect to the *time past*, that ye willingly embarked in the service of sin, to have your *conversation in the lusts of the flesh, and fulfil the desires of the flesh, and of the mind*, (*Eph. ii. 3*): But by the efficacious power of his grace, which has made a thorough change upon your whole souls, ye, who formerly were the voluntary servants of sin, have now, not feignedly, in pretence and profession only, not merely in external behaviour and appearance; but sincerely, deliberately, freely, and resolvedly, as from your very hearts †, yielded cheerful obedience to the authority of God, in the evangelical doctrines and commands, which have been

continu-

NOTES.

† In this and the following verses, the apostle alludes to a common and well-known custom in those days, with regard to slaves or servants, that were the property of their masters, who, at their pleasure, either kept them for life, or turned them over to another master, or made them free.

† The apostle's saying, *ye have obeyed from the heart*, in opposition to what they had formerly done, when they were the servants of sin, gives us a key to his whole discourse about the service of sin, and the service of righteousness; and shews that we are to understand him, as speaking all along in this

chapter of a *voluntary* obedience, in opposition to that *forced and unwilling* captivity to the law of sin in his members, which he speaks of chap. vii. 14,—23. (See the note there on *ver. 14*.) Accordingly he, in this chapter, expresses their obedience to sin, by *yielding themselves and their members, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin*, and *selling themselves as servants to obey it*, as well as their afterwards doing the like, with regard to God and holiness; and calls the service of sin, *obeying it in the lusts of their mortal body*, *ver. 12, 13, 16, 17, 19*.

was delivered
you.

communicated to you by Christ and us, his apostles, and have been impressed upon you by the attending operations of his Spirit; yea, into the very form and image of which ye have been cast, by a divine energy, as into a mould, which has left the print of its amiable lineaments upon you, that ye might be exactly conformable to it, as wax is to the seal, or as coin is to the die, line answering to line (*ὡς ἢ σφραγισμὸς τὸν αὐτὸν διδάχης.*)

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

18 And (ye) being, in this happy and effectual manner, set at liberty from the dominion and lordship of sin, whose odious form is hereby obliterated, whose rule and tyranny are hereby defeated, and whose power and interest, in the will, affections, and conversation, are hereby destroyed; ye became the devoted and willing servants of true holiness, in conformity to the righteous will and law of God, which henceforward has the rule and command over you, as a governing principle within you; and has enthroned itself, like an acknowledged and rightful sovereign, in your hearts.

19 I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity, unto iniquity;

19 I represent these things in such comparative forms of speech, as are familiarly known and plainly understood among men, in the case of masters and servants; it being a common practice, especially among you, *Romans*, for servants to change masters, and to pay as cheerful service to the last as to the first: And I choose to make use of these strong and lively figures, that I may the better accommodate myself to your capacities; because of your imperfect ways of conceiving spiritual things, by reason of the enfeebling remainder of corruption in you *, and of your receiving ideas more easily by sensible observation and experience, than by any other means, while ye are in the body: For, if ye reflect on the force and tendency of the similitude I have been using, ye may easily observe, that as formerly, in the days of your unregeneracy, ye resigned and employed the various members of your bodies, and affections of your souls, (see the note on *ver.* 13.) in voluntarily serving the most tyrannical and enslaving lords, such as the principles and habits of uncleanness †, unrighteousness, and

N O T E S.

* *Flesh* in this passage may relate, either to the remaining corruption of human nature, which is often called *flesh*, and has enfeebled the powers of the mind; or it may be taken for the mass of *flesh* which chiefly composes the human body, and is the means of sensation, and the means, which we are so much used to, that we find a difficulty in forming conceptions, that have no affinity with it, or assistance from it.

† *Uncleanness* and *iniquity*, in the former

part of this sentence, may be considered as the lords and masters to which they had yielded themselves, answerable to the turn and drift of all the foregoing discourse; and their yielding themselves herunto, in the latter part of the sentence, is said to be *unto iniquity* as works of iniquity are the services which they had performed to those masters: And in the same manner we may understand their being afterwards servants to righteousness *unto holiness*.

iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness.

and ungodliness, which have ruled and reigned over you by your own consent; and as ye have gone on in all manner of abominations to the increasing of iniquity, and making yourselves more and more guilty, vile, and miserable, by adding sin to sin: Even so, being now brought into a state of grace, and having changed masters, think how fit, how worthy, just, and reasonable it is, that ye should act up to the dignity, obligation, and sanctity of your new character and relation, by yielding up all the members of your bodies, and all your powers and faculties, without reserve, as servants to an opposite and most excellent Master, even to righteousness; unto the bringing forth of the genuine fruits of holiness, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God, that ye may be more and more holy and fruitful in every good word and work, by henceforth doing more for God than ye have ever heretofore done in the service of sin.

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

20 For while ye were the willing servants of sin, devoted to its interests, and entirely under its power and dominion, by a chosen subjection to it, ye were not under the rule and government of principles of righteousness; but were wholly strangers, and disaffected to it, and did not maintain a sense of your obligations to regard it, but rather neglected and opposed it, and pleased yourselves with the thoughts of having cast off the holy restraints which it would have laid upon you †: But how much soever ye might imagine yourselves to be free in that condition, ye were in reality the most miserable and abject slaves, as a little serious reflection may satisfy you,

21 What fruit had ye then in those things, whereof ye are now ashamed? for the

21 Let me then ask you, what real profit, honour, or pleasure, did ye find, or could ye expect, in your former sinful courses, even while ye were pursuing them, and indulging yourselves in them? Were they not attended with remorse, defilement and reproach, trouble and disappointment, loss and mischief to yourselves? and did they not leave a sting behind them? Could ye ever reflect, with any satisfaction, or peace, upon those abominable crimes, for which ye are now justly filled with holy confusion, self-abasement and shame, in every review of them as things that were foolish, and unworthy in themselves, and highly ungrateful, offensive,

N O T E.

† Free from righteousness is not mentioned as a privilege, but as the misery of their natural state; for that sort of liberty was really the worst of slavery, though they might not think it so, while they chose to be under it: Nor doth it signify that they were discharged from obligations to righteousness; for these

are immutable and eternal: But it intimates, that, while they were the servants of sin, they, in the practical sense of their own minds, were at loose covenants, with respect to God and holiness; and did not regard the bonds which lay upon them to be holy.

the end of those things is death.

live, and dishonourable to God? Were they not all unfruitful works of darkness? (*Eph. v. 11.*) they certainly were: For the direct tendency, and due desert of those evil practices, as ye now well know, and cannot but own, were nothing less than destruction and death, temporal and eternal; and they would certainly have issued in the worst of all miseries, that are a deprivation of, and stand in opposition to everlasting life, (*ver. 22.*) had not God, in the greatness of his compassion, prevented it, by turning you from all your iniquities to himself, through a Redeemer.

21 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

22 But now the case is happily altered with you, who, by the mighty power, and abounding grace of God, are brought under another head and covenant, and under the dominion of other principles: Being now set at liberty from the love and liking, reign and tyranny, as well as from the guilt of sin, and thereby restored to the truest and noblest freedom; and being made the willing and obedient servants of the great and blessed God, which is your highest honour and advantage; ye bring forth, and reap a better, a more excellent and delightful sort of fruit, the very best that can be, in the renewed course of your lives, which tends unto, and produces evangelical holiness, with growing increases of it, in this world; and the final issue and perfection of which is no less than eternal glory and blessedness, free from all remainder of sin, shame, or sorrow, in the world to come.

23 For the wages of sin is death: but the gift of God

23 For all the wages which sin pays, as the natural, just, and proper recompence, that is due for the drudgery sustained in doing its work, and is allotted to its servants by the holy law of God, is the worst imaginable; even that dreadful and miserable death, which is not only a separation of soul and body, but an utter exclusion from, and stands directly opposed unto, all the blessedness of eternal life: This is the punishment which all and every sin deserves; and this, like the hire of soldiers, (*στρατία*) which is paid in victuals for the toils, hardships, and dangers of war, that they undergo in the service of their lords, is all the food, and all the reward, that the sinner shall ever have from that cruel tyrant. But, on the contrary, the free gift *, which proceeds merely

N O T E.

* The natural antithesis to the wages of sin, would have been the wages of righteousness, or holiness, had it been consistent with truth: But instead of that, wages and gifts are here opposed; one to the other, because, though death is the just reward of the service done for sin; yet eternal life is merely the unmeri-

ted gift of grace, without any worthiness in us to intitle us to it; and the opposition, that, in this and the preceding verses, is made between death and eternal life, shews that the death, which is the fruit of sin, takes in that which is eternal, as well as that which is temporal.

God is eternal
life, through Je-
sus Christ our
Lord.

merely from the grace of God, without the least regard, yea, in opposition to any merit or desert in us, is infinitely advantageous: It is no less than an everlasting life of the highest honour and felicity, in the immediate presence, and complete enjoyment of, and conformity to the ever glorious God, through the righteousness and mediation of Jesus Christ, in whom we, that believe, have a sure interest; whom we own, honour, love, and serve; and whom we humbly claim and depend upon, as our Lord and Saviour.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How groundless and injurious are all charges of licentiousness on the doctrine of justification alone by the free grace of God, through the righteousness of Christ! Though no good works of our own bear any part in our justification before God, yet they stand in a close and necessary connection with it; and nothing can be more detestable, than to continue in sin, that grace may the more abound in pardoning it. For how shall we, that are by profession and obligation, and, if true believers, are in fact dead to sin, live any longer therein? This would be a flat contradiction to our baptismal engagement, and to all that was signified by it, and is answerable to it; would be absolutely inconsistent with our character, privilege, and duty, as members of Christ, that have communion with him in his death and resurrection, and with all realizing views by faith of deliverance from sin and wrath, and of an advancement to eternal glory, through him.—How excellent is the effect of regenerating grace; it includes both a mortification of sin, that the old man may be destroyed, and spiritual quicknings to a holy and heavenly life, that we may walk before God with new principles and ends, and according to a new rule, in imitation of Christ, and by virtue derived from his death and resurrection, to the glory of God. How certainly may we judge, whether sin or holiness has the ascendancy in our hearts and lives! Which ever of these we willingly yield ourselves up unto, *that* is the Lord that rules over us. We all once were the servants of iniquity, as appeared by our choosing its works, obeying its dictates, and taking pleasure in violating every bond to holiness: But, blessed be God, true believers are moulded into the spirit of the gospel, which, under divine influence, has a transforming efficacy upon them; they are set at liberty from the commanding power of sin; they hate and abhor it, and by no means approve of it, in any instance whatsoever; and they are become, in their very hearts, servants to God and righteousness. How concerned then should they be, to live under a constant sense of what belongs to their state, as Christians! They should reckon themselves to be entirely dead to sin, as those that have nothing more to do with it; but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord: Though sin still remains, and is striving for the mastery in them, they should never give way to its efforts; but yield up their whole selves, body and soul, to the Lord. And how great are their inducements and assistances, to quit the service of sin for the service of God! Though they are still under the law as a rule of life, they are not under it as a severe and impracticable covenant, nor under its curse; but are taken under the covenant of grace, which contains the strongest securities against sin's recovering its dominion over them; and they are freed from the dreadful lordship of sin. What fruit has any one ever found, worth having, in its ways and works, even while he was employed in them? They are matter of the greatest shame, and their just wages are all mingled unto eternal death. But there is a present pleasure in the ways of holiness; and its happy issue is everlasting life, not indeed as the wages of righteousness, but as the mere gift of God's free grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C H A P. VII.

The apostle shews that believers are not under the law, as a covenant; but are married to Christ, that they may bring forth fruit unto God, as a further argument against sin, and for holiness, 1,—6. Sets forth the use and excellence of the law, in other views of it, though it be not sufficient to remove the guilt, or master the power of sin, 7,—13. And describes the spiritual conflicts between corruption and grace in a believer's heart, 14,—25.

TEXT.

NOW ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?

1 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth: but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

3 So then if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she

PARAPHRASE.

LET me now a little further argue the point, particularly with those of you my dear brethren in Christ, that have been converted from among the Jews*, relating to your deliverance from the law-covenant, (*chap. vi. 14. &c.*) in such a manner as frees you from the dominion of sin, that ye may live unto God; for I would now address myself in a special manner to those that are acquainted with the law given by Moses, and so may the more readily apprehend what I am going to say, Are ye not well satisfied, that the authority of the law continues, and is binding to a man, as long as, and no longer than, he lives under it, and so stands related to it? Ye surely cannot be ignorant of so plain a truth as this.

2 For to illustrate the matter by a known and familiar instance, it is undeniably plain, that a married woman is tied and continues under obligation to her husband, by the law of wedlock, which establishes the relation between them all the days of his life, or till death shall part them: But if her husband dies, the relation ceases between them, and she is discharged from the law, which, in the nature of a covenant, bound her to her husband; so that he has no longer any right to her, nor is she under any further obligation to him.

3 From hence it plainly follows, that if she were to be married to any other man during her lawful husband's life, she would be justly deemed an adulteress, as having broke the covenant-contract that was between them, and bound her to him, and him only: But if her husband were dead, there would be an end of the relation, and consequently of the marriage-bond which tied her to him; so that she would not be guilty of adultery,

N O T E.

* The apostle here directs his course most immediately to the believing Jews that belonged to the church at Rome, as appears by his appealing unto them as persons that knew the law. And as their prejudices were

so strong for the law, and against salvation by mere grace through Jesus Christ, it was proper to deal particularly with them upon these points.

It is no adultery, though she be married to another man.

4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should

adultery, nor ought she to be charged with it, in case of her being then married to another man, any more than if she had never been espoused to a former husband.

4 Therefore, my beloved brethren, to apply what I have now been saying to the state that ye are in toward God, as the law has a right of dominion over a man only so long as he lives under it, and this has been illustrated by the covenant-obligation of a wife to her husband, which is dissolved by death: So ye, through faith, are become dead to the law, as a covenant, which requires perfect obedience, as the condition of life, and pronounces a curse for every failure; it in this respect is vacated, or disannulled, as to you, and has lost its power over you *; inasmuch that ye are freed from its terms

N O T E.

* As the law had been illustrated, (ver. 2, 3.) by the law of a husband, which is, properly speaking, a covenant between him and his wife: We, in correspondence therunto, are naturally led to consider the law, under the notion of a covenant, when the apostle speaks of believers, as dead to it, and ver. 6. as delivered from it: And considering it in this view, their deliverance is not only from the ceremonial, but likewise from the moral law. Accordingly, he often speaks of the law, in his argument about justification, in such terms as can agree to none but the moral law: For this is the law, the things of which the Gentiles do by nature, and the work of which is written in their hearts, and the Jew, being instructed out of which, approved the things that are more excellent; and this is the law that says, a man shall not steal, and shall not commit adultery; and it is distinguished from, and preferred to the ritual ordinance of circumcision, which was so far from profiting the breakers of this law, that the Gentiles by fulfilling its righteousness would have the advantage of the transgressing Jew, (chap. ii. 12,—17.) This likewise is the law, which speaks to them that are under it, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God; by which is the knowledge of sin; and which is not made void, but is established, through faith, (chap. iii. 19, 20, 31.) And this is the law which works wrath to the transgressor of it, (chap. iv. 15.) and entered that the offence might abound, (chap. v. 20.) It is also the moral law, of which the apostle says, in this seventh chapter, (ver. 5,—16.) The motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin reigned, and I died, and the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death: Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.—I had not

known lust, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet.—Sin by the commandment became exceeding sinful.—We know that the law is spiritual.—I consent to the law that it is good, &c. And, in the eighth chapter, (ver. 4, 7.) This is the law, the righteousness of which is fulfilled in us; and to which the carnal mind is not subject, neither indeed can be.

It is, I think, unquestionable that in most, if not in all these, and several other passages of the apostle's discourse, such things are spoken of as are peculiar to the moral law; and therefore he evidently keeps this in view, at least together with the ceremonial law, and so took in the whole of the religious law of the Jews, as well as the law of nature, when he spoke of our not being justified by the works of the law, and of our being dead to it, and delivered from it. But then this deliverance from the moral law is to be considered only with reference to it, as the covenant of works, and to the curse, which it pronounces upon every transgressor; and not with respect to it, as the law of creation, and the rule of life: For if in this view of it, it is still to be accounted holy, just, and good, (ver. 12.) and is of eternal and unchangeable obligation, resulting from the creature's relation to God and one another; and in this sense, believers are still, as much as ever, bound by it. The gospel has not, in this respect, set aside the moral law, or substituted a requirement of only sincere imperfect obedience, instead of the perfect law of God, as a rule of life: For as it would not become the holiness of God to give us an imperfect rule of behaviour; so the sincere believer might, in that case, be said to fulfil the utmost of his demands by an imperfect obedience; and would neither have any sin, nor need any pardon. But the truth is, that the grace of the gospel pardons their sins, on Christ's account, while, through the remaining depravity of nature, they cannot, as they vainly would, come up to the per-

should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

terms for justification, or condemnation, by the crucifixion of Christ, *who his ownself bare your sins in his own body on the tree, (1 Pet. ii. 24.) and redeemed you from the curse of the law, being made a curse for you, (Gal. iii. 13.)* that being thus discharged from covenant-obligations to the law, as your former husband, ye might be honourably espoused to another, of a more excellent nature, even to Christ, and might come into a new-covenant-relation to God, through faith in him; who, *as he was delivered up to death for your offences, was raised again for your justification, (chap. iv. 25.)* But take heed of thinking, that this deliverance from your former husband, and espousal to Christ is, that ye may be at liberty to live as ye list, *without law to God, (1 Cor. ix. 21.)* as though its moral precepts did not still bind you to obedience: For the very end and design of this happy alteration in our covenant-state *, who were under the law, is, that *being dead to sin we might live unto righteousness, (1 Pet. ii. 24.)* and that by a principle of spiritual life, derived from our risen husband and Saviour, we might bring forth fruits of holiness, acceptable in the sight of God, and to his praise and glory, through Jesus Christ.

5 For, when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth

5 For while we Jews, (I put myself in, it having been my own case in common with yours) while we were in our carnal unconverted state, under the power of corrupt nature, which, for its vileness, and activity in and by the body, may well be termed *flesh, (chap. viii. 8.)* and while we were so immersed in it, as to be *in the flesh*, as, a man who is overcome with strong liquor is said to be *in drink*; then the violent passions (*ταπεινὰ*) of indwelling corruption, which were irritated by the opposition that the purity of the precepts and the severity of the curse of the law made against them,

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fect demands of the law. Though it is true that they are delivered from all manner of obligation, under the gospel-state, to observe any rites of the ceremonial law; yet in the nature of the apostle's argument, he considers their deliverance from the whole of the *Mosaic law*, inclusive both of its ceremonial and moral parts, only as it contained terms of life in a covenant way. To all this we may add, that when he particularly meant the *ceremonial*, in distinction from the *moral law*, he frequently spoke of it in diminutive terms; sometimes calling it *the law of a carnal commandment, and carnal ordinances, (Heb. vii. 16. and ix. 10.)* at others, *The law of commandments contained in ordinances, (Eph. ii. 15.)* at others, *Ordinances, and the rules*

of this world; (Col. ii. 20.) And at others, *The customs of the fathers, (Acts xxviii. 17.)* and the like: But none of these lessening and distinctive characters of the law are found in this epistle to the *Romans*, to restrain it to the ceremonial law, in what is said about justification by its works. (See also the note on chap. iii. 19.)

* The apostle, with admirable address, varies the *person*, and puts *we* for *ye*, that we might better see what he was going to say in the next verse, about their former vile and polluted circumstances; and might take off the odium of it, by including himself; and, at the same time, might the more plainly shew that he is here speaking particularly of the *Jews*.

forth fruit unto death.

6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

7 What shall we say then? Is the

them, powerfully worked (*compelle*) and exerted themselves in the whole man, unto the employing and commanding of all the members of our bodies, and all the faculties of our souls *, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, (*chap. vi. 13.*) and all the fruit; we thereby brought forth, was so far from being to God and his glory, or to our own good, that it deserved and tended to, and (had not grace prevented) would certainly have issued in our eternal ruin and misery, which, in opposition to an everlasting life of happiness, is justly called death. (*Chap. vi. 21, 22.*)

6 But now the law, as a covenant of works, being like the former husband of a wife, (*ver. 2, 3.*) dead to us, who heretofore were held in subjection to it, and were under obligations to be dealt with, for life or death, according to it; we, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ †, are delivered from its covenant-demands and rigorous curse, that we might obey and serve God, under a new and better covenant, in our espousals to another husband, even Christ, from new principles and motives, and to new ends, with all freedom and delight in our own souls, as those that are renewed in the spirit of our minds; and in a new life and conversation, all spiritual, holy, and heavenly, by the assistance of the Spirit of God; and not in the old carnal way of regarding only the letter of the law, by a bare external compliance with some, and that principally of its ritual precepts, to the neglect of those which are of a moral nature, and which, in the bare letter of it, through our own perverseness, rather provoked, then restrained the corruptions of our hearts.

7 What shall we think then of this account of our former state, as we stood in relation to the law? Some may say, Doth it not reflect the highest dishonour upon the

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* The members, in which sin works, seem not to be understood *conjunctly* of the members of the body; for several works of the flesh are immediately seated in the soul, and in its evil affections; such as *idolatry, hatred, wrath, envy, and the like*, *Gal. v. 20, 21.* And yet, perhaps, (see the note on *chap. vii. 5.*) they are called *flesh and members*, because they are excited and influenced by flesh and blood, and the members of the body are the instruments by which they work.

† As being dead to the law, *ver. 4.* seems most directly to answer to what the apostle had said, *ver. 1.* about the law's having dominion over a man as long as he lives: So being delivered from the law, in this verse, most directly answers to what had been observed,

ver. 2, 3. about the wife's being freed from the law of her husband when he is dead. (See the note on *ver. 4.*) "If this might be explained by a similitude, (says an ingenious and pious writer) I think it is such in the same manner, as the penal laws against the protestant dissenters in England are not abolished, but stand in force still: yet have no power to hurt any person, who accepts of the act of toleration, and qualifies himself accordingly: Though there is indeed this difference, that it can never be said, that those penal laws are now, or ever were, either *idle, just, or good*, as the law of God is." *Ordinary and charity united.* pag. 103.

the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

the righteous law of God itself; as even its moral precepts were the cause of sin, instead of a check to it? I answer, No, by no means, (*non ymo*); this would be as vile and injurious a thought, and as much to be abhorred, as any of the others that have been already confuted, (*chap. vi. 1, &c. and ver. 15, &c.*): Nay, so contrary is this to the excellent nature and proper design of the law, that I myself (to tell you my own former experience) should not have understood some things to be really sinful and condemnable; nor been suitably humbled for them, and brought to see my need of Christ, to save me from them, had it not been for the light and authority of God's holy law, which discovered and forbade them: For, to instance only in one particular, I should never have apprehended, and been convinced in my own conscience, that the secret workings of irregular desires, and the very first motions of inordinate affections, were sins, unless the law had pronounced them to be so, in the tenth commandment, saying, *Thou shalt not covet*, (*Exod. xx. 17.*) which includes a prohibition of all impatience and discontent in our own minds at any disposals of Providence concerning us; all grudging and envying at the prosperity of others; and all inclinations to what God has forbid, and uneasy cravings of any worldly enjoyments which others are possessed of, and he sees fit to deny us: That therefore which thus discovers and forbids all sin, in its first and most secret workings, can never be a friend to it.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

8 But the truth of the case is, that so far as the law ever proved an occasion of sin to me, the fault lay, not at all in the law itself, but entirely in my own wicked heart: It did not so properly *give* the occasion, as the corruption of my nature; the sin that reigned in me unworthily *took* the occasion for it, from the just strictness and severity of the law, and from my own natural enmity to it; and so worked in me all manner of evil inclinations and desires after that which was forbidden by it: For as long as I continued without a true sense of the spirituality and holiness, strictness and extensiveness of the demands of the law *, (which I was after-

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* It is surprising to me, that the learned Mr Locke, and some others after him, should make the sense of this passage to be, *without the law* (meaning the law given by Moses) *sin is dead*, not able to hurt me; or *without the law of Moses*, which annexes death to transgression, *sin is as good as dead*, is not able to have its will of me, and bring death upon me: For this is directly contrary to the a-

postle's peremptory assertions, (*chap. v. 12, 13, 14.*) that *by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin*; that *sin was in the world until, or all along before the law*; and that *death reigned from Adam to Moses*. How then could it be said, that sin was not able to hurt the apostle, or to bring death upon him, or upon any other Jew, without the law of Moses? Since it had reigned unto death

afterwards led into by the Spirit of God, when he came to open mine eyes) sin, and especially heart-sin, though it actually worked with great power in me, was a trivial harmless thing in my account: It did not terrify my conscience; but seemed, like a dead man, to have no strength in me, and to carry no danger in it.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

9 For in those days of my unregeneracy, I had high swelling thoughts of myself, vainly imagining, that I was in a safe state, and in good terms with God, upon the foot of mine own righteousness; as being then an utter stranger to the true knowledge and discerning of the pure and spiritual meaning, and high requirements of the law, how much soever I was acquainted with the letter of it. But when the divine precept, in all its spirituality and extent, as reaching to the thoughts, principles, views, and desires of the heart, as well as to the words and acts of the life; when it thus came, in the light and energy of the Holy Spirit, to my mind and conscience, in his convincing me of sin; then I saw many things to be sin, which I never thought to be so before; I found it had no more power in me than I formerly was aware; I was then fully convinced, that, in the righteous judgment of God, the worst of punishment was due to me, for my multiplied transgressions in heart and life, beyond all that I had ever apprehended before; and so sin revived in my conscience, in all its hideous forms, and with terrible accusations of guilt and obnoxiousness to divine wrath; and thereupon all my former vain confidence, and high conceit of myself, died within me; I could no longer support them, nor think myself righteous, but fell under a sentence of death and condemnation in the sense of my own soul, as a man dead in law, and deserving to die eternally.

10 And the commandment which was ordained to life,

10 And the righteous law of God, which was a system of holy commandments given with a promise of life to such as should perfectly obey it, and was originally designed to be a covenant of life, upon performance of its terms and conditions, to them that were under it, saying, *The man which doth those things shall live by them,*
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death so many hundreds of years before that law was given; and we are told, (*Rom. i. 32.*) that the very heathens, who had only the law of nature, knew the judgment of God, that the transgressors of that law were worthy of death. I therefore take the sense of this expression, as given in the paraphrase, to be equally proper in the construction of the phrase, and much better agreeing with, and countenanced by, all the preceding and following context: And how applicable so-

ever this, and the former part of the next verse, may be to any other Jew, I apprehend that they are to be considered, not more as personating the carnal Jews in general, but as descriptive of the apostle's own experience; and that all, which follows to the end of the chapter, is peculiarly so, to exemplify the difference between the law and the gospel, and their different effects upon those that are under them respectively.

life, I found to be unto death.

(chap. x. 5.) This very law, being now a broken covenant, and so become *weak through the flesh*, (chap. viii. 3:) I found was so far from being capable of justifying, and giving me a title to life and happiness, that, on the contrary, it condemned and bound me over to death and misery of every kind both temporal and eternal; and afforded me no remedy.

11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me,

11 For my original depravity, being impatient of restraint by the law, took a perverse occasion, from the strictness of the commandments contained in it, to rise up in rebellion against it, as if it were too unreasonable and severe an imposition to be laid upon human nature; and so beguiling me as the serpent did *Eve*, (Gen. iii. 13.) it ensnared, and insensibly drew me into the commission of many evils which God had forbid, and by this means brought me, still more and more, under the heaviest sentence of condemnation and death: and when afterwards it came home, in its spirituality and power, to my conscience, it slew the high-towering thoughts and confidences which I before had entertained about my own sufficiency to keep it, and my own righteousness to recommend me to God.

12 Wherefore the law is holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

12 Since therefore the moral law thus discovers, forbids, and condemns every sin; and since all its *unhappy* consequences and influence, like those of the sun's shining on a dunghill, are only owing to the froward abuse that is made of it by the corruptions of mankind, it must be acquitted of all blame; and we must own, that the law itself is faultless, as it is the eternal and unchangeable rule and standard of all holiness: and that its direct and natural intent is to encourage and promote it, and cannot but do so, in them that make a right use of it: And it is all of a piece, like the God whose law it is*; every particular commandment of it is intrinsically pure and holy, just, right, and true, good and excellent, every way becoming the holy, righteous, and good God to enjoin, and intelligent creatures to obey, for his glory, and their own advantage.

13 Was then that which is good

13 Having thus fully answered the objection against *the law's being sin*, (ver. 7, — ~~was~~ perhaps some of you, making a handle of what has been said, (ver. 10.) about *my finding the commandment to be unto death*, may suppose, that I nevertheless make it to be the cause of all the *mischiefs* that are come upon mankind, even to eternal

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* It is with inimitable judgment and severity, that in all this discourse the apostle soothes, and ingratiates himself with the Jew, by displaying the honour of the law in the

equity and excellence of its demands and designs; even while his chief view is to shew that it is incapable of relieving and saving a transgressor.

good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

eternal death. Was then, do ye think, that which is altogether good in itself, and in its own tendency and design, the real, direct, and proper cause of my being made liable to all misery and ruin? No, (*μη γενοίτο*) this reproachful reflection upon it is as much to be detested as any of the former: But, as ye may see by what has been already offered, it is all owing to sin, which, that it might be discovered to be a most malignant and destructive evil, produced such wicked works in me, by its abuse of the good law of God, as are the only criminal cause of destruction; and so it apparently brought me under a righteous and aggravated sentence of condemnation, as its natural and due desert; that sin, being thus prohibited by, and yet rising up in desperate opposition to the holy commandment, might be shewn to be so extremely odious, unreasonable, and injurious, above all things else; so directly contrary to God, and his law; and so pernicious to myself, that it wants a word strong enough to express its malignity, and cannot be so justly and fully represented, as by an epithet taken from itself, and so pronouncing it to be above all measure sinful. (*Καὶ ὑπερβολὴν αμαρτανῶς.*)

14 For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal

14 For, whatever unenlightened minds may think of it, those of us, who have been led into a deep conviction of the evil of sin, in its contrariety to the moral law, are very sure that this is not, like the ceremonial law, *a carnal commandment*, (*Heb. vii. 16.*) pertaining only to the body; nor like human laws, which can take no cognizance of crimes, farther than they appear by overt-acts. No, we are thoroughly satisfied, that this excellent law is of a spiritual nature, every way worthy its author, who is *a Spirit*, and *the God of the spirits of all flesh*, (*John iv. 24. and Numb. xvi. 22.*) and that therefore it extends its requirements to the *soul*, in all its powers and faculties, thoughts and dispositions, principles, motives, and ends; demands internal and spiritual, as well as external and bodily service; and forbids heart-sins, as well as every irregularity in the life and conversation: But, alas! to tell you now my *present*, as (*ver. 7. 23.*) I did my former, experience; after all the renovation in the spirit of my mind, there are still such remainders of indwelling corruption in me, and so many comings short of the spirituality and wide extent of this law, that when I view myself in its pure and holy light, and compare my own heart and ways with the perfection it requires *, I find myself to be, in too great measure,

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* That the apostle here, and in the following verses to the end of the chapter, speaks of himself, with relation to what he found, after he had been renewed and called by grace,

carnal, sold under sin.

measure, carnal still, or, comparatively speaking, but imperfectly renewed; and though I am no longer like the wicked *Ahab*, and those idolatrous *Israelites*, who voluntarily *sold themselves to do evil*, (1 Kings xxi. 20. and 2 Kings xvii. 17.) yet, against my own will, I am sometimes carried into captivity to sin unawares, (ver. 23.) by its secret and treacherous workings, under the power of temptation; and instead of being a free servant of sin, I at such seasons am rather like a slave, who has been sold into the hands of that detestable tyrant, by the fall

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grace, appears from his changing the *tense*, when he enters upon this branch of his discourse. Whereas he spoke, in the former part of the chapter, of what he was before conversion; he now all along speaks of himself in the *present tense*, with regard to what he experienced after he was converted, in the struggles that passed in his own soul, between the remainders of indwelling corruption, and the principle of grace, which was wrought in him. Accordingly, in relating this conflict, from the beginning to the end, he speaks of two contrary principles, in such a manner as to distinguish his renewed self from sin, that dwelt in him, and personalizes *sin* and *grace*, under the character of two *I's*, as though they were two different persons in him, (ver. 15,—19.) One of these he calls, *the law of sin in his members, the flesh, and the sin that dwelt in him*; and the other, *his mind, the law of his mind, and the inner man*, (ver. 20, 21, 23, 25.) And the strongest expressions he uses to set forth the power of the sinful principle, such as his *being sold under sin, brought into captivity to the law of his members, and serving the law of sin with the flesh*, (ver. 14, 23, 25.) are by no means inconsistent with a regenerate state; if we consider them (which the turn of his expressions intimates we should) as relating, not to the general course of his life, but only to some particular acts, and to a sort of involuntary subjection, on some occasions, and at some certain seasons, through the lusting or willing of the flesh against the spirit, which he elsewhere represents to be the case in true believers themselves, (Gal. v. 17.) But the *high things* he mentions of his habitually *disallowing* and *bating* the evil which he did, inasmuch that it was not so properly *he himself that did it*, but *sin that dwelt in him*; and of his *consenting to the law that it is good, delighting in it after the inner man, and serving it with the mind*, so that *he himself served it*, his understanding, will, and affections, every faculty of his soul, were set with a holy bias towards it, (ver. 15, 16, 17, 21, 25.) All this is much more than can be justly said of any unregenerate man whatsoever, whose judgment and conscience draw one way,

while his will and affections draw another, in his conflicts with sin; but the approbation of his mind, the consent of his will, and the delight of his affections are never *habitually* and *unitedly* set for that which is good: Nor do the apostle's groanings under the body of sin, and for deliverance from it, together with his thankful confidence of *deliverance through Jesus Christ*, (ver. 24, 25.) agree to any, but those that have the grace of God in truth. We may add to all this, what to me, though not observed, as far as I find, by any expositors, is a decisive evidence, that in these verses the apostle speaks of himself as *regenerate*, viz. that the *style* he here uses is entirely different from that in which he speaks of unregenerate men, in the foregoing and following context. There he represents them, as *obeying sin in the lusts thereof, as yielding themselves servants to obey it, and their members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity*, (chap. vi. 12, 13, 16, 19.) as being in the *flesh, when the motions of sin, which were by the law, worked in their members to bring forth fruit unto death*, (chap. vii. 5.) as being *after the flesh, and carnally minded*; and as *minding the things of the flesh, and walking after the flesh, and having such enmity against God*, that they neither were, nor could be *subject to his law, or please him*, (chap. viii. 5,—8.) But nothing of this kind occurs in the account he here gives of himself. Let therefore any one attentively and impartially read and compare the several parts of these chapters; and then judge, whether there be not many of the terms, under which the apostle speaks of himself in this chapter, from the 14th verse to the end, that can never be reconciled to his own description of an unregenerate man, in those other passages; and whether they may not be all fairly reconciled to the opposite descriptions which he there intermingles of believers, as *yielding themselves to God, and obeying from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to them, as being spiritually minded, and minding the things of the spirit, and walking after the spirit*, and the like, in the most prevailing bent of their hearts, and general course of their lives.

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would that do I not; but what I hate that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law, that it is good.

17 Now then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is

fall of my first father and covenant-head, and by my own former consent; the effects of which I still feel, at times, with sad regret.

15 For I am now far from allowing myself in any of the violations of God's law, which, through infirmity, temptation and surprise, I sometimes may be guilty of in thought, word, or deed; my settled judgment and purpose, and all the dispendency of my soul are against them; and I never go into them with deliberate choice: For the duties, that I propose to myself, in the governing views of life, and fain would be found in the constant practice of, I too often, through inadvertence, sloth, and indolence, am prone to neglect, and do not perform, in so spiritual and perfect a manner, as I sincerely desire to do; but on the other hand, the sins, that I habitually and determinately have the utmost abhorrence of, and, at times, my warmest indignation is raised against, I, at other times, to my great grief and humbling before God, am insensibly drawn into.

16 If then whatsoever I do, that is contrary to the holy law of God, is what I have a supreme and settled aversion to, and my mind and will are habitually turned against; this evidently shews me to be so far renewed, as that I, in my very heart, am at full agreement with the law, and, like *David*, (*Psal. cxix. 128.*) *esteem all its precepts*, in whatever it commands, or forbids, *concerning all things to be right*; and that (*εὐνομίᾳ*) I give my vote for it, and thoroughly approve of it, as a most excellent rule of righteousness, which requires nothing but what is altogether worthy of God to enjoin, and fit and good for me to observe, in every instance whatsoever.

17 Now the plain and natural inference from this is, that, through the change which divine grace has made in me, it is no longer my whole self; much less is it my renewed judgment, will, and affections, which are now most properly my self; nor is it still I, (*ἐγώ εἰμι*) as a willing and approving agent, that at any time transgress the law, either by sins of omission, or of commission; but every thing of this kind is the fruit of the corruption of nature, which I disavow; and which, like the *Canaanites* in the land of *Israel*, (*Numb. xxxiii. 55.*) still dwells in me, contrary to my own will, and is, at times, exceeding troublesome, and too hard for me.

18 For I know, by sad experience, that in me (my meaning is, that in my corrupt nature, as considered in itself, or so far forth, as it still remains not fully subdued) no spiritually good thing has any place or resi-

is present with me, but here to perform that which is good I find not,

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that when I

dence; all that I have of this sort proceeds from that better principle, which I received by renewing grace: For under the influence of this grace, my will is so entirely set towards all goodness and holiness, that its main bias stands ready for it, and makes it the matter of its fixed purpose and choice: But, alas! there are times and seasons, when, through the power of remaining corruption, and concurring temptations, and for want of a due presence of mind, and lively exercise of faith, I do not find a vigorous activity in my soul, to execute my best resolutions for performing holy duties, and doing good, at least not in that spiritual manner, and to that degree of eminence, as I sincerely desire to do.

19 For though I am, through mercy, kept from gross sins, and am helped, in the general course of my conduct, to have an unfeigned respect to all God's commands; yet, as I said before, (*ver.* 15, 16.) I do not, in fact, perform all the good, by an universal conformity and obedience to the law, which I aim at, labour after, and should be glad continually to abound in: But *in many things I still offend*, (*Jam.* iii. 2.) and too frequently fall into such sins of infirmity, in unguarded moments, as I am really averse to, and would by no means indulge.

20 Now if, as is the truth of my case, I sometimes, in fact, do such evil things, as the full bent and inclination of my will is, upon judgment and deliberation, habitually set against, I must insist upon it, to the glory of God's grace in me; to the reputation of his law, as holy, just, and good; and to the reproach of sin, as it is an unreasonable violation of that faultless and excellent rule of righteousness, that it is not still, as it formerly was, I myself, that knowingly and willingly do the abominable things which God hates; but it is owing to the unnatural force I am sometimes under from the workings of that principle of sin which I must own, to the humbling of my soul before God, still remains in me, and is not opposed, watched, prayed and laboured against, so much as it ought to be by me; so that were I to say, *that I have no sin, I should deceive myself, and the truth would not be in me.* (*John* i. 8.)

21 I therefore ⁽²²⁾ find, by woful experience *, an evil principle still working in me, which, though it be

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* By this *law* the apostle seems to mean the corrupt principle which inclines to all evil, in opposition to the law of God, and to a principle of grace in the heart; and which may be called *a law*, because it prescribes contrary rules of conduct, and enforces them

by powerful motives, such as the sensitive rewards or punishments of complying, or not complying with it; and so operates, after the manner of a law, in its influence to the doing of evil.

I would do good
evil is present
with me.

in a crucified state, that it may be destroyed, (*chap. vi. 6.*) yet it sometimes so far revives, and exerts itself, like a law, by suggesting sinful things, and proposing such allurements of sensitive ease, pleasure, and worldly advantages, to draw me into its vile design; and by starting such discouragements from persecution, reproaches and unbelieving jealousies about the excellence and reality of spiritual and invisible things, to deter me from forsaking and quitting its evil ways, and from resolutely pursuing religious sentiments and practices; that when I fain would be doing that which is pleasing in the sight of God, and conformable to his holy law, indwelling sin is so near me, (*ἡ καὶ παροικεῖ*) that some bad motion too often presents itself immediately, to oppose and hinder my acting up to, and accomplishing the unfeigned and earnest desire of my heart; and leads me into one or another transgression unawares.

11 For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man.

22 For I can truly say, that I have the greatest complacency, and the noblest satisfaction, in all the pure and spiritual precepts of God's law, as right and good, and as what I take the highest pleasure in obeying, according to the prevailing sense of all the powers of my soul †, and so far as they are renewed.

23 But

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† This phrase, *the inner man*, I think is found in none of the sacred writings, but in those of our apostle; and is used but twice more in all the New Testament. Once in *1 Cor. iv. 16.* where he speaks of *the inward man's being renewed day by day*; and again, in *Eph. iii. 16.* where he prays that the *Ephestian* might be *strengthened with might by the spirit in the inner man*. And in both these places it has a manifest reference to *believers*; and seems to point to us, not only to the renewings and strengthenings of their minds, and all the inmost powers of their souls, but likewise to the further advancement of that good work which was already begun in them, as they were before supposed to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit; and so, though the *inner man* primarily signifies the *soul*, it, in the apostle's use of it, takes in also the idea of a *renewed soul*, and answers to what he, at other times, calls the *new man*, (*Eph. iv. 24.* and *Col. iii. 10.*) And what is this? but the effect of God's gracious covenant-promise to his people, that he would *put his law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*, (*Jer. xxxi. 33.*) When therefore the apostle speaks of his *delighting in the law of God after the inner man*, it intimates, that the inmost bent and bias of his heart was set towards it, which is the character of *true believers*, who are abundantly described in the *Scripture*, as those that *love the law of God*, and

delight in his commandments: Whereas the *inward parts* of unregenerate sinners are represented to be *full of wickedness*, *Psal. v. 9.* and *Luke xi. 39.*; and, in our apostle's description, he tells us, *The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*, (*Rom. viii. 7.* See the note on ver. 14. of this chapter.) But how is it possible that this should consist with *delighting in the law of God, after the inner man*? It is indeed said of Herod, that he *heard John the Baptist gladly*, (*Mark vi. 20.*) and of the Jews, that they *rejoiced for a season in his light, and heard Christ gladly*, (*John v. 38.* and *Mark xii. 37.*) And it is said of some temporary believers, that they *heard the word, and anon with joy received it*, (*Matth. xiii. 20.*) But all this is to be understood of a delight in some good news, or *pleasing tidings*, which they apprehended were brought to them; but not of a delight in the *moral law*, as *holy, just, and good*: And even this delight was only from some present superficial stirrings in their affections, which were struck with pleasure, at the hearing of what they took to be agreeable to their interests, of one kind or other, while the governing temper of their hearts lay against all that is truly holy, and spiritually good; and so it could not be called, with any propriety, their *delighting in the law of God, after the inner man*, or in their very heart and soul.

23 But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God, through Jesus

23 But, alas! as I am still in an imperfect state, after all my attainments in Christianity, I find, by lamentable experience *, a remaining principle of corruption, which has a powerful influence, like a *law* in my sensitive passions and appetites, and which, like a *body*, consisting of many parts, exerts itself chiefly in, and by the members of the natural body; and wages war against the holy and approved light and propensions of my judgment and will, which like a superior law written in my heart, has the more stated predominancy in me; and yet sometimes when I am left to myself, and am under the power of temptation, that sinful principle prevails so far, as to draw me aside, and make me an unwilling captive, at such seasons †, to that law of sin, which as I said but now, chiefly operates in, and by the members of my body.

24 This is a deplorable consideration; it is my heaviest burden, and costs me many a groan, in my serious reflections upon it. O vile and miserable man that I am, as in myself considered, on this account! Who shall set me free from this body of sin ‡, which I still carry about with me, and from its dreadful consequences, which deserves and tends to death and ruin, and will continue to work in me as long as I dwell in mortal flesh, and which, unless I were some way delivered from it, would certainly issue in my everlasting destruction? While I look into myself, and into the holy law of God; and observe how contrary the workings of corruption in me are to its strict requirements, I am under the greatest discouragement, and have indeed the highest reason to despair of salvation by any works of my own.

25 But, blessed be God, I am already delivered by his free favour §, and the operation of his grace in me, from

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* The apostle having in this and the preceding chapter represented the corruption of nature, under the figure of *the old man, the law of sin, and the flesh*, here speaks of its effects in various forms by means of the body, and sensitive affections, and of temptations arising from thence, as *the law of his members*, in opposition to the *new man*, or that spiritual principle of grace and holiness, which subsisted, and ruled with full consent, in his soul; and is here called *the law of his mind*.

† Though this great apostle was eminent in grace and holiness, and was, doubtless, continually improving in them; yet, several years after this, he freely owned, (*Phil. iii. 12.*) that he had not already attained, nor was already perfect; which intimates, that his vic-

tories over sin, and his advancements in faith, love, and obedience, were imperfect, or not, even then, so complete as he wished for, and aimed at.

‡ By the *body of his death*, or *this body of death*, the apostle might mean, either *the body of sin*, which tended to death; or his *fleshy body*, which became mortal by reason of sin, (*chap. viii. 10.*) and in which original corruption was so interwoven, that, like the fretting leprosy under the law, (*Levit. xiv. 44, 45.*) it could never be perfectly purged out, till the earthly house of this tabernacle itself should be pulled down.

§ Several Greek copies, and several versions of good credit read, *the grace of God*, (*χαρις το Θεου*) instead of *I thank God*, (*ευχαριστω το Θεο*.) Vid. *Mill. in loc.* And as the apostle

his Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

from the guilt and dominion of sin; and have well grounded hopes of complete deliverance, in consequence thereof, at the dissolution of this mortal frame, from all its workings and remainders in me, through the obedience, sufferings, and advocacy of Jesus Christ, my Lord, and yours, who believe in him. So then, to sum up all in a few words, in my settled judgment and choice, as I am renewed by grace, I myself (*αυτος εγω*) with full approbation, resolution, and consent, devote the whole man to God, and yield an unfeigned, and unreserved obedience to his law, as his willing servant without objecting against any part of it: But so far, and so far only, as there are still disallowed workings of corruption in me, I sometimes am thereby brought under the power of propensions to sin, and into an unwilling servitude to its abominable interests and demands.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How excellent is the moral law, as the rule of obedience! In this view of it, it is unchangeable and everlastingly binding, and is fit and worthy to be so: For it is all holy, just, and good, and reaches to the thoughts of the heart, as well as to the actions of the life: It discovers and strictly forbids every sin, and stands clear of all charges of defect, or of being the cause of sin, or death, tho' the corruption of human nature takes occasion, from its purity and strictness, to rise up with the greater rebellion against it. But how monstrously iniquitous is this; and how impetuous are the workings of sin, in those that are strangers to renewing grace! It is utterly impatient of restraint; but brings the transgressor under a righteous sentence of condemnation and death; and is so abominably evil, that no words can so well paint out its proper deformity, as to call it *exceeding sinful*. How different are the sinners thoughts of his own state Godward before, and after he beholds himself in the glass of the law! He is alive in his own conceit without the law; overlooks his own defects and provocations, especially heart sins; and is full of himself, and fearless of the wrath of God: But when the commandment comes to his conscience, in the light and power of the Spirit, all his vain confidences die within him: He then sees himself to be guilty and law-condemned, and to be liable to, and deserving of eternal death, and utterly incapable of being justified by any righteousness of his own. And, O how happy is it not to be under the law, as a covenant of works! It was indeed ordained for life, in case of perfect obedience to it; but it is impossible for us, in our fallen state, to perform the righteousness it requires, as the condition of life; and yet it is exceeding strict and unyielding in its demands, and terribly rigorous in its curse for every disobedience. But they, that believe in Jesus, are as dead to this covenant as if they had never been under it; and are as much delivered from it as a wife is from the law of her dead husband. And as a woman may marry another man without incurring the guilt of adultery, after, though not before, her first husband is dead: So God, by the constitution of the new covenant, has espoused believers to Christ, not to acquit them of their natural obligations to the law of their creation, but to free them from its curse for their transgressions of it; and to engage and enable them, by virtue derived from their second living husband, to bring forth fruits of holiness to the praise and glory of God, that they may serve him in newness of the Spirit, and not in

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possible undoubtedly had his eye upon grace, as the spring of his relief and hope, in opposition to what might be expected from the law; and these words are a direct answer to the

foregoing question; the grace or favour of God must be, at least, included in his design, when he says, *I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

in the way of merely external performances. But, alas ! How great is the remainder of corruption in God's own people ! They are still in some degree carnal ; and are too often, though not with their full consent and approbation, carried into bondage and captivity to sin ; and, so far as they are unrenewed, no good thing dwells in them : For when they are left to themselves, and are under the power of temptation, they do not find such a readiness to perform good duties as they ought, and would ; but are, at times, betrayed into the commissions of sins which they hate and disallow of : and into the omission of duties which they would fain be constantly practising : And even when good desires and purposes are in their minds, they are sometimes troubled with the counteractings of evil thoughts, which hinder their steady and effectual pursuits, and executions of their noblest designs for God and religion. O how directly contrary is all this to the settled principles and dispositions of their holy souls ! Their inmost, habitual, and most governing sense and inclinations are entirely on the side of God's holy law, which they heartily consent to, approve of, and delight in, as every way right and fit ; so that they can truly say, it is not they themselves, as Christians and renewed, but the remainder of indwelling sin, that is the spring of it ; that they themselves, with their whole souls, sincerely serve the law of God, and would gladly do it in every instance whatsoever ! and that it is only so far forth as they are unrenewed, that they at any time act a contrary part, under a sort of force, in serving the law of sin. But how distressing are these workings of sin in them ! They are the greatest burthen of their lives, and cost them many a sigh and groan ; and make them earnestly long and pray for deliverance. And how reviving are the hopes of relief in Christ against this worst of evils, and this greatest sorrow of their hearts ! Were it not for this, they would think themselves wretched to an overwhelming. But O how supporting and comforting is the thought of that freedom, which they already have from the guilt and reign of sin, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ; and of that entire and everlasting deliverance which they shall consequently have from all remainders of it hereafter ! Blessed be God for Jesus Christ, and for this hope of a perfect and sinless state through him.

C H A P. VIII.

The apostle sets forth the freedom of believers from condemnation, and their real character, by which they may be distinguished from all others, 1,—8. Their privileges as having the Spirit of Christ, as their principle of life, their guide and witnesser, and in being the children of God, and heirs of glory, 9,—17. The comfort of their hopeful prospects under all present tribulations, 18,—25. Their assistance from the Spirit in prayer, 26, 27. Their interest in the love of God, as the original spring of all their blessings, 28,—30. And their triumph, through Christ, over all the enemies of their salvation, 31,—39.

TEXT.

7^{Here is therefore now no}
con-

PARAPHRASE.

SINCE therefore *, as I have shewn at large, (*chap. iii. 21. &c. and chap. iv. v. vi.*) and but now expressed my joy in it, (*chap. vii. 24.*) the grace of God, thro' Jesus

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* The particle (*ογα*) therefore, plainly shews that this is an inference from something that had been said before ; and it seems to be most immediately from the last verse of the

seventh chapter, where the apostle thanks God for deliverance, through Jesus Christ, from the guilt and reigning power of sin. But as that thought was founded upon his main argument,

condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Jesus Christ, delivers all true believers from the guilt and dominion of sin; in order to his freeing them, in due time, from all remainders of it; We may hence assuredly conclude, that there is now at present, even in this imperfect world, no sentence of law condemnation standing out against them, that are vitally united to Christ, and become members of his mystical body, through faith in him: They may humbly rejoice in this, that being thus in Christ, as their head and husband, the curse of the law is actually reversed on his account, as to them, who, though attended with many bewailed and condemnable infirmities, are distinguished from mere professors, by their acting, in the general and governing course of their lives and conversation, not according to the dictates and inclinations of corrupt nature, for gratifying the flesh; but according to the written word, which was indited by the Spirit; as also according to the spiritual principle, which was wrought in them by regenerating grace; and according to the suggestions, guidance, and assistances of the Spirit himself, and agreeable to his holy nature and will.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life,

2 For * as the moral law was in Christ, the anointed Saviour's heart; and he, according to covenant-engagements.

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ment, which he had pursued in the foregoing chapters, about the believer's being justified freely by God's grace, through faith, in the righteousness of Christ, and being enabled on that principle to live to God, we may carry our view back, not only to the immediately preceding verse, but likewise to his whole discourse on those heads, as the premises from which he drew this conclusion.

* As the apostle in this verse, and this only from the beginning to the end of the chapter, alters his style, and speaks again in the first person singular, as he had all along in the latter part of the preceding chapter; he seems here to refer back to the thanks he had offered to God, through Jesus Christ, for his deliverance from the body of death, in the close of that discourse, (ver. 24.) But among the various interpretations I have met with, of this phrase, *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, it is difficult fully to adjust any one of them to the direct scope of the apostle's argument in this and the two following verses, which evidently is, to support his assertion, (ver. 1.) that *there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*. It may possibly give some light to the passage before us, if we consider, that by *the law*, in the apostle's style, is often meant *the works*, and *the righteousness of the law* performed in obedience to it. Thus *the law*, and *the righteousness*

of the law, are with him terms of much the same import, in the two next verses, (ver. 3. 4.) and so are *keeping the law*, and *keeping the righteousness of the law*, (chap. ii. 25, 26.) *following after the law of righteousness*, and *seeking righteousness by the works of the law*, (chap. ix. 31, 32.) and *being justified by the law*, and *justified by the deeds, or by the works of the law*, (chap. iii. 20. and Gal. ii. 16. compared with Gal. iii. 11. and v. 4.) According to this sense of the word, *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, signifies his obedience to the law which was in his heart, (Psalm xl. 8.) which obedience he, as man, was fitted for, assisted in, and carried through by the Holy Spirit, by whose immediate operation his human nature was *that holy thing which was born of the virgin*, (Luke i. 35.) and by whose anointing above measure, our Lord went about doing good, (John x. 40.) and offered himself without spot to God, (Heb. ix. 14.) And he may be called *the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, because, by his joint agency with the Father and Son, the body of Christ was raised from the dead to immortal life; and because he is a quickening spirit to all that are in Christ, and will raise their mortal bodies to eternal life, as it follows in our context, ver. 10, 11. Now, though *the law* here spoken of, may, perhaps, have a reference to the eternal covenant between the Father and

life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

ments with the Father, on behalf of his people, completely satisfied it, by his obedience and sufferings in their room and stead, under the conduct and assistance of that Divine Spirit, who is life itself, and is an animating principle wherever he dwells, and worked powerfully in the human nature of Christ, to invigorate him in the whole of his mediatorial performances on earth, and then raised him from the dead; the righteousness of the law, which Christ thus fulfilled, being made over through faith, by the gracious constitution of the gospel, which is established in him, and becomes effectual, through the quickening influences of his Spirit, has discharged me from the condemning power of sin, which rendered me obnoxious to eternal death; and in consequence thereof, it has delivered me from the dominion of every iniquity: and, at the dissolution of this mortal frame, will entirely rid me of all the workings and indwellings of corruption, which I groan under, while I am here in the body. And this happy privilege is not peculiar to me, as an apostle; but equally belongs to all of us that believe.

3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,

3 For as the law, under the form of a covenant of works, made perfect obedience the condition of life, and pronounced a curse for every sin; it was impossible that any transgressor should ever be justified, or acquitted from condemnation, by its tenor, or by its own fulfilling the righteousness it requires: But that which was impossible for the law to do, (*το αδυνατον το νομου*) not from any defect in itself, which is holy, just, and good, and still the same, as when it was first ordained to life, (chap. vii. 10, 12.) and is as able to justify a sinless man as ever; but which it could not do, through the impediment, that arises from the corruption of nature, as this has brought us under guilt, and rendered us utterly insufficient to answer its just demands; and so has made

us

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Son, which was as a law to Christ, in his mediatorial capacity; yet as it may not be very easy to conceive how this should be called *the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*; and as the engagement, which Christ came under by the law of mediation, was to fulfil the moral law, in the room and stead of his people; I would rather understand it of the moral law, as fulfilled by him; and this makes the sense of the term law most uniform in the whole argument here, and in the two following verses; and gives an harmonious view of it, in all its parts, with full strength and force. But if by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus should be meant, as some have thought, the

dispensation, or doctrine of grace, as exhibited in the gospel; or if, as others apprehend, *the spirit of life*, signifies life itself, according to the use of this phrase in Rev. xi. 11. and so the law of the spirit of life in Christ denotes the powerful operation of this life, which is spoken of as a law in him, in opposition to the workings of the law of sin and death in us; both these senses, as well as that which refers to the law of mediation, may be understood in a manner very consistent with what, if I mistake not, is principally intended; and therefore, though I prefer this, as making the argument most of a piece, I have not wholly excluded those.

flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh :

us incapable subjects of its absolving and justifying sentence, by virtue of any thing found in us : This impossible thing to the law, God, in his infinite wisdom and grace, has done in another way, by sending into our world his own dear and essential Son, (*τοῦ σαρκὸς υἱόν*) who assumed human nature into personal union with himself ; so that he was *God manifested in the flesh*, (1 Tim. iii. 16.) and was truly *made of a woman, and made under the law*, (Gal. iv. 4.) and *that* in such a low condition *, as carried a resemblance of the sinful state into which we were fallen, though he really had no sin of his own : And being thus sent to do honour in our nature to the law, and answer the great designs of divine love to us, God, by the atoning sacrifice which he offered †, shewed his just and unyielding abhorrence of sin, and both passed and executed a judicial sentence against it, in the penal sufferings, that Christ, as our substitute, endured in his crucified flesh, when *he his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree*, (1 Pet. ii. 24.) and so God condemned sin in him, by inflicting the punishment due to it upon him ;

* That the righteousness of the

4 To the end that (*ὥστε*) the whole righteousness † demanded by the holy and broken law, in suffering its curse,

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* Christ appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, as he was attended with all the natural human infirmities of infancy and weakness, pain and poverty, hunger and thirst, mortality and death, which are the fruits of sin; and with external appearances of depravity in his circumcision, legal purification, (see the note on Luke ii. 22.) baptism, and reproachful sufferings under the curse of the law.

† For *sin* (*ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίας*) is the very phrase in the *septuagint*, by which the *sin-offerings*, that were typical of the sacrifice of Christ, were usually expressed. See a great many instances of this in Dr *Winby* on the place.

‡ The righteousness of the law evidently means the righteousness required by the moral law ; as it unquestionably does, when the apostle speaks of the *Gentiles keeping the righteousness of the law*, (chap. ii. 26.) which is the only place besides, where this phrase (*τὸ δίκαιον τοῦ νόμου*) is used. The moral law merit likewise needs be included at least, when in a kindred phrase, he says, (chap. x. 5.) *Moses describes the righteousness which is of the law*, (*τὸ δίκαιον τοῦ νόμου*) that the man which doth these things shall live by them. Accordingly it is here spoken of, as that righteousness of the law which is necessary to free us from condemnation; and the sins

against which were condemned in the flesh of Christ : And this righteousness's being fulfilled in us, or by, or for us, as the preposition (*ὅτι*) sometimes signifies, and is rendered, *by* and *for*, Matth. v. 34. and vi. 7. and Heb. i. 3.) seems by the turn of the expression, and the nature of the argument in hand, to refer to the righteousness which was wrought out by Christ, as our Head and Surety, for us, and is imputed for justification to us, through faith in him, as if it had been wrought out by ourselves, rather than to a righteousness that is personally fulfilled, or filled up by us, at this word (*πληρωθῇ*) signifies; and it is the same word that is used concerning Christ's fulfilling the law, (Matth. v. 17.) For as the law is said to be *weak through the flesh*, (ver. 3.) so we cannot be properly said to fulfil the righteousness of the law by our own imperfect, though sincere obedience to its precepts ; much less to give satisfaction to its threatenings, both of which go into the righteousness that a broken law demands : But Christ did the first of these for believers by his obedience, and the last by his death, when *sin was condemned in his flesh*. And if we here take the preposition (*ὅτι*) to signify *instead of*, as our grammarians and lexicographers tell us it is sometimes used, the sense will be, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled by Christ instead of us. However, it would be directly

the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

curse, as well as in obeying its precepts, might be fulfilled up by our public head and representative, in our nature, and in our room and stead; and so might be deemed, in *legal* estimation, to be fulfilled for, and by those of us, who are believers, not in the name and notion only, but in sincerity and truth; or who, as I said before, (*ver. 1.*) and now repeat it, because of its vast importance to prevent self-deceivings, have our stated and habitual conversation in the world toward God and man, not according to the principles of corrupt nature, which to our grief still remain in us: But according to those higher and nobler principles that are implanted in our hearts, and are continually maintained and assisted by the Spirit of God; and that are agreeable to his mind and will, and to the rule which he has given us in his inspired word, as also to the settled inclination and temper of our renewed souls: These, and none but these, are vitally in Christ; and so freed from condemnation through him.

5 For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

5 For, whatever our profession be, as to those that are still under the direction, power, and dominion of corrupt principles; they (*flesh*) habitually consult and relish, pursue and take pleasure in such worldly, sensual, and sinful things, as are agreeable to their carnal and unrenewed appetites, and may be styled *the works of the flesh*: (*Gal. v. 19.*) But on the contrary, as to those that are under the guidance, influence, and dominion of the Holy Spirit, and of the gracious principles which he infused into them in their regeneration; they (*spirit*) think of and are addicted to, contrive and relish, follow after and delight in those things that are of a spiritual and heavenly nature, agreeable to their renewed inclinations, and according to the dictates of the divine Spirit. And it is plain, that not the first, but only the last of these sorts of persons are united to Christ, as true believers, and are the happy subjects of freedom from condemnation by him:

6 For

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directly contrary to the whole design of the apostle's argument, to suppose that either obedience were to be performed, or satisfaction to be made to the law by believers themselves for their justification, or to free them from condemnation: And yet he, at the same time, maintains the necessity of personal obedience to the moral law, by his adding, at the close of this verse, and insisting upon it in several following verses, that this privilege belongs only to them, *who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, which secures that

point as much as if he had intended to say, that the end of what Christ did was, that they might, in their own persons, fulfil the righteousness of the law, as far as they might be capable of it in this life; for that is, in effect, the same thing with *walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, which the apostle here makes to be the distinguishing character of them in whom the righteousness of the law is fulfilled, just as he had before of them, *in whom there is now no condemnation*, on account of their being in Christ, (*ver. 1.*)

6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace:

6 For to have the prevailing bent, bias, and delight of the mind and heart turned to sensual, worldly, and sinful objects *, and to live and act accordingly, is, in its own nature, a spiritual death in trespasses and sins, which deserves, tends to, and persisted in, will certainly issue in eternal death: But to have our minds frequently complacently, intently, and transformingly employed about spiritual things, under the dominion of the Holy Ghost, and of spiritual principles, is itself a spiritual life, which fills the soul with the sweetest serenity and peace; and in the nature of things, and by the gracious constitution of the gospel, it tends to, and is the beginning and earnest of, everlasting life and peace in the enjoyment of the blessed God, and will certainly issue in it. This can never be said of any one that is in a carnal unregenerate state:

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

7 Because the whole bent and disposition of the carnal heart, which is set upon earthly things, as its chief and chosen good, stands in direct opposition to the blessed and holy God; to his perfections, authority, and government; to the revelation he has made of his mind and will; and to a conformity to him, and a spiritual enjoyment of him: It is not only disinclined and averse to him, but is downright enmity itself against him, under every consideration of him, that does not comport with, but would lay a restraint upon its pride and passions, or its depraved temper and interests, pleasures and designs, in any instance whatsoever: For such is its desperate malignity, and unyielding contrariety to the good and holy law of God, that it will by no means be brought into a subjection to his authority therein, or into a compliance with its spiritual and righteous demands; nor indeed has it any principles or dispositions of its own, that can be turned that way; the heart itself must be changed, by renewing grace, before it can be reconciled, or brought over to God.

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

8 So then, it clearly follows from all this, that they who are in a state of nature, under the power and dominion of carnal principles, and corrupt affections, are utterly unable of themselves, and while they continue in that state, to do any thing that is spiritually good, and pleasing in the sight of God: (see the paraphrase on chap. vii. 5.) And therefore they cannot, in any consistency

N O T E.

* To be carnally minded (*το σαρικῶς νοεῖν*) is the same expression in the Greek that is rendered in the next verse the carnal mind, and signifies the counsel, wisdom, affection, and desire of the flesh, and the like:

And so to be spiritually minded (*το πνευματικῶς νοεῖν*) bears a sense opposite to the others, and both these expressions correspond to what was called, *mindings* or *framing the things of the flesh and the things of the Spirit*, ver. 5.

tence with his holy nature and will, and with the honour of his law and government, be so in Christ, as to be discharged from the condemning sentence of the law, and accepted of God to eternal life.

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

9 But I am persuaded better things of you, brethren, though I thus speak, (*Heb. vi. 9.*): Ye are not under the dominion of corrupt nature, though there be lamented and opposed remainders of it still with you: But ye are under the prevalent guidance and government of the Holy Spirit, and of a spiritual and gracious principle, which he has wrought in you; because he has taken up an abiding residence in you, as in his temple, by way of special relation, and peculiar manifestation and influence*; and it is undoubtedly true, that ye are regenerated and ruled by this Divine Spirit, in case he thus really dwells in you, as I trust he doth. But (†) if, after all, there should be any of you, that is not partaker of the renewing and sanctifying operations of the Holy Ghost, who is as properly the Spirit of the Son †, as of the Father, I must be so faithful as to tell you plainly, that, be such a person's pretences what they will, he is not united to Christ, as a member of his mystical body, through faith in him; he is not a child in his family by adoption and the new birth; he is not a subject of his kingdom by the conquests of his grace; nor has he any claim to his care of him, as his property and charge for eternal salvation; and, if he lives and dies in his present condition, Christ will not own him for *his*, nor adjudge him to eternal life, as such, at the last day.

10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because

10 On the contrary, If Christ by his Spirit has taken up his abode in you, as in those that are united to him; your bodies indeed are still mortal, and will certainly die, as well as other mens, by reason of the first transgression, which has subjected all mankind to corporal death according to the sentence which God pronounced upon them in *Adam*, their publick head, (*Gen. iii. 19.*); and because of the remainder of sin which still abides in you, and prevents the repeal of that part of the sentence, which relates merely to temporal death, till in a sinless state, mortality shall be swallowed up of life: Nevertheless,

N O T E S.

* The particle, (*utro*) if so be, might have been justly rendered, *because* the Spirit of God dwells in you: and so may be considered rather as a note of confidence than of doubt, concerning the Spirit of God's dwelling in them, whom the apostle had spoke of, (*chap. i. 7, 8*) as believers, that were beloved of God, and called to be saints. See *Blackwall's sacred classes*, vol. ii. p. 293. However, I have taken in both senses.

† The Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ, are here used promiscuously, as terms of the same import, to intimate, that Christ, as well as the Father, is God; and that the Holy Spirit as essentially belongs to, and is as inseparable from the Son, as from the Father himself; he being as much the spirit of the one, as of the other of these divine persons.

because of un-
righteousness.

theleis, your souls are already made spiritually alive, and shall live in glory and blessedness for ever, on account of the righteousness of Christ; because it is wrought out for you, and imputed to you, to deliver you from condemnation, and from the second death; and by means of that principle of true holiness, which is implanted in you to enable you to live to God here, and to make you meet for the inheritance of the saints in light hereafter.

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

11 And (31) as to your *bodies* themselves, they shall not always lye in the rotting grave, as though death were to have an everlasting dominion over them, and it were never to be turned into a blessing to them, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and in union with Christ: No, if the eternal Spirit of God the Father, who by his almighty agency, and in concurrence with him, raised up the dead body of Jesus, the Saviour, from the sepulchre *; if this Divine Spirit dwells in you by peculiar relation, and by quickening and sanctifying operation; he who raised up the anointed head of the church, as their representative, and as the *first-fruits of them that sleep* in him, (1 Cor. xv. 20.) will as certainly, in conformity to Christ's resurrection, and in virtue thereof, raise your dead bodies from the grave, at the last day, to a glorious and immortal life, by the same omnipotent energy of his Spirit, who has taken up a gracious and everlasting abode in you; and so the risen head and all his members shall be completely glorified together in the heavenly world.

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

12 Therefore, my dear brethren in Christ, as all mischief and ruin is owing to sin, and all the good we have, and hope for, is conveyed to us by the Holy Spirit; we certainly can be under no obligation to the law of sin, which is in our members, nor have any reasonable inducement to follow its pernicious motions, or yield obedience to its unrighteous demands: *For what fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? The end of those things, as I have already observed, is death,* (chap. vi. 21.) But we are under the highest obligations to the good Spirit of God; and have the strongest motives to live answerable to his holy dictates.

13 For

N O T E.

* The Father, Son, and Spirit, are here distinguished from each other by *personal* characters: And though Christ is spoken of, in his human nature, as raised from the dead; yet he, in his original nature, and the Holy Spirit, as well as the Father, are *divine* persons, undivided in essence and operation, and exerting one and the same power of the God-head, with joint concurrence in raising the

dead; as may be fairly concluded, because the resurrection of Christ and of believers is sometimes ascribed to God the Father, 1 Cor. vi. 14. at others to Christ himself, John ii. 22, 21. and v. 28, 29. and vi. 40. and at others to the Holy Ghost, as here, and 1 Pet. iii. 18. And that *quickening our mortal bodies* is meant of raising them to eternal life, see Dr Whist on the place.

13 For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

13 For if any of you, contrary to your Christian character and profession, and to my desire and hopes concerning you, should yield yourselves up to the suggestions of corrupt nature, for fulfilling the lusts of the flesh; the sure and sad effect will be, according to God's righteous threatening in his law, and your own just demerit, that whatever be your notions, pretences, and external privileges, ye will be found to have no real interest in Christ, and so will fall short of eternal life, and perish in, and for your iniquities, and *have your part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death, (Rev. xxi. 8.)* But if, on the contrary, as true believers in Christ, that are vitally united to him, ye, by the gracious aids and assistances of his Spirit, resist, subdue and crucify those corrupt affections, principles, and practices, that make up the body of sin, and chiefly vent themselves by, and consist in gratifications of the flesh; if, I say, ye maintain your holy opposition to them, till at length they expire, in conformity to your crucified Lord, and by virtue derived from him, as he died for your sins; ye, according to the gracious settlement of the gospel, on his account, shall live with him, soul and body, in mansions of all delight for ever.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God.

14 For whoever they be, that are conducted, assisted, and governed by the light and influence of the Spirit of God, in their minds, wills, and affections, way and walk; they, and they only are the sons of God by adoption, which gives them their title to everlasting life; and by a new birth, in which they are made partakers of an immortal and divine nature, in resemblance of their heavenly Father, that they may live to him here, and with him hereafter. And as many of you as are thus led by the Spirit, may be well assured of your sonship:

15 For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the

15 For *, under the gospel-state, ye have not received the Holy Spirit, to subject your souls again to such thralldom and servile fear, as resulted from, and was suited to the darkness and terror of the legal dispensation, (*Gal. iv. 3, 24, 25. and Heb. ii. 15.*) and as filled the minds of *Gentile* believers before they were converted; or as worked in your own consciences, when he first convinced you of sin, and awakened your fears of the wrath of God, as denounced in his law, on its account: But according to the light, liberty and joy of the New Testament-dispensation, ye have been made partakers of the Spirit, in those sweet and emboldening operations, which

N O T E.

* These words are brought in, not only as *deuce*, whereby they, that receive the Spirit of adoption, may know themselves to be so. a proof, that they, who are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God; but also as an evi-

the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

which are peculiar to the children of God, produce filial dispositions towards him; and by which we *, who are led into the full liberty of the gospel, whether we be *Jews or Gentiles*, put in our humble claim of special relation to God, and are enabled to address him in our prayers with affection, fervour, and importunity, and with holy reverence, confidence, and freedom, as our Father, in like manner as Christ himself did, when he said *Abba*, which signifies *Father*. (*Mark* xiv. 36.)

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

16 In this pouring out our souls to God, with an assurance of faith in him, through Jesus Christ, as our Father, the Divine Spirit himself †, by working these gracious dispositions in us, and by shining upon his own work with clear and distinguishing light, to shew us that he is indeed the author of it, by means of, and according to his word, bears an evident testimony, and gives our own souls a satisfactory assurance, and so concurs or joins with our own spirits in witnessing, that we are really brought into a covenant-relation to God, as his children, by adopting and regenerating grace.

17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him,

17 And as surely as we are, in such a peculiar sense, the children of our reconciled God and Father, we, by right of sonship, are entitled to a rich and glorious inheritance, answerable to the high dignity and relation, to which he has advanced us: We then are heirs of the great God himself, that all he is and has may be our portion, to be employed for our benefit, or enjoyed by us; and we are herein co-heirs, not indeed in an equality, but in our order and measure, as inheritors by grace, together with Christ himself, our elder brother, and in his right, who is by nature the eternal Son of God, and so is the original heir of all; and who condescended to be *made of a woman, and made under the law, to redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*, (*Gal.* iv. 4, 5.) He has brought us into this near and happy relation to his Father and our Father, (*John* xx. 17.) with whom he now lives in all his glory; and has given us an heirship with himself, that

N O T E S.

* *Abba* is a word of that Hebrew dialect which was commonly used in the apostle's days, and signifies *Father*. Accordingly it was pronounced in that language, by our Lord in his agony, *Mark* xiv. 36. and the evangelist, writing in *Greek*, very probably gave the interpretation of it. But as the apostle had no such occasion of using this term in a different language, his here mentioning it, and giving its signification in *Gr.*, and at the same time changing the person from *ye* to *we*, may possibly intimate,

that believing *Jews and Gentiles* have a like interest in, and pay a like regard, in their fervent addresses to God, as their Father. *Vid. Biji. Occom. Pad.* p. 434.

† The Spirit is here spoken of as a divine person, who in a free, intelligent, and authoritative manner, bears witness with our spirits; and God is said to know the mind of the Spirit, who makes intercession for the saints, (*ver.* 27.) And therefore this passage might be rendered, *The Spirit HIMSELF bears witness, &c.*

him, that we may be also glorified together.

that we might have a glorious resurrection to eternal life by him, and together with him, who is *the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence*, (Col. i. 18.); and if, as is to be expected in this sinful and uncertain world, we suffer and endure the greatest trials and persecutions even to death for his sake, and in conformity to him who calls us to them, and will stand by us in them, and carry us through them; it is also ordered, designed, and over-ruled to this happy end, that we may be also conformable to him in his joys and triumphs, and may reign with him, (2 Tim. ii. 12.) in his immediate presence, and by derivation from him, whose glory, reflected upon us, will make us exceeding glorious; and who will then publicly own us for his brethren, and give us a rich and everlasting amends for all our sufferings with faith and patience, after his example, and for his sake.

18 For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

18 For having carefully examined and balanced accounts, and *that* under divine and infallible direction, I compute, (*λογίζομαι*) and am thoroughly satisfied, that all the afflictions of every kind, that can possibly befall us in the body, while we are passing through this present transitory life, and are exercised with the sorest tribulations in these perilous days of persecution and reproach; all these, put together, are so short, light, and trivial, that they do not deserve to be once mentioned, as a counterpoise; or to be brought into the least comparison, in an estimate of loss and gain, or of merit and reward, with *the exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, (2 Cor. iv. 17.) which shall be clearly manifested to us, and in us, before the whole world of angels and men, at the revelation of Jesus Christ, *when he who is our life shall appear, and we shall appear with him in glory; and when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe*, (Col. iii. 4. and 2 Thess. i. 10.)

19 For the earnest expectation of

19 For so illustrious, important, and delightful is the state of things, which will then be introduced *, that

N O T E.

* The various interpretations that have been given of this and the three following extremely difficult verses, principally turn upon the different senses, in which the words, *creature*, (*κτίσις*) and *the whole creation*, or *every creature* (*πανα κτίσις*) may be taken; some understanding them of the whole visible creation of this lower world; and others only of mankind in general, or of the *Gentile* world in particular. In the first of these views, the apostle's discourse on this head is

as strong and noble a *prosopopeia* as we anywhere meet with, either in scripture, or in any other celebrated writings whatsoever. In the second, the expressions are less figurative; and are to be understood in such a sense as is some way applicable to intelligent creatures. (See Blackwell's *sacred classics*, vol. i. p. 350.) And yet it is no easy matter to keep up such an application throughout, in full consistency with the state of mankind in general, or of the *Gentile* world in particular, as Dr. Ham-

of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

that the human race in general, and the *Gentile* world itself, are earnestly wishing, longing, and waiting for the final happiness†, which they have only some confused notions of; but which will certainly attend the last days, when the exalted dignity of the sons of God shall be manifested in all its lustre, to make them appear like themselves; and when every one shall see them possessed of all the grandeur and delights that belong to the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, (ver. 17): Yea, so exceeding desirable is this state, that, methinks, even the whole creation, which lyes under the curse, and is so much disordered by sin; and particularly the brutal part of it, which suffers, and is so much oppressed, by the cruelties of men, lifts up its head, and it stretches forward, as looking, with eager impatience, (*ἀνταπαίδεια*) for the relieving advantageous alteration which shall then be made upon its whole frame, suitable to the wonderful scene of liberty, peace, and magnificence, that shall then be opened in honour to the children of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope:

20 For how much soever sin and folly, fickleness, weakness, misery, and death, which well deserve the name of vanity, have reigned over the whole human race, (*Job* xi. 12. *Psal.* lxxii. 9. and lxxviii. 33.) and how greatly soever the heathen world has fallen into vain superstition and idolatry, (*Rom.* i. 21,—23.) and though both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are liable to death, so that *every man walks in a vain show, and at his best estate is altogether vanity*, (*Psal.* xxxix. 5, 6.); yet they were not originally reduced to this wretched condition by their own choice, or of their own accord; but by the fall of the first man, *Adam*, their common father, and covenant-head; and by the judicial sentence of the great God, on account of his sin, (*Gen.* iii. 19.) as also by the power, subtilty, and malice of the devil, at whose instigation that sin was committed, (*Gen.* iii. 4, &c.) and who thereupon became the god of this world, who blinds the minds of them which believe not; and is the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience,

2 Cor.

N O T E S.

man and Dr *Whitby* put it. But, as it is not clear to me in which of these senses the term *creature* is most directly intended in this discourse, I have attempted a paraphrase that may comport with them all.

† This expectation and waiting may be ascribed even to the *Gentiles*, that had no explicit knowledge or belief of what this glorious state would be, much in the same manner as Christ, before his incarnation, was

called the desire of all nations: and the *Israelites* were said to wait for his law, (*Hag.* ii. 7. and *Isa.* xlii. 4.) And it intimates, that the felicity of this time will be so great as to be a proper object of the utmost desire of mankind, who could not but eagerly wish for it, upon its being revealed to them, with a prospect of their sharing in it, as it now was to the *Gentile* world.

(2 Cor. iv. 4. and Eph. ii. 2.) And to the like origin are owing all the religious disorders and confusions that have spread through the whole frame of nature, which are contrary to its primitive principles and tendencies, but were brought upon it by the sin of man, and by the righteous curse of God; a specimen of which was given in *that* which passed upon the ground for his sake, (Gen. iii. 17, 18.) and by Satan, *the prince of the power of the air*, who has ever since helped it forward, by his malignant, though invisible agency, as in the destruction which God suffered him to bring, by storms, upon Job's children and cattle, (Job i. 17-19.)

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

21 But this sad state, in which mankind and all creatures of this lower world are involved, is not absolutely desperate: They, according to their respective natures, are waiting like persons in hope*, that a time of deliverance will come to them. Thus the *Gentiles*, as well as mankind in general, are not without some wishful hope, that they shall one day be set at liberty from their servitude to sin and Satan, and *from the power of death, through fear of which they have been all their life-time subject to bondage*, (Heb. ii. 15.) and that some time or other they shall be brought into a happy condition, which we, by the gospel-revelation, know to be the inheritance that shall be enjoyed, in a glorious state of liberty, by all the children of God: And, while we observe the present unnatural situation of the sensitive and inanimate parts of the world, we seem to see them looking forward in hope, that *they* also, at the restitution of all things, (Acts iii. 21.) shall be delivered from all the oppression and confusion, which, by the sin of man, they have been subjected to; and that they shall be restored to their primitive liberty and order, which, in a vastly more exalted degree and kind, God's own children will be advanced unto, *in the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwells righteousness*. (2 Pet. iii. 13.)

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth, and

22 For we Christians very well know, by observation, and by the word of God, that (*πάσα κτίσις*) all the human race groan together, like over-loaded men, under the

N O T E.

* In hope, as some expositors observe, should be rather made the beginning of the 21st, than the close of the 20th verse. And I should chuse to consider all that comes between the 19th verse, and *in hope*, as a parenthesis, to shew how the creature became subject to vanity; and so the connection stands thus: *The earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God in hope (ver.) that the creature itself shall also be delivered, &c.* This makes the sense

clear and easy: But it is all confused, and hardly explicable, on supposition, that *in hope* refers to him who has subjected the creature to its present state of vanity. He who has done this, some say is the devil, others Adam, and others God. I take it to be most directly and immediately meant of Adam; and yet as God had a righteous, and the devil a wicked and tyrannical hand in it, I have included them all.

and travaileth in
pains together un-
til now :

the burden of sin and misery, and are distressed, like women in labour, (*οὐρανῶν καὶ γυναικῶν*) earnestly wishing and longing for deliverance, as they have done from the fall of man to this very day : Yea, many of the *Gentiles* are at present under the pangs of the new birth, and have been so, ever since the gospel was first preached to them : And even the animals themselves, like creatures oppressed under the burden of the curse which is laid upon them, are, as it were, still heaving and struggling after a happy deliverance, not only from their yoke of servitude, but also from the cruelties and abuses which they undergo to the dishonour of God, their Creator, and for the gratification of the more than brutish lusts of those that tyrannize over them, and riot upon them.

23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body,

23 And there are not only among all ranks of creatures, according to their different kinds, these strong aspirations after a better state, to free them from the heavy pressures that lye upon them ; but we ourselves likewise, who have already received the earnest of the Spirit, in his sanctifying, sealing, and comforting operations *, which, like the first-fruits of harvest, tho' incomparatively small, are of the same kind with the whole, and are pledges, evidences, and securities of our hereafter enjoying the heavenly inheritance, (*Eph. i. 13, 14.*) : We Christians, I say, not being yet arrived to that high pitch of holiness and happiness which we are breathing after ; even we ourselves, notwithstanding all our present joy and peace in believing, are exceedingly troubled, and secretly groan in our own spirits, under an affecting and humbling sense of the body of sin, which still remains with us, and of all the afflictions and the corporal death which it subjects us to, (*chap. vii. 23, 24.*) and we wait with longing desire, and assured hope, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, for a complete possession of all the exalted privileges and blessings which are entailed upon, and are the fruits of, our adoption into the family of God ; and which shall be perfected in the deliverance of our mortal bodies from the power of death, and in their resurrection to an immortal life, *that they may be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body*, (*Phil.*

iii.

N O T E.

* "The first-fruits, says the pious and ingenious Dr Watts, of any field, or plant, or tree, are of the same kind with the full product, or the harvest : Therefore it is plain, that the first-fruits of the Spirit in this place, cannot chiefly signify the gifts of the Spirit, such as the gifts of healing, or of miracles, nor the gifts of prophecy, preaching, or praying, because these are

"not the employments nor the enjoyments of heaven. The first-fruits of the Spirit must rather refer therefore to the knowledge and holiness, the graces and the joys which are more perfect and glorious in the heavenly state, than they were ever designed to be here upon earth." *The world to come*, vol. II. p. 116.

iii. 21.) and that we, in our whole persons, may be advanced to all the dignity and delights which shall be revealed in us, as *heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.* (ver. 17, 18.)

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

24 For, at present, we have not this complete salvation in actual possession, but only in hope, and sure reversion, as it is laid up, and secured in Christ for us: But hope of things that are already enjoyed, is not, properly speaking, *hope*, which is a comfortable expectation of some *future* benefit: For what any one has in hand, and sees himself possessed of, How can it be said, with any propriety, that he still only hopes for it? Or why should he talk of hoping for what he already has in enjoyment.

25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

25 But if we do indeed hope for deliverance from all that here defiles and distresses us, and for something still better than we yet enjoy; we then, in proportion to the strength and assurance of our hope, patiently endure all present trials and afflictions, and *rejoice in hope of the glory of God, (chap. v. 2, &c.)*; waiting, in his way, with calm and humble resignation, for his time of admitting us to it, and with firm expectation, that it will entirely dismit us from all the evils we are here groaning under, and will crown us with everlasting blessedness and honour.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the

26 And as this delightful hope encourages and supports our patient waiting, under all our present griefs and burdens; so the Holy Spirit likewise assists and relieves us, (*consolat, adiuvat*) by his concurring light and energy, under all the imperfections, weaknesses, and troubles of this mortal life; which would otherwise carry us into unreasonable and impatient desires of deliverance, before God's time: For, by reason of remaining darkness, selfishness, carnality, and perturbation of spirit, we often misjudge of what may be most for God's glory and our own good; and so, as to the *matter* of prayer, we are, of ourselves, at a loss, in many circumstances, to know what petitions are best for us to offer; and as to the *manner* of prayer, we are as little capable of knowing how to order our addresses to God, in so believing, spiritual and fervent, holy, humble and submissive a manner, and with such unitedness of heart, free from wanderings and distractions, as in duty becomes us, and as is necessary unto the acceptableness of our humble pleas with him. But that divine person whom our blessed Lord promised to send as the paraclete, or Comforter, (*John xvi. 7.*) and whom we have received as *the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Ab-*

the Spirit itself make.h intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

28 And we know that all things

ba, Father, (ver. 15. of this chapter,) even the Holy Ghost himself, as *the spirit of grace and supplication.* (*Zach. xii. 10.*) indites our prayers for us, by his gracious suggestions to us *; and excites and enables us to offer them up with such vehement panting and breathings of soul, in an admirable mixture of faith and patience, importunity and hope, for seasonable succour under, and deliverance from, all our pressing weights and troubles in this present mortal state, as exceed the power of language to express, and as sometimes melt and sweetly overwhelm our souls to such a degree, that we cannot tell how to form them into suitable words.

27 But (2d) whether we can fully express these inward strong workings of our souls, in a just and proper manner, or not; the omniscient God, whose peculiar prerogative it is to know and search the hearts of the children of men, (*1 Kings viii. 39.* and *1 Chron. xxviii. 9.*) is not only acquainted with, but observes, and approves of, what we aim at, and are earnestly pressing after, under the influence, and according to the design of the blessed Spirit's dictates to us; because all his assistances of holy souls, in their desires and pleas, are perfectly agreeable to the mind and will of God, and to the declarations of his word: We therefore may be confident that he hears, and in due time will answer us, in *whatsoever we ask according to his will.* (*1 John v. 14.*)

28 And, for our further comfort, under all our present groanings, we, who believe, are fully satisfied, from God's peculiar relation and affection to his children thro' Jesus Christ, from the tenor of his gracious covenant, and from our own and other Christians experience, that every occurrence of providence, and even the worst circumstances that can befall us, in this present frail and imperfect state, are wisely and kindly ordered to our advantage: Yea, though they be ever so dark, perplexing, and seemingly contrary to us, and though, viewing them apart, and by themselves, we are apt to say, with good old *Jacob*, (*Gen. xlii. 36.*); *All these things are against*

N O T E.

* *The Spirit's making intercession*, is not to be understood of his acting the part of a mediator between God and us, or with God for us, which is the peculiar office of Christ, our great high priest and advocate: For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, (*1 Tim. ii. 5.*) But it is meant of his relieving our infirmities, as our counsellor and assister, in our religious addresses to God: For his interceding is said to be, not by his agency with God, but *with us*, to help our infirmities, and to excite and

regulate our groanings. And God is spoken of, as *the searcher of our hearts*, with respect to his knowing the mind of the spirit, or the thoughts which he raises in our minds; and to the spirit's making intercession for us, is his causing us to pray, in a right manner for ourselves, just as his crying, *Abba, Father*, (*Gal. iv. 6.*) is his enabling us to cry. Accordingly our apostle, (ver. 15.) speaks of him as *the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

against us; yet it is an established maxim of faith with us, that, by the over-ruling wisdom, power, and grace of God, they not only hereafter shall, but even now at present do, co-operate, (*συνεργῶν*) in their connections and issues, one with another, together with his special influence, and the serious reflections of a sanctified mind, to promote the spiritual and eternal welfare of them, that have a sincere and predominant affection to God, as their chief good, and highest end; even of them, who have not only heard the rich overtures of the gospel, with the hearing of the ear *; but are likewise brought, by the inward and effectual workings of the Spirit with the word, to hearken to it, and embrace it; and so are emphatically, and in a way of peculiarity, *the called of God*, (*τοὶ καλεσμένοι*) not indeed according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.)

29 For whom he did foreknow he

29 And this eternal purpose of God's unsearchable wisdom and grace, is the original spring of all the good we have in hand, and in hope: For thus stands the holy connection of his sovereign and merciful decrees, and the order of his executing them, by various steps, in a way becoming himself, till they be all fulfilled in our complete salvation; those among the sinful and miserable race of mankind, who, in common with the rest of the world, are in themselves utterly unworthy of his favour †, but whom, in his kind thoughts from everlasting,

NOTES.

* As our Lord tells us, that *many are called, but few are chosen*, Matth. xx. 16. (see the note there,) so this calling of God, according to his purpose, cannot relate to them, that are only externally called by the gospel according to the eternal design of God, that it should be preached to them; because all things cannot be said to *work together for good to them*, that are only called in that sense, as appears from multitudes that are hardened in their wickedness, and perish under the gospel: And the calling here spoken of, is only of such as *love God*, and so are effectually wrought upon to yield obedience to his call, by means of the gospel, according to his eternal purpose, that they should be so, through the attending power of his Spirit; And it is such a calling, as is connected with, and certainly issues in, the justification and glorification of all that are partakers of it, as appears from ver. 30. See also the note on chap. ix. 6.

† God's foreknowing them is not to be understood merely of his prescience, as all things lay eternally, in one comprehensive view,

before his infinite mind: For, in this sense, *known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world*, (Acts xv. 18.) and so he foreknew every thing relating to all others, as well as to the persons here intended; whereas something distinguishing is apparently meant in his foreknowledge of these. Nor is it to be understood of his fore-approving them, on account of his seeing before-hand that they would be true lovers of him, and be holy in conformity to Christ: For he predestinated them, not as conformed, but *to be conformed to the image of his Son*; and he chose them in him, before the foundation of the world, not because he foresaw that they would be, but *that they might, or should be holy, and without blame before him in love*, (Eph. i. 4.) So that every thing of this kind is the consequence and effect, and not the cause of the foreknowledge here spoken of. It is therefore, I humbly apprehend, to be taken for God's distinguishing and appropriating regard to them, in a way of love, kindness, and choice, by an act of his understanding, in concurrence with his gracious will: Hence

he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

lasting, according to the good pleasure of his will, (Eph. i. 5.) he set his free love and choice upon: These very persons he also determined, before all worlds, should be made conformable, in due time, to his own eternal Son, by their bearing his likeness, as far as possible, in holiness, and needful sufferings here, and in all the glory and blessedness of the heavenly state hereafter, (ver. 17.) that he might have the dignity of being the prince, ruler, and chief of a numerous family, whom he is not ashamed to call his brethren, (Heb. ii. 11.) and for whom he rose, as the first-born from the dead, (Col. i. 18.) that they might rise after him to glory; and that as they have bore the image of the earthly, they might also bear the image of the heavenly. (1 Cor. xv. 49.)

30 Moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called: and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified.

30 Furthermore, those whom God in this manner fore ordained from all eternity, to holiness and sufferings, as proper means, in this fallen world, of training them up, and fitting them for the heavenly glory, which he appointed them unto, as the end; them he also, in execution of his decrees, effectually called out of darkness into his marvellous light, (1 Pet. ii. 9.); and whom he thus called internally by his grace, as well as externally by the gospel, them he also acquitted from guilt and law-condemnation, and accepted as righteous, thro' the righteousness of his Son: And whom he thus freely justified, them he also advanced to all the honours and enjoyments of the heavenly world, where they are freed from all their tribulations, and are glorified together with, and in conformity to their exalted head and Redeemer f.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God

31 What shall we then think, or say, in reflection upon these great and gracious designs and performances of

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it is called, *His good pleasure, which he has purposed in himself; and the counsel of his own will*, (Eph. i. 9. 11.) to shew that it is an act of sovereignty in God, and yet is conducted with unerring judgment, as well as peculiar love, though the reasons of it lie entirely within himself, beyond the reach of our account; and this is called his *own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began*, 2 Tim. i. 9. Accordingly knowing often signifies such a knowledge as is with love and choice, as in Exod. xxxiii. 17. Amos iii. 2. John x. 14. 15. and 1 Tim. ii. 19. Answerable herunto, God's *fore-knowledge* is used in such a sense relating to his decrees, as includes his affection and good-will, chap. xi. 2. (See the note there,) where the apostle says, *God hath not call away his people, whom he foreknew*; and the apostle Peter speaks of the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through justification

of the Spirit unto obedience, &c. (1 Pet. i. 2.) And the same word, that, in the place before us, is rendered *fore-known*, (*προγνωστος*) is translated *fore-ordained* (*προορισμενος*) 1 Pet. i. 20. And it seems to be of much the same import with God's gracious purpose, which is mentioned at the close of the preceding verse in this eighth chapter to the *ROMANS*.

† All this is spoken of as already done in the gracious purpose of God, which has inseparably connected these happy effects together, to be accomplished in their proper order; and because, by virtue of his eternal decree, there is an intallible certainty of these great events, with respect to every appointed heir of salvation, they are mentioned as if they were already past: But it can no more be inferred from hence, that they were actually and personally justified, than that they were actually and personally called and glorified, from eternity.

God be for us,
who can be against
us?

of God for us, who in ourselves are so utterly unworthy of them, and are still encompassed with so many infirmities, difficulties and dangers? How can we sufficiently admire and rejoice in his love? Or what can we wish for more, to encourage our patience and hope, and to support, comfort and secure us under all our troubles? If, as we have seen, the infinitely wise, unchangeable, and almighty God be such a sure and fast friend to us, and his perfections, purposes, promises, and operations be all on our side, to secure our eternal happiness, what signify all the malicious, crafty, and powerful attempts of our most inveterate enemies, be they ever so great or many, against us? What hurt can the world, the devil, and all his instruments do unto us? Or why should we be dismay'd at them?

31 He that
spared not his own
Son, but deliver-
ed him up for us
all, how shall he
not with him al-
so freely give us
all things?

32 He who loved us at such a surprising rate; that, rather than we should perish, he did not withhold his own proper, and only begotten Son, (*re idem uon ex equitate*) and did not favour or abate him in any thing that in law and justice was due to us for our iniquities, and was necessary to be suffered in order to our redemption; but of his own accord, unasked by us, delivered him up to bear our sins, and to die in our room and stead, as a sacrifice of atonement for every one of us *, whom he has chosen and called to grace and glory: How unreasonable is it to suppose, that, with this grand capital gift, which was so dear to himself, and by which a purchase was made of all other blessings at the vast expence of his own Son's precious blood; how can it be thought that this God will not, in the riches of his love and grace, freely give us, together with him, and for his sake, every thing else that is needful for us, relating to soul and body, till all be completed in eternal salvation? he, who has done the greater for us, even when we were enemies, will undoubtedly do the less, now he has made us friends. Whether therefore we consider our danger, on account of our sins or sufferings, neither of them shall be our ruin.

33 Who shall
lay

33 As to our *sins*, though, alas! they have been many and great, and we have too much still to charge ourselves with, and to mourn over and be humbled for; and tho' Satan and the world, and our own consciences may

N O T E.

* The sense of *us all* is to be determined by the subjects that are spoken of all along in this discourse; and they are God's elect, whom he predestinated, called, justified, and glorified; whom God is for, in such a manner that none can prevail against them; and to whom he freely gives all things, and makes all

things work together for good; and who are more than conquerors, through him that loved them, and never shall be separated from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, as they are described in the foregoing and following context.

lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth:

may justly accuse us; yet who shall implead, (*τις ἐναντιοῖται*) or prosecute us at the bar of God, and fix a law-charge of guilt upon any of us who are the objects of his peculiar choice, and whom, as has been said, (*ver. 30.*) he has called and justified? None can do this: For it is God himself, whose judgment is according to truth, that accounts and pronounces us absolved from guilt, and righteous to eternal life: And as he, and he only, who is the party offended by sin, and is judge of the law, can justify; so he abides by his own sentence, and will suffer none to reverse it †.

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

34 Though there are indeed many things condemnable in us, and a malicious world is ready, on all occasions, to aggravate our faults, and pass the severest censures upon us; and though we may be unjustly condemned at the bar of men: Yet who is he, that shall undertake to subject us to the curse of the law, and condemn us at the bar of God, to our eternal destruction? men and devils cannot, and we may be sure that our dear Redeemer will not: For it is he, who, in the greatness of his love, freely put himself into our law-place to redeem us from its curse, (*Gal. iii. 13.*) and gave his life a ransom for us, (*Matth. xx. 28.*): Yea, rather, to strengthen our humble confidence in him, I add, that it is he, who was not only delivered for our offences; but rose again, as a public head, for our justification, (*chap. iv. 25.*) and who, in further token, that divine justice is fully satisfied by his death, is now exalted to the highest authority and glory, in God the Father's immediate presence, which, to speak in figurative terms that are expressive of the greatest dignity and honour, (see the note on *Acts vii. 55.*) may be called his sitting on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens, (*Heb. viii. 1.*) to exercise an universal rule and dominion for our advantage, and to pass a public absolving sentence upon us, as our Judge, at the last day: And that we may entirely depend upon his friendship, to secure our standing in the favour of God, we are assured that he ever lives, as a righteous advocate, to plead the merit of his atoning blood in his prevalent intercession for us; in which he represents his will and claim, that we, on his account, may be eternally saved.

35 And

N O T E.

* Some are for reading the last clause of this, and the second in the next verse, with an interrogation thus, *Shall God that justifieth? Shall Christ that died?* And so the apostle argues the absurdity of supposing, that God should lay any thing to the charge of them

whom he justifies; or that Christ should condemn them for whom he died. And if we have nothing of this kind to fear from either of them; there can be no danger of it from any one else whatsoever.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

35 And as to our *sufferings*, What enemy, or what circumstances and events shall ever be able to alienate Christ's heart from us †, or ours from him? or exclude us from a share in the saving designs, fruits, and manifestations of his special love, in the freeness of which he has already done such wonderful things for us? We may boldly challenge the very worst that can assault or beset us, and bid them all defiance, in the holy triumphs of our faith *: Shall any afflictions in the ordinary course of providence, such as sickness, pains and poverty, losses and disappointments in life, that are grievous and oppressive to the body, part between Christ and us; so that he should not love us, or we not love him? No. Or shall distress of soul under a humbling sense of guilt, the temptations of Satan, the disallowed workings of indwelling corruption, and the hidings of God's face; or any perplexity of spirit, from which we know not how to extricate ourselves? Or shall any persecutions for the sake of Christ, that effect our reputation, liberty, and property? Or shall any instances of hardship, that reduce us to the utmost straits, even to the want of necessary food to refresh and support us; or of proper raiment to cover and defend us from the severity of seasons? Or shall any other dangers, that threaten the loss of our lives themselves? Or shall a violent death, by the sword of the civil magistrate, produce this dismal effect? No. None of these calamities (χαρισται) shall divide between us and this love, though we have reason to expect the greatest of them.

36 (As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as

36 For what was said in former ages, and *that* with a prophetic spirit, relating to God's people in perilous circumstances for their fidelity to him, is equally applicable to us, as it is written, (Psal. xlv. 22.) *For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter*, that is, on account of our relation and adherence to thee, and espousing thy cause, and bearing thy name, we are daily and hourly exposed to the danger of death; and many of us are frequently cut off by the hands of violent persecutors; we are marked out and devoted to destruction, in like manner

as

N O T E S.

† The love of Christ here, and the love of God in him, ver. 39. may signify their love to us or our love to them; but separating us from their love, and the glorious advantages here spoken of, being ascribed to him that has loved us, ver. 37. lead us to understand it of their love to us; and yet as our love to God is mentioned, ver. 28. I would likewise include that. And as various things, as well as some persons are specified in the following verses,

that cannot separate from this love, the question, *Who shall separate?* refers to both.

* Here the apostle enumerates abundance of trials, which he expresses in different words, to exaggerate them, and take in every thing of the afflictive kind, that might be supposed to endanger a miscarriage; and I have endeavoured to keep the ideas as distinct as I can, in each of them.

as sheep for the
slaughter.)

as sheep are to be butchered; though we, like them, be meek and inoffensive in our temper; innocent and harmless, as to the crimes that our enemies impute to us; and are beneficial to mankind while we live, and patient under our sufferings when we come to die. But, be it that all these calamities befall us, shall they shut us out of Christ's love? or take off our love to him?

31 Nay, in all
these things we
are more than
conquerors, thro'
him that loved us.

37 No, so far from this, that in all, even the worst of these events, we are not only carried with safety and success through them, and made superior to them, and finally victorious over them; but we even rejoice and triumph, and glory in them, (*chap. v. 3.*) as they are overbalanced by inward supports and consolations. (*2 Cor. i. 5.*) and are made to subserve the exercise and improvement of our graces; and as they wean us from this world, and sweeten the thoughts of heaven to us, and make us the more desirous of it, and the fitter for it, and work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, (*2 Cor. iv. 17.*); and so we suffer no real loss, but gain the greatest advantage by them, even already here, and shall do so for ever; not indeed by any worthiness, strength, or wisdom of our own; but thro' the meritorious obedience and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ; through his victory over this world for us; and through his over-ruling conduct and gracious assistance, who has loved us to such a matchless degree, as to lay down his own life; that he might make us conquerors and triumphers over all that would interpose between him and us.

38 For I am
persuaded, that
neither death, nor
life, nor angels,
nor

38 For whatever occurrences we meet with, whether of the adverse or prosperous kind, in the body *; I firmly believe and am fully satisfied, upon the sure principles of divine revelation, relating to the unchangeableness of God's thoughts, purposes, and covenant of grace, and to the merit of the dear Redeemer's blood, and the efficacy of his intercession, that, on one hand, neither the fears, terrors, and agonies of death, nor its stroke, whether it come to us in a natural or violent course; nor, on the other, the desire and hope of life, nor any entangling or ensnaring circumstances in it, arising from its caresses or pleasures; nor those most powerful of all creatures, the angels, whether they be good or bad; nor the good, who are sent forth to minister to them that shall be heirs of salvation, (*Heb. i. 14.*) nor the

N O T E.

* Here the apostle rises in his argument, to shew, that the dangers which might be supposed to spring from the allurements, as well as terrors of this world, cannot prevail to

make a separation between the love of Christ, or of God in him, and those that are once interested in it.

nor principalities,
nor powers, nor
things present,
nor things to
come.

39 Nor height,
nor depth, nor
any other crea-
ture, shall be able
to separate us
from the love of
God which is in
Christ Jesus our
Lord.

the *bad*, who do indeed seek all occasions against us, but cannot devour us, (1 *Pet.* i. 5. and v. 8.) nor * any force, or policy of even the *superior*, or *most potent orders* of the holy, or of the wicked angelic spirits; nor any secular princes and magistrates upon earth, how violently soever they may persecute us for the sake of Christ; nor any present trials, nor future dangers of any kind:

39 Nor the ensnaring height of all worldly prosperity. were we to be advanced to it; nor the deepest adversity that we can be plunged into: To sum up all in a word, I am thoroughly persuaded, that neither these, nor any other person or thing, in the whole sphere of nature, that can be imagined, shall at any time be capable of cutting us off, or setting us at a distance, from the infinite and unchangeable love of God, the Father, which is fixed upon us, and manifested to us, and performs all things for us, in and through the great Mediator, who is our only Lord and Saviour, and who himself equally loves us, (*ver.* 35.); nor can any, or all of these remove from our souls their sincere love to Christ, or to God, as manifesting himself to us through him. (See the note on *ver.* 35.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What dreadful work has sin made in the world! It has turned the natural bent and bias of our hearts towards earthly and sensual things, and into enmity to God, and his law; has brought them under spiritual death and condemnation, and moral impotency to do what is pleasing to him; yea, all mankind in general, and even the sensitive and inanimate parts of this lower world, groan under the dismal effects of the fall, and seem to be in pain, like a woman in travail, for deliverance from the bondage of misery and disorder to which the sin of man has subjected them, and for that happy and orderly state to which there is hope of their being restored, when all things shall be made new; and even believers themselves, during this mortal life, are attended with many natural and sinful infirmities, tribulations and distresses, from which they cannot but earnestly long to be delivered: And yet so great is their remaining darkness and corruption, that, in numberless instances, they neither know of themselves what is fittest for them to ask of God, nor how to pray for it in such a manner as is acceptable to him. Nevertheless, how great is the safety, honour, and happiness of them that are in Christ; that mind and favour not the things of the flesh, but of the spirit; that are led by, walk, and live after the spirit; to whom they are infinitely indebted, and not at all to the flesh; and

N O T E.

* By *principalities and powers* some understand *superior ranks and orders* of angels, which whether they be of the good or evil sort, are described under these terms, *Eph.* iii. 10. and vi. 12. But others take them to mean *earthly potentates and rulers*, who are called *principalities and powers*, *Tit.* iii. 1. And I am inclined to think that our apostle most directly intended the *persecuting powers upon earth*; because this widens the argument, and keeps its several parts most distinct: And yet as

the argument is still further strengthened by giving the greatest latitude to these expressions, in an enumeration of particulars, which, whatever were the apprehensions of believers themselves, their enemies might think likely to be nutritious to them, and so to occasion their miscarriage, I have included the principal angels, both good and bad, according to the sense that is given of the foregoing passage, which doubtless relates to that upper rank of creatures.

and that, through his influence, mortify the body of sin ! There is even now no condemnation to them ; but the perfect righteousness demanded by the law, as the condition of life, is completely fulfilled for them by God's own divine Son, whom he sent, and who came in the appearance of sinful flesh, to take away their sin by the sacrifice of himself : They are the children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, and in his right ; the same spirit dwells in them, which he himself, as their head, was filled with above measure : And though their bodies are mortal, like other men's, by reason of sin ; yet their souls are alive to God, and shall live for ever, by means of the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and of a work of holiness wrought in them ; and their bodies themselves shall be raised to immortal glory, in resemblance of their risen Saviour, by virtue of their union with him, and by his spirit which dwells in them. And what a comfort is it to have this good spirit, to witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God ; to assist them, as to the matter and manner of prayer ; and to give them humble boldness and holy freedom in their thoughts of God, and addresses to him, as their heavenly Father ! But O how much greater still is the blessedness, that they shall be partakers of hereafter ! They shall be glorified together with Christ ; and shall then be openly manifested, and treated, as the children of the Most High, in a state of entire freedom from all imperfections and sorrows, and of the utmost honour and felicity, which shall abide for ever. What matter of triumph in Christ is all this, amidst the various persecutions and trials that here befall them ! Though numerous enemies set themselves against them, none can prevail to their ruin, because God is for them, and has assured them of all things working together for their good ; and, he who has given his own Son to suffer and die, with the utmost extremity, for their redemption, will not stick at giving them all things with him, that he knows to be best for them. Though they are humbly sensible of many sins, which might be charged upon them ; yet who can fix a law-charge to their condemnation at the bar of God, since it is he that justifies them ; and Christ has died and rose again, and ever lives to make intercession for them ? What an infallible certainty, and beautiful order is there in the salvation of God's elect ! He fore-ordained them to be conformed to the holy and suffering image of his Son, and calls and justifies them here, that they may be glorified with their head and elder Brother hereafter. And O how affecting and engaging are the thoughts of Christ's love, and of the love of God in him ! So great, so free, and unchangeable is this love, that no circumstances of life, or forms of death ; no allurements of prosperity, or terrors of adversity ; no fears or dangers from any quarter, can ever separate between the love of God and the lovers of him ; or alienate Christ's heart from them, or theirs from him. But they already are, and shall one day appear to be, not only conquerors, but triumphers over, and even gainers by all that would come between God and them, through him who has loved them.

C H A P. IX.

The apostle expresses the deep concern of his heart, that the generality of his countrymen were strangers to the great blessings of the gospel, 1,—5. Shews that the promises given to the fathers are, nevertheless, made good to the spiritual seed of Abraham, to the end that the purpose of God might stand, 6,—13. Answers objections against God's sovereign conduct, in exercising mercy toward these, and justice toward the carnal Israelites, 14,—23. Shews that this sovereignty runs through his dealings both with Jews and Gentiles, 24,—29. And that there is no reason to complain of the Gentiles attaining righteousness, for justification through faith, since the Jews falling short of

of it is owing to their not seeking it in that way, but by the works of the law, 30,—33.

TEXT.

I Say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,

PARAPHRASE.

IT would be the rejoicing of my soul, if what has been said of the glorious blessings that belong to the peculiar objects of God's love, might be affirmed of the whole body of the *Jewish* nation *; and while I see, by sad effects, that it is quite otherwise, I, as a Christian, who dare not lie, declare with all the solemnity of a religious oath, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as in his sight and presence, who *searches the reins and hearts, and will give to every one according to their works*, (Rev. ii. 23.) that what I am going to say, is strictly and unfeignedly true, without the least hypocrisy or deceit, ill-will, or prejudice against mine own countrymen; but, in all tenderness to them, and faithfulness to my apostolic office: My own conscience likewise, as enlightened, directed, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, is to me instead of a thousand witnesses of my sincerity therein: and I appeal, for the truth of this, to that divine Spirit, *who searches all things, yea, the deep things of God*, (1 Cor. ii. 10.)

2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart.

3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from

2 I in this solemn manner profess, that I am extremely distressed, and always feel the bitterest agonies in my soul, which are as sharp as the pangs of a woman in travail, (*οδυνη*) whenever I think or speak of the awful and deplorable condition of the generality of the *Jews* on account of their unbelief.

3 For as *Moses*, in the greatness of his concern and affection for the *Israelites*, and of his zeal for the glory of God, prayed, (*Exod. xxxii. 32.*) that he might be *blotted out of the book of the living*, and out of the *register of the house of Israel*, (*Ezek. xiii. 9.*) rather than their sin should not be forgiven: So I, with the like temper of spirit, could freely submit to the greatest self-denials and sufferings that can be endured without sin, for their salvation. If, through their unreasonable prejudices against me, my reputation in the church of Christ is the occasion of their being offended at me, to their own perdition; I could be willing, for their recovery

NOTE.

* It is with an admirable spirit and address that the apostle here vents the grief of his own heart, to soften the prejudices of his countrymen against him, in this melting and pathetic introduction to the awful and tremendous things that he was going to say concerning them, and that could not but be very distasteful to them, who knew not how

to bear the thought of any distinguishing favours being shown to the *Gentiles*, especially to the exclusion of any, much more of the generality of their own nation; but fondly imagined, that all the blessings of the *Messiah's* kingdom were to be entirely confined to themselves.

from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh :

covery, to be deemed and treated as an excommunicated person, (*ἀποκομὴ κοινῆς*) to the loss of all the external privileges of the covenant, and of communion with the saints on earth, and of life itself ; and to be accounted, according to their defamations of me, as the *filth of the world, and off-scouring of all things*, and as a *fellow not fit to live*, (1 Cor. iv. 13. and Acts xxii. 27.) Yea, were it lawful, and could it avail to the salvation of such vast multitudes whom I have a natural affection for ; methinks, I could even be contented to be cut off from the delights of present communion with Christ *, for the sake of my brethren of the *Jewish* nation and religion, and mine own countrymen, to whom I am so nearly related, as a native *Jew*, in natural, civil, and religious bonds ; and whom God himself has so highly dignified and distinguished with eminent tokens of his favour for many ages past ; as for instance,

* Who are Israelites ; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God,

4 They are the descendents of the renowned *Jacob*, whom God himself surnamed *Israel*, to keep an honourable memorial of the power of his faith in prayer, by which he, *as a prince, prevailed with God* for a blessing, (*Gen. xxxii. 28.*) And, answerable to the eminence of their parentage, they have been distinguished with exceeding great and valuable privileges, as the only visible church and favourites of heaven ; inasmuch that they have been nationally taken into God's family, who publicly owned, and dealt with them, in his external dispensations, *as his sons, and his first-born*, (*Exod. iv. 22, 23.* and *Jer. xxxi. 9, 20.*) and some of whom he made his children by a spiritual adoption, and by internal efficacious grace : And they accordingly had the temple, the ark, and the mercy-seat, the *Shechina*, and other visible tokens and emblems of his peculiar and gracious presence among them, which was their glory. (*1 Sam. iv. 21, 22.* and *Psal. lxxx. 1.*) God also entered into a covenant with them for temporal and spiritual blessings, in various repetitions and administrations of it †, which he first made with *Abraham*, (*Gen.*

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* It is possible, that the apostle's love and zeal might rise to so high a strain, as is expressed in the paraphrase : But I can scarce think that he either lawfully might, or could go so far, as to with himself eternally separated from Christ, for the sake of any advantage to the *Jews*.

† I take the covenants here mentioned, to relate most immediately to the covenant made with *Abraham*, which, on account of its various articles and promulgations, is styled, in

the plural number the *covenants*, but which are indeed only so many explications and enlargements of that original covenant which God made with him when he first called him, and said, (*Gen. xii. 2, 3.*) *I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, — and thou shalt be a blessing ; and in thee, shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* And I chuse to confine my thoughts to *Abraham's* covenant, that we may the better distinguish it from the law ; though that was delivered in

God, and the promises;

(Gen. xii. 2, 3. and xvii. 7, &c.) and afterwards repeated to *Isaac*, and to *Jacob*, (chap. xxvi. 3, 4. and xxviii. 13, 14.) and, last of all, to the whole church of *Israel*, (Exod. xxxiii. 1. Deut. xviii. 15. and xxx. 5, 6.) and he committed to them his holy oracles, (*Rom.* iii. 2.) when at mount *Sinai* he delivered to them the *moral law*, which is of eternal obligation, which he wrote, by a supernatural operation, on two tables of stone, (*Deut.* ix. 10. and x. 1,—5.) and which contained a clear and comprehensive summary of the law of nature, after it had been greatly obliterated in the heart of man by the fall; and to this he added, by special commandment to *Moses*, the *judicial law*, relating to their civil affairs, as a *nation* under his own immediate government: He also gave them the *ceremonial law*, relating to their religious concerns, and containing typical ordinances of divine worship, (*ἡ λειτουργία*) to be observed by them as a *church*, (*Exod.* chap. xxiv, &c.) And to this *Sinai*-dispensation † he annexed many promises of his being with them, and owning them for his people, while they should continue to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments; and promises of his never casting them off, unless for their final obstinacy, impenitence, and unbelief, (*Exod.* xxiii. ver. 20. to the end; and *Deut.* chap. xxx.)

§ Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God blessed

§ In fine, to crown all, This present generation of the *Jews* are the posterity, not only of *Jacob*, from whose most honourable name they are called *Israelites*, (*ver.* 4.) but also of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *David*, and many other eminent and holy men: And from them the promised *Messiah* himself descended in his human birth, in so much that, as far as relates to his assumed nature, he was properly their seed, of *Jewish* extract; even he, who, in his original nature, is in the strictest notion of deity, God infinitely possessed of all possible blessedness, beyond all that is, or can be enjoyed by any mere creature whatsoever; and who is exalted, in his own being and perfections, *above all blessing and praise*, (*Neb.* ix. 5.) and is absolutely worthy of the highest adorations of saints and angels, invariably, and for

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in the form of a covenant at mount *Sinai*, but could not disannul the covenant made with *Abraham*, (*Gal.* iii. 17.) and to distinguish it from the promises, both of which are mentioned in the close of this verse: I have accordingly given such a sense of the law and the promises, as may not interfere with the things contained in the covenants, which, by all the expositors I have seen, are too much confounded.

† This sense of the promises keeps up a proper distinction between them and the covenants; preserve a natural order in the privileges here mentioned; and stands in close connection with the giving of the law, and the service of God; and it seems best to suit the apostle's design of obviating the objection, *ver.* 6. as though, because of the rejection of the unbelieving *Jews*, the word of God has taken no effect.

bleſſed for ever.
Amen.

for ever, as having, in that view of him, no God above him *: In testimony of which, and of our desire that he may be honoured accordingly, we, who believe, heartily say, *Amen*: And may all, that hear, join their *amen* with ours!

6 Not as tho' the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel:

6 But though the greatest part of the *Jews* of this age are in a deplorable condition, through their own unbelief, which, as I have said, (*ver. 2.*) moves my tenderest grief and compassion for them; yet we are not to imagine, as some may suppose, on account of their great external privileges, (*ver. 4, 5.*) that the covenant of promises, which God made with their fathers, and their seed, is disannulled, or has failed of its accomplishments †: For all the natural offspring of *Jacob*, who, as such, belong to the nation and visible church of *Israel*, are not the true *Israelites*, in God's account, that are interested in the *ſaving* blessings of the covenant, according to his intent and meaning in its indefinite promises, which had a peculiar relation to, and were to have their accomplishment in, the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, of what nation soever they be, as has been observed. (*chap. iv. 16, 17, 18.*)

7 Neither, because they are the seed

7 Nor are the *Jews*, in a *ſaving* and spiritual manner, the children of God, merely because they are descendants of the faithful *Abraham*, as their father according to the flesh; But the promise, in its most peculiar and beneficial design, belonged to those only of his

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* Over all, God blessed for ever, is manifestly a description of Christ in his divine nature, by way of antithesis to, or in distinction from, the description of him in the former part of this verse, in his human nature; and not a description of his office-power, in distinction from his person, abstractly considered: For his office-power was given him, as God-man, in both natures; whereas his being called God over all, blessed for ever, is a description of him only as to *ess* nature in distinction from the other. And here two characters that are peculiar to deity, and ascribed to God absolutely, and to God the Father particularly, are united in Christ; one is that of *over*, or *above all*, (*Eph. iv. 6.*) and the other is that of *blessed for ever*, (*Rom. i. 25.* and *1 Cor. xi. 31.*) This therefore is as high and strong an attestation to the proper supreme divinity of Christ, above which there is no other deity, as words can well express. And it seems to me, that nothing can be a more forced construction of the words, or more foreign to the apostle's design of pouring out the mournful sense of his heart for the *Jews*, than to make this

clause a *doxology* to God the Father, as some would have it. (See this text further explained and vindicated in my sermons upon it, intitled *Jesus Christ God-man*, pag. 26.)

† As what the apostle here enters upon, in vindication of God's chusing some and rejecting others, seems to have taken its rise and occasion from *chap. viii. 18.* where he had spoke of them that were emphatically *the called*, according to God's purpose; so the way in which he here, and in the next verses, sets out and goes on with that design, by distinguishing between one and another sort of *Israelites*, and seed of *Abraham*, carries a strong intimation, that he does not confine his view to what is merely national and external, but rather begins with a personal distinction, which was made in the purpose of God between the believing and unbelieving *Jews* themselves, with regard to *ſaving*, together with external privileges; and so covertly and gradually advances to the national rejection of the *Jews*, and calling of the *Gentiles* in their stead, till he comes more openly, directly, and confidently to insist upon that point at *chap. xi. 12, &c.* See the note there.

seed of Abraham, are they all children: but in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

his race that are partakers of his faith, and walk in his steps, (*chap. iv. 11, 12.*); as was intimated in a typical distinction which was made between one sort of Abraham's seed and another, when, upon God's making his covenant with him and his seed, he said, (*Gen. xxi. 17.*) *In Isaac shall thy seed be called*; that is, not from the loins of *Ismael*, thy son by *Hagar* the bond-woman; but from *Isaac*, whom *Sarah* the free-woman has bore to thee, (*Gal. iv. 22.*) shall thy children be called to partake of spiritual, internal, and everlasting, as well as of temporal and outward benefits, according to my promise. (*Gen. xvii. 7, 8.*)

8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

8 The true meaning of this is, that as *Ismael*, the son of *Hagar*, a young woman, was born in her teeming age, according to the usual course of nature, without any extraordinary interposition of God; and *Isaac* was born of *Sarah*, who through faith received strength to conceive seed, (*Heb. xi. 11.*) by a miraculous influence according to, and in virtue of, the promise, (*Gal. iv. 23.*) after she was past age, and, though so long married, never had conceived before: So they who, as typified by *Ismael*, are only Abraham's seed according to the flesh, and glory in their privilege of having him for their father, (*John viii. 33, 39.*) who also put confidence in the flesh, and seek to be justified by something of their own; these are not the children of God by special and effectual grace, whom he designs for glory, (*chap. viii. 17.*); but they who, as typified by *Isaac*, are begotten to God by his own almighty power, and sovereign will, according to, and by means of his word, (*1 Jam. i. 18.*) without any regard to merit or worthiness in them; or who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, (*John i. 13.*) and who lay hold by faith on the promise of salvation thro' Jesus Christ; these are to be reckoned the true spiritual seed of Abraham, who are blessed with him, (*Gal. iii. 9.*) and in whom the promise made to him and his seed is fulfilled, in a peculiar manner as it was in *Isaac*.

9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

9 For thus the promise runs, (*Gen. xviii. 10.*) which limited the blessing to one sort of Abraham's seed, to the exclusion of the other, and by virtue of which *Sarah* became the mother of *Isaac*, even now, without delay, notwithstanding all the impossibilities that may seem to lie against it, I will come in the grant of my mercy, and by a supernatural operation of my providence, to enable your wife *Sarah* to conceive a son; and, according to the usual time from conception to the birth,

birth, about nine months hence, she shall certainly be delivered: And so God made a sovereign distinction between *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, as types and samples of what he would do between others of *Abraham's* posterity.

10 And not only *this*, but when *Rebecca* also had conceived by one, even by our father *Isaac*;

10 And this distinction was made, not only between the immediate offspring of *Abraham*, which, perhaps, some may suggest was owing to *Ishmael's* being the son of an *Egyptian* bond-woman, and more perverse in his temper than *Isaac*, who was miraculously born of the free-woman, (*Gen. xxi. 9, 10.*); but there was afterwards, in the next descent from *Abraham* by *Sarah* herself, a further limitation, which could be ascribed to no moral difference relating to the subjects themselves; and that was when *Rebecca*, *Isaac's* wife, was with child of two sons, which she had by one conception, and which were begotten by one man, even *Isaac*, her husband, who was the progenitor of the whole nation of the *Israelites*: Though these children were the immediate fruit of the bodies of the same father and mother, and were in all circumstances alike; yet God also made an early and sovereign distinction even between *them*, according to the good pleasure of his will.

11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works,

11 For, while these infants lay alike together in the womb*, both of them indeed *shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin*, (*Psal. li. 5.*) and incapable, as all mankind are since the fall, of being born righteous and holy, (*Job xiv. 4. and xiv. 4.*) yet before either of them was brought forth into the world, and consequently before they had, or could have done any act of a moral nature in their own persons†, whether good or bad, to engage God to regard one more than the other: Even then he declared that he had made, and would make a difference, in preferring one to the other, (*isa*) to the end

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* Though to shew that there was no moral difference between these children, to move God to chuse the one rather than the other, but that it proceeded from the mere good pleasure of his will, it is said that neither of them had actually and personally done any good or evil, in consideration of which God had distinguished one from the other in his kind regards; yet this rather supposes than denies, that they were equally involved in the guilt and depravity of original sin, which was common to them, as it is to all the seed of the first fallen covenant-head: And without supposing this concerning them, as well as others, it is no easy matter to account for what is immediately afterwards said, with reference hereunto, (*ver. 13,—18.* about God's *having Esau, and having mercy and compassion on whom he will have mercy and compassion; or to clear his righteousness, and make the in-*

stance of *Pharaoh* pertinent to the argument in hand: For God's *hated, mercy, and compassion*, must have some relation to sin and misery, in the objects of them; and *righteousness or unrighteousness* in God has a reference to his dealing with men on account of sin: Accordingly, in the winding up of the argument, the apostle considers *the vessels of wrath, as endured with much long-suffering, and prepared for destruction by the sin* which God finds in them; and *the vessels of mercy, as prepared by his own pardoning and renewing grace*, according to his eternal design in which he laid them out for glory, that *his purpose according to election might stand*.

† Here is a strong intimation against the pre-existence of souls, which, on that supposition, might have done either good or evil, before they were born into this world.

works, but of him that calleth,)

end that his eternal purpose might be unchangeably established and fulfilled, according to his own free choice of one of them, rather than of the other: Not as tho' he was moved thereunto by a consideration of any good works * that he foresaw one of them would do, rather than the other; for this, in effect, would have been the same thing as if they had been already performed; and had it depended on their own will, it must have been uncertain, whether God's choice would stand firm, or not: But, to prevent its being defeated by the corruption and fickleness of the creature, it is an *election of grace*, (chap. xi. 5.) which proceeded from the mere good will and pleasure of God †, who effectually calls, according to his purpose. (Chap. viii. 28.)

12 As

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* I cannot see to what end the apostle should mention their having done neither good nor evil, antecedent to the purpose of God about them, and thereupon add, that it was not of works, unless he designed to exclude all good works foreseen, as well as actually performed, from being the cause of God's gracious purpose concerning one, rather than the other of them, since the purpose itself was antecedent to the existence of either of them: And to suppose otherwise, would be not only to make the purpose according to election precarious, instead of firm and stable, as depending on the previous uncertain free will of the creature, and on the free grace of God, which alone can make the promised inheritance sure to all the seed, (chap. ix. 15.) but it would be likewise inconsistent with the apostle's ascribing it, in the next words, entirely to him that calleth; and it would be directly contrary to what he afterwards offers, in support of his argument, by introducing God, as saying to Moses, (ver. 25.) *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion*; and by drawing the inference from thence, (ver. 16.) *So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that bestoweth mercy*: Nor would this supposition leave any room for the objections that are raised, (ver. 14, 19.) against what the apostle had said on this head, or comport with his answers to them in the verses there following.

† Here is, I think, a plain reference to what the apostle had said, chap. viii. 28.—30. about God's calling persons, according to his purpose, and glorifying them, whom he predestinated and called. That seems to be the foot of, and to have given rise to the present discourse; and as the calling there intended was an effectual one, unto a participation of spiritual and eternal blessings, (see the note there) the apostle's mentioning this, as well as the former instance of Isaac, can hardly be taken

in a just and pertinent light, without considering it as an exemplification of what he there so clearly expressed: And therefore it appears to me, that his design in alledging them was, not merely to represent God's purpose as taking place, according to election, with respect to the external privileges of the gospel, to which he had chosen and called whole nations, and bodies of men, and particularly the Gentiles; but likewise with respect to saving and eternal benefits, to which he had choie certain persons out of such bodies. Accordingly we find that he speaks of a distinguishing choice, and separation of some from among the general bodies of both Jews and Gentiles, ver. 6, 7, 9, 24, 25, 26, 27. and of a gracious election of a remnant, to the obtaining of salvation, out of the body of that ancient people whom God had chosen to external privileges, chap. xi. 4, 5. And then, having gradually led the way to it, in what he had said about the sovereignty of divine grace, in its actings toward multitudes of both Jews and Gentiles, he proceeds, at the 11th verse of that chapter, to discourse more directly about the national rejection of the Jews, and calling of the Gentiles, (see the note there.) The want of a due attention to these things, and to what has been observed in the note on ver. 6. about the way of the apostle's entering on this discourse, by distinguishing between the natural and spiritual Israelites, and children of Abraham, has, I doubt not, misled many expositors to make the argument in this ninth chapter one and the same with that of the eleventh: And yet a late paraphrast, who earnestly contends for that scheme, tells us, that the eleventh chapter, relating to the national rejection, is prophetic of what the apostle foresaw would soon be, but was not yet a fact. But what the apostle insists on in this chapter, plainly relates to facts that were already actually come to pass at the time of his writing.

11 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.

12 As a specimen and evidence of this, when Rebecca, the mother of these twins, was quick with child, and felt them struggling in an uncommon manner within her, (*Gen. xxv. 22, 23.*) she sought the Lord to know the meaning of it, and received for answer, that the heads of two nations, which were typical of two sorts of seed, *viz. the children of the flesh, and the children of the promise*, (*ver. 8.*) were in her womb; and that he had determined, of his own good pleasure, that, contrary to human ways of judging, the younger would be preferred to the elder *; in token of which, the son of whom she would first be delivered, should be a servant to the other, who should be born last of the two.

13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

13 And we have a further testimony, that may be accommodated to this purpose, as it is recorded in *Malachi i. 2, 3.* where God says, I have set my love upon Jacob in a free and eternal choice of him for myself, that I might recover him from all the ruins of the fall, and give him the spiritual, as well as temporal blessings of the first-born: But I, who have a right to place, or withhold my undeserved kindness as I please, have determined to leave Esau, among many others of the apostate sinful race of mankind, whom I justly abhor, as such, to the free choice of his own will, that he may walk in the way of his own heart †: I will not favour him with my

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* The elder's serving the younger was fulfilled in a spiritual and mystical sense in their own persons, when the birth-right and the spiritual blessings pertaining to it were transferred from Esau to Jacob; when Esau was cut off from God's covenant, and Jacob continued in it; and when Esau lost, and Jacob got the promise of Canaan, that eminent type of the heavenly inheritance: And so whilst Esau's being doomed to servitude was a badge of the curse upon him, *Gen. iii. 16, 19. and ix. 25.* Jacob's title to the promised land was an emblem of his being enrolled in the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, (*Heb. xii. 23.*) And it was likewise fulfilled in a literal sense, in their respective distant posterity, when in after-ages the Israelites, that descended from Jacob, subdued the Edomites that were of Esau's race, *2 Sam. viii. 14. and 2 Chron. xxv. 11, 12.* But the covenant-right to all this was primarily made over to Jacob himself, *Gen. xxvii. 37.*

† It is pleaded by some, that God's loving Jacob, and hating Esau, did not respect them personally, but only their posterity, and had a relation not to their eternal, but only their temporal concerns; and that *Malac. i. 2, 3.* from whence these words are quoted, repre-

sents it in this light. But, as I apprehend, that the subject of the apostle's discourse, all along in the preceding chapter, is about *internal and saving* benefits, and he begins this chapter with a lamentation, that the greatest part of the Jews were not *effectually* called, it seems incongruous to suppose, that when he comes to account for this, by shewing that God had chosen and called some, and rejected others of the natural seed of Abraham, *ver. 6. 7.* and proceeds to illustrate it, by the distinction that was made between one and another of Abraham's and of Jacob's immediate offspring, he should entirely drop the consideration of *spiritual and eternal* blessings, and confine his thoughts to those that were only *external and temporal*; and yet that, after all this, in winding up his argument, *ver. 22, 23.* he should apply it to the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, and to the vessels of mercy, which God had afore prepared unto glory. And were we to restrain the apostle's sense of God's loving Jacob, and hating Esau, to what is said in *Malachi* about his *loving* Esau's mountains and heritage waste for the dragons in the wilderness, it would be so foreign to the apostle's design, that it would not come up to so much as an instance of any religious privileges at all, though but of an external nature,

my recovering and saving mercy, as I do the objects of my special love.

12 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

14 If this be God's sovereign way of making such a wide difference, in his original choice, according to his good pleasure, between persons that were in themselves alike, without the least regard to any thing done personally by themselves, whether it be good or evil, what shall we then think or say of this method of his proceeding? Shall it be hence inferred, as some objectors would suppose, that there is any injustice in the great and holy God, as to his thoughts, designs, and dispensations toward the children of men, in receiving some, and rejecting others, that were before in equal circumstances? No, by no means: (*non videtur*) Far be it from us to entertain such a shocking thought, so directly contrary to his perfections, and to his government of the church and world. He doth injury to none, in distributing, or withholding his free favours just as he pleases; because he is debtor to none.

13 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

15 As to his *showing favour* to some, rather than others, that are equally undeserving of it, there can be no injustice in this; he having an undoubted power and liberty in himself to bestow his bounteous grace, as seems good in his sight: And the *Jews*, of all people, cannot reasonably object against this, if they attend to what God declared to their own famous law-giver, with regard to his unmerited and forfeited kindness to their fathers: For, to maintain the glory of his prerogative in displaying his goodness, he said to *Moses*, in an absolute and sovereign strain, (*Exod. xxxiii. 19.*) *I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious; and will show mercy to whom I will show mercy*; that is, my showing mercy and pity to any persons whatsoever, is merely an act of mine own good pleasure; I will be gracious and compassionate to those among the sinful, unworthy, and wretched race of men, to whom I choose to be gracious and compassionate,

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ture, being granted or denied to any person, or body of people whatsoever; and it is observable, that the apostle does not go so far in his quotation as to take in these last words in *Malachi*, they not suiting the purport of this present argument. Why then should we not under the passage, as far as he quotes it, in an accommodated sense, suitable to the tenor of his discourse, as signifying *Jacob* and *Esau* personally considered; and so giving us leading examples of a personal election of some to all the blessings mentioned in the foregoing chapter, and of God's passing by others? since these two persons are mentioned by name, and the event proved, that *Jacob*

was a good man, who was blessed with spiritual blessings, and is now in heaven, *Luke xlii. 28.* and *Esau* is spoken of as a *profane person, who sold his birthright*, and all the spiritual, as well as temporal blessings pertaining to it, *Heb. xii. 16.* See also the foregoing note on *ver. 12.*

* There would have been no occasion or colour for this objection, if God's proceedings herein had been in consideration of good works foreseen in one, and of wickedness in the other.

† This is cited by the apostle exactly as it stands in the *Septuagint*, which entirely agrees in sense with the *Hebrew*.

sionate, for reasons found in myself, and not in them, that I may have the entire glory of it, as the absolute Lord and disposer of my free gifts.

16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

16 It therefore (Rom. ix.) appears from hence, that as it was not owing to *Jacob's* desiring the blessing, and running to prepare venison for his father, which *Esau* did, as well as he, (*Gen. xxvii. 3, &c.*) that *Jacob* obtained it; but it was merely from God's own good pleasure, who determined in his free mercy to confer the blessing upon him, rather than upon *Esau*, and thereby made a distinction between one and another of *Abraham's* natural posterity: (see the note and paraphrase on *ver. 13.*) So the purpose of God, according to election, (*ver. 11.*) is not to be attributed to any one's own free will, good dispositions and desires; nor is it to be ascribed to his own diligent endeavours and inquiries after salvation; for these are the effects, and not the cause of God's choice, (*2 Thess. ii. 13, 14.*) but it takes its original rise only from the sovereign will and pleasure of God, who shews mercy to some, and not to others, as seems best to him; and who, in the greatness of his mercy, works in them both to will and to do, of his good pleasure, (*Phil. ii. 13.*) and makes them a willing people, in the day of his power, (*Psal. cx. 3.*) even when he comes effectually to call them by his grace, whether they be *Jews* or *Gentiles*: (*ver. 24.*) and so he gives them the blessing, though not for, yet in the way, and by means of, their desiring and seeking it; even as *Jacob* obtained his father's blessing in that way. (*Gen. xxvii. 18, &c.*)

17 For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised

17 And then, as to God's refusing favour to some, whilst he extends it to others, that were no more worthy of it than they, there is no room for a pretence of unrighteousness in this; and the *Jews* themselves must own it, if they consider what is recorded again in the writings of *Moses*: For the great *Jehovah*, as we find him speaking with awful majesty in the scriptures of the Old Testament, which were indited by his Spirit, said to the notoriously tyrannical *Pharaoh*, who was the same by nature with the rest of the apostate race of mankind, and so was as undeserving of favour as others *, I exalt-

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* What is here alledged in a quotation from *Exod. ix. 16.* about God's raising *Pharaoh* up for this purpose, that he might shew his power in him, relates, not to God's creating him, or bringing him into being; but to his raising him to the throne of *Egypt*, and continuing him in that exalted station, for some length of time, in the midst of all his cruelties and oppressions on one hand, and of the various

judgments which were ineffectual to reclaim him on the other. Accordingly, the Hebrew word (*הֶעֱלֵאתִי*) signifies, I have established thee, or made thee to continue or stand; and is rendered by the *Septuagint* (*ἀνέστηκα*) Thou hast been kept or preserved; and the word used by our apostle (*ἐξήνεκα* or *ἐξήνεκα*) signifies, I have exalted, or advanced thee to this end, viz. that God might manifest his power in exem-

plarily

ed thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

ed you to all the grandeur of the *Egyptian* throne, and preserved you alive for a considerable time; bearing with you in my long-suffering and patience, (*ver. 22.*) while you persisted in your obstinacy and cruel outrages against my people, and would not attend to the voice of my judgments, and my kinder messages to let them go: And this I have done in the disposals of my Providence, for this very end and purpose, (*ὡς*) that I might the more illustriously display my prerogative, and indisputable right of dealing with you according to your deserts, by memorable acts of my tremendous power, to bring down your haughty spirit, and by performing those mighty works, that will be occasioned by your stubbornness and rebellion, till I shall utterly destroy you: And as *I have made all things for myself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil*, (*Prov. xvi. 4.*) so my ultimate end in these my awful dispensations toward you is, (*ὡς*) that my being, perfections, and providence may appear with solemn glory through the whole world *; that my patience and justice toward mine enemies, and my faithfulness, mercy, and grace toward mine own people; and that my wisdom and power in both, and in making *the wrath of man to praise me, and restraining the remainder of it*, (*Psal. lxxvi. 10.*) may be conspicuous, and proclaimed among all nations of the earth; as well as that the *Egyptians may know that I am the Lord*. (*Exod.*

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plarily punishing him for the wickedness which he knew *Pharaoh* would commit when left to himself; and so might give a solemn warning to others. We may further observe, that it was to *Pharaoh* personal, and not to him and the *Egyptians*, his subjects, that God said, *I have raised thee up, to shew my power in thee*, &c. and so it is a proper sample of God's righteous and sovereign dealing with particular persons, whom he rejects for their sins. And the word *power* (*δυναμις*) is here used, as it sometimes is in other places, in the same sense with another word, (*ἐξουια*) which is likewise rendered *power*, but properly signifies *authority* in *ver. 21.* where the apostle speaks of the *potter's power over the clay*; and so it denotes the uncontrollable prerogative and dominion which God exerted in his acts of power upon *Pharaoh*: And as this instance of exercising his sovereign authority in his righteous dealing with *Pharaoh*, is mentioned in opposition to his *showing mercy* to others, according to the good pleasure of his will, *ver. 16.* so for a due understanding of this passage, and making it a pertinent answer to the objection, as if God were *unrighteous* in his different way of proceeding with persons in like circumstances, *ver. 14.*

it seems necessary to consider *Pharaoh* as in the same fallen condition by nature with the rest of mankind, and so of the *same lump*, that is *subjectively* capable of being made a vessel unto honour, or unto dishonour, as it is expressed, *ver. 21.* Unless we take it in this light, it will be extremely difficult to clear the *righteousness* of God, in his raising up *Pharaoh* to his dignity, and continuing him in it, *for this very purpose, that he might shew his power in him*, which issued in his utter destruction, and is called God's *showing his wrath*, *ver. 22.*

* God's name is declared in manifestations of his glory. We accordingly find that a song of praise was offered by *Moses* and *Israel* for the glorious appearances of his power, which was exercised in a way of mercy and faithfulness to them, and in a way of dreadful justice to *Pharaoh* and his host at the red sea, *Exod. xv. 1.—21.* and the world rang of the vengeance which he took upon *Pharaoh*, and of the wonderful deliverance which he wrought for *Israel*. God hereby became terrible to the heathen, and his name was known by the judgment he executed, *Psal. ix. 16.*

xiv. 4.) Now though God might, if he pleased, have dealt otherwise with *Pharaoh*; yet as he is sovereign Lord of all, and doth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, (Dan. iv. 35.) who shall say that there is any unrighteousness in all this :

18 Therefore
hath he mercy on
whom

18 From these instances therefore (apv) we may justly conclude, that God extends his mercy to such sinful and miserable creatures as he pleases, according to the counsel and determination of his own gracious will, as he declared to *Moses* concerning his people of old, (ver. 15.) * And whom he sees fit, in his awful sovereignty, to pass by, among the wretched objects of a sinful race, he

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* The former part of this verse has a manifest reference to what had been mentioned, ver. 13. of God's saying to *Moses*, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*, &c. and the latter part refers to what had been related of God's words to *Pharaoh*, ver. 17. And as the apostle here speaks of God's hardening whom he will, in answer to an objection, as though he were unrighteous in his dispensations, ver. 14. we may be sure the apostle did not mean, that God refuses, or puts a principle of hardness into any man's heart, or hardens it by any positive act upon it: For that would be to make him the author of sin, and to charge the worst of all unrighteousness upon him. But all hardness of men's hearts proceeds originally from themselves, from their own allowed aversion to God, and inclination to sin, as fallen creatures, and from their wilfully indulging their evil dispositions in repeated acts, and in a continued custom of sinning, which naturally increase the stupidity and insensibility of their hearts God-ward, to which he may righteously give them up, according to what he said of the idolatrous *Israelites*, (Psal. lxxxi. 11, 12.) *My people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me: So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts: and they walked in their own counsels.* Hence sinners are often said to harden themselves against God, 1 Chron. xxxvi. 13. Nehem. ix. 26, 17, 29. Job ix. 4. Jer. vii. 26. and xix. 15. and it is expressly said three times over, that *Pharaoh* hardened his own heart, Exod. viii. 15, 32. and ix. 34. When therefore the scripture speaks of God's hardening any one's heart, as he said he would the heart of *Pharaoh*, Exod. ix. 21. and vii. 3. and xiv. 4. we may learn from the history of that case how it is to be understood. He withheld his softening grace from *Pharaoh*, or did not please to give him that grace, which, had God seen fit, might have prevented, or taken away, the natural and contracted hardness of his heart, but de-

livered him up, in a judicial manner, to the proud, perverse, and wicked inclinations of his own heart, under the power of which he said, *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?* (Exod. v. 2.) And this is what is called God's giving persons over to a reprobate mind, &c. because they did not like to retain him in their knowledge, (Rom. i. 24, —29.) He likewise suffered *Satan* still further to harden *Pharaoh's* heart by the magicians imitating some of those miracles which were wrought by *Moses* and *Aaron*; upon which we are told *Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken to them at all*, (Exod. vii. 22.) and so the god of this world blinded his mind, as he doth the minds of them that believe not, (2 Cor. iv. 4.) and as doth the man of sin, whose coming is after the working of *Satan*, with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they may be saved, (1 Thess. ii. 9, 10.) God furthermore used such external methods in his Providence, as were good in themselves, but as *Pharaoh's* perverse heart turned into occasions of hardening itself yet more and more; such as God's so soon removing several of his judgments, and so long forbearing to execute the fierceness of his wrath upon him. Accordingly, as soon as the frogs died, it is expressly said, when *Pharaoh* saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, Exod. viii. 15. and when the swarm of flies was removed at one time, and the thunder and hail ceased at another, we are told, that *Pharaoh* hardened his heart, and sinned yet more, (Exod. viii. 31, 32. and ix. 34.) and so, as the wise man observes, (Eccles. viii. 11.) *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil; or, as the apostle speaks of some, (Rom. ii. 4, 5.) 'They despise the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads them to repentance: but,*

whom he will
have mercy, and
whom he will he
hardeneth.

he leaves to the natural and chosen obstinacy, stupidity, and rebellion of their own hearts; and upon their wilfully persisting therein, against warnings, cautions, and patient trials, as in the case of *Pharaoh*, (ver. 17.) he, at length, in his righteous judgment, delivers them up to a judicial hardness, as the result and desert of their own imperious and unbridled passions, and of the devil's power over them, who, in conjunction with the depravity of nature, disposes, and determines them to turn all God's dispensations, even of mercy and long-suffering toward them, into occasions of the most resolute and unrelenting obstinacy against him.

19 Thou wilt
say then unto me,
Why doth he
yet find fault?
for who hath re-
sisted his will?

19 One or other of you, perhaps, may be ready to object yet further against *the sovereignty* of God, in bestowing his special, distinguishing, and preventing grace on some, and withholding it from others; and may say to me, Why is he offended at, and why doth he reprove, threaten, and condemn any of his creatures for their obstinacy and hardness of heart, as he doth in the scripture? Can this be right and reasonable? For since he has resolved to let some sinners take their own course without controul, who among them all has so stood up against him, as to hinder, or defeat his determination about them? what room therefore has he still to complain of, and accuse them? (*τί τίς μισήσας.*)

20 Nay but,
O man, who art
thou that repliest
against God?
Shall

20 But durst any of you indeed venture to cast such a bold reflection on God's sovereign, wise, and holy dispensations? O contemptible, sorry, worthless man, who hast rational faculties, and art accountable to the great God, and art as nothing before him, yea, who, as a fallen creature, deservest no good, but all evil at hand, Think how insolent and saucy it is, for such an one as thou art, to talk at this daring rate, not barely against my reasonings, but against the great God himself, and against his own express declarations, which I have been reciting, (ver. 15, 17.) and which the *Jews*, who are the chief objectors on this head, must own to be of divine authority, whatever they think of me. Who art thou, poor mushroom of the earth, and guilty wretch

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but, according to their hardness, and impenitent heart, treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God.—Now surely, there can be no unrighteousness in any of these divine dispensations: Not in God's withholding the grace which he is under no obligation to give: Not in his delivering men up to the evil way of their own chusing: Not in his suffering Satan to blind and harden them that have lifted into his service, and take

pleasure in doing his will, in opposition to God: Nor in relieving them in distress, and exercising great long-suffering, patience, and forbearance toward them, under high provocations, before he brings utter destruction upon them. And therefore all the fault lies in the hardened sinner himself; and so far as God is concerned in hardening, it is in such a negative and holy manner, as shews that there is no unrighteousness in it, nor any just ground of complaint.

shall the thing
formed say to
him that formed
it, Why hast thou
made me thus?

wretch before God? or what dost thou vainly imagine thyself to be, that thou shouldest ever presume to arraign the awful Majesty of heaven at thy bar, to call him to an account, and pass such a reproachful censure on his proceedings? What! shall *man*, whom *God made upright, but who has sought out many inventions*, (Eccles. vii. 29.) pretend to quarrel with his Maker? Shall he, who is under a forfeiture, and has thrown himself into the hands of justice by sin, contend with the offended God, saying *, *Why hast thou dealt more strictly with me than with some others that were in like circumstances with myself? Ah! What shocking language is this to the infinitely holy and blessed God himself! Wo to him, that thus strive with his Maker: Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth: Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?* (Isa. xlv. 9.)

21 Hath not
the potter power
over the clay, of
the same lump, to
make one vessel
unto honour, and
another unto dis-
honour?

21 As clay is, in itself, naturally capable of receiving different forms for answering divers purposes, has not a master potter, its sole proprietor, such an absolute power and authority over it, (*Ex. xvi.*) that he may take one parcel of it, and form it into one sort of vessel for the more honourable use of the dining-room and parlour; and may take another part of the very same mass, and shape it into another sort of vessel, for the meaner and more contemptible use of the kitchen and scullery, just as he sees fit and proper, without doing the least injury to it? How much more then must the supreme Lord, Creator, and proprietor of all, have an absolute right and authority to dispose of his creatures in a different manner, and for different purposes, as best pleases him, without being obliged to give them the reasons of it, and without the least injury to any of them; since they are all alike corrupt by nature, and so alike capable of being made to serve different uses for his glory, either in their own undeserved honour and blessedness, or deserved shame and contempt?

22 What if God,
willing to shew
his

22 Suppose then that God, having a design to display the awful glory of his righteous sovereignty, and
Greadful

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* That this passage, *Why hast thou made me thus?* is to be understood, not with relation to God's creating man, but to his dispensations towards him, and disposals of him for happiness or misery, in consequence of the fall, appears from the whole current of the preceding and following context, which speaks, not of God's bringing perions into being, but of his giving some up, in his awful righteousness, to the wilful hardness of

their own hearts, and having mercy upon others; and of his making some vessels of wrath, and others vessels of mercy. Accordingly it is illustrated in the next verse, by the power of a potter over the clay, which in its own nature was antecedently fit to be formed into different shapes, and for different uses, some of the more noble, and others of the more ignoble kind.

his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction:

dreadful power, in proper time and season, upon obstinate and impenitent sinners; and suppose, that to make this the more conspicuous and unexceptionable, when the day of reckoning shall come, he for a great while, in his abundant patience and long-suffering, bore with them, and deferred taking vengeance upon them, who by their own iniquity and hardness of heart were become proper and deserving objects of his wrath, and who, like *Pharaoh*, had fitted themselves for everlasting destruction, and therefore might have been plunged into it long before: What objection can there be against God's justice in this? since, after all their abuses of his goodness and forbearance, he only renders to them according to their due deserts; as he did to *Pharaoh* of old, (*ver.* 17.) and as he will do to the unbelieving *Jews* of this day, that shall continue to reject Christ and his gospel to their own perdition.

23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?

24 Even us whom he hath called, not of the *Jews* only, but also of the *Gentiles*.

23, 24 And suppose that God has taken this course with them, to recommend and enhance his distinguishing grace to others, who were by nature children of wrath as well as they, (*Eph.* ii. 3.) and that he has also, in his great long-suffering, bore with his own elect, in the days of their unregeneracy, (*ver.* 18.) to the end that he might take a proper opportunity for manifesting and illustrating the endearing riches of his glorious grace in the salvation of the objects of his mercy, whom he, in his eternal purpose and choice, laid out beforehand for blessedness, and glory *, and whom he fits for that happy and holy state, in due time, by his renewing and sanctifying Spirit, before he advances them to it; doth he hereby do any wrong to others? Has he not a liberty in himself, of thus extending his free mercy to these, of what nation soever they be; as he has done even to us, whom he has effectually called by his grace, according to his eternal purpose, (*chap.* viii. 28.) not only from among the *Jews*, nor with a limitation, as formerly, to them; but from among the *Gentiles* also †: These,

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* It is observable, that the apostle, speaking of the vessels of wrath, in the foregoing verse, uses a passive verb, calling them vessels of wrath, (*κτείνονται*) fitted to destruction: But speaking of the vessels of mercy, he uses an active verb, saying, which he, viz. God (*ἡμεῖς*) has afore prepared unto glory; one intimating what the sinner is fitted for by his own iniquity; and the other, what God himself doth upon him in a way of preparation for designed happiness.

† Not of the *Jews* only, but of the *Gentiles* also, shews that there was a choosing and call-

ing of particular persons to eternal life, out of both those bodies of people which God had chosen and called to the external privileges of the gospel, viz. the *Jews* first, and afterwards the *Gentiles*: For the body of the *Jews*, those that rejected Christ by unbelief, as well as those that received him by faith were externally called, or, as a modern writer would have it, invited before, and as much as the *Gentiles*. And this may be considered as a proper key to the preceding discourse; as it may satisfy us, that the apostle did not there speak merely of the rejection of the *Jews*, but

These, of whatever nation they be, are the true seed of *Abraham*, and children of the promise beforementioned. (ver. 7, 8.)

15 As he saith also in *Olee*, I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved.

25 And that God designed to call a people from among the *Gentiles*, and make them the spiritual seed of *Abraham*, under the gospel-state, appears from Old Testament-prophecies; as for instance, He says, in *Hos. ii.* 23. not only with respect to the ten tribes that had fallen off from his covenant, but likewise with respect to the *Gentile* nations among whom they were scattered, and who never had been taken into his gracious covenant, *I will call them; or say unto them, Thou art my people which were not my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God; and I will call her beloved which was not beloved, or I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; that is, I will take them into my covenant, and make them my people, in due season, to serve and glorify me here, and enjoy me for ever; and I will deal with them, and own them as such; and will enable them to avouch me for their God who before did not stand in that special relation to me, but were utter strangers to the covenant of promises: And I will shew distinguishing compassion, and loving kindness to them, in the most effectual manner, to make them partakers of all the blessings of grace and glory, who never before had found saving mercy, as the objects of my peculiar love **

16 And it shall come to pass, that, in the place where it was said unto them, *Ye are not my people; there shall they be called, The children of the living God.*

26 And in another passage of the same prophet it is said, (*Hos. i. 10.*) *It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God; or there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God; that is, The time is coming when in those very places and*

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calling of the *Gentiles* in general; but of God's exalting the riches of his free grace in saving whom he pleased among the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, whilst, in his tremendous righteousness, he abandoned the bulk of his once favourite people, for their obstinacy and unbelief; and, in his abundant mercy, had a peculiar regard to multitudes of *Gentile* sinners.

* It seems indeed from the context in *Hos.*, and from what the apostle *Peter* writes to the believing strangers that were scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythinia, that these prophecies had a respect to the elect of God, which should be called among the ten tribes of *Israel*, 1 *Pet. i. 1.* 2. and *ii. 10.* But some have thought that the apostle *Peter's* epistle was wrote to *Gentile* Christians, that were scattered through those provinces: (See Mr *Pierre's* introduc-

tion to the epistle to the *Hebrews*.) However, that the words of this prophecy had a reference to the *heathen nations* themselves, and was to have its more eminent accomplishment in God's elect among them, may be concluded, not only from the strong terms in which they are expressed, as applicable in their fullest sense to the *Gentiles*; but principally from our inspired apostle's quoting them, as prophecies of the calling of some among the *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; and so he keeps up his view towards the spiritual children of *Abraham*, through faith in Christ, according to the promise, of what nation soever they be, in opposition to the children of the flesh, that were only the natural descendants of *Abraham*, which he had mentioned, ver. 7, 8. See *Preface* on *Hos. i. 10.* and *ii. 23.*

and countries, where it has been said to the inhabitants thereof, for many ages together, Ye are not a people in covenant with me; there shall they be brought into the number of the children of the only living and true God; they shall be called to the faith and fellowship of the gospel, and admitted to all the privileges that belong to the adoption of sons; God will not be ashamed to be called their God, and they, in the surprising riches of his grace, shall be received into his family.

17 *Esaïas* also crieth concerning *Israel*, 'Though the number of the children of *Israel* be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.'

27 As God in these passages speaks of his intended favour toward sinners of the *Gentiles*; so it is plain from other prophecies, that, under the gospel-dispensation, he purposed effectually to call some, though, comparatively, but few of the *Jews*; and to reject the rest of them for their unbelief; as particularly from the prophecy of *Isaiah*, who (*chap. x. 22.*) speaking in the concern of his own soul, about the seed of *Abraham*, according to the flesh, and lifting up his voice to engage attention, for the alarming of some, and encouraging of others among them, said†, 'Though the number of the children of *Israel* by natural birth, and external privileges, be such a vast multitude, that, as the promise to *Abrah* expressed it in a proverbial way, (*Gen. xxii. 17.*) they are past account, like the sands on the sea-shore; yet, out of this innumerable company, it is but a remnant according to the election of grace, (*Rom. xi. 5.*) very few of them comparatively speaking, whom God has reserved for himself, that shall be made partakers of that salvation which is in *Christ Jesus*, with eternal glory.

18 For he will finish the work, and

28 That these were to be but a small remnant, compared with the rest of the *Israelites*, further appears from what the same evangelical prophet immediately adds, saying, (*Isa. x. 22, 23.*) For ‡ God will finish the account

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† Here, and in the 18th and 19th verses, the apostle quotes two prophecies of *Isaiah*, to prove his point, with relation to the choosing and calling of a few, and rejecting the rest of the *Jews*; and here is evidently a choosing of some to salvation, out of the body of the *Jews*, that were chosen to external privileges, and to be the people of God, visibly in covenant with him, in preference to all other nations of the earth.

‡ This part of *Isaiah's* prophecy is recited according to the *Septuagint*, which is much the same in sense with the *Hebrew*; and though this prophecy, and that which follows in the next verse, seem to have had an immediate reference, one to the preservation of a remnant of the *Jews* from destruction by the *Assyrians*, and the other by *Babylon* and *Persia*;

yet as they were typical of God's elect among the *Jews*, that should be saved with an everlasting salvation through faith in *Christ*, under the gospel-state; so the apostle considers those words, as to have a further accomplishment in gospel-days; otherwise I cannot see how they could be at all to his purpose. And it is observed by several critics, that the expressions, *He will finish the work, and make a short work*, (*1076*) are metaphorical, taken from accounts, upon the balancing of which, and cutting off one part from the other, the remainder is but a small sum. Accordingly the word (*1076*) here used signifies, and is often rendered, *an account*, as in *Acts xix. 40. Rom. xiv. 12.* and several other places: And so here, and in the following verses, the apostle gives a hint of the national rejection of the

and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth,

count which he has laid in his eternal purpose with regard to the calling of his elect among the *Jews* in the riches of his grace, and to his rejecting the rest for their unbelief; and he in the way of his righteous judgment, will make quick dispatch with the carnal *Israelites* in the decreed consumption, which he will bring, like an overflowing flood, to take them away; because when the Lord comes to cast up the number of his chosen, and of others, and to balance the account between them, the remainder of the saved will be but very small, in comparison with those that shall soon be cut off from his covenant, and from the earth, in the destruction of the refractory part of the *Jewish* nation, both in this world and in that which is to come.

19 And as Elias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah.

29 And this is still further evident from another passage in *Isaiah*, where, in a former part of his prophecy, he said, (*chap. i. 9.*) Unless the great Lord, ruler, and disposer, of all, who, in asserting his uncontrollable authority says, *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure*, (*Isa. xli. 10.*); unless he had, in the riches of his free and sovereign grace, reserved to us a spiritual seed, whom he has made the objects of his special love; and who, for number, should be but as the seed, compared with the innumerable grains of corn in the harvest: Had he not, I say, been so gracious, as to secure a remnant, such is our sinfulness, unworthiness, and provocations, that we should have been utterly destroyed one and all without exception, as the wicked people of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* were for their iniquities; so that it is really amazing that any are saved at all, rather than that the number of them should be, comparatively speaking, so small. From all this it appears, that it is an act of justice in God to take vengeance on the objects of his wrath, and an act of his free mercy to save the objects of his love, of what nation soever they be.

30 What shall we then say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have

30 What shall we then say further, to maintain the freeness of divine grace, and clear the holy God from every charge of unrighteousness, in his sovereign distributions of happiness and misery; and to leave the rejected sinner without excuse? Surely nothing more need be added than this, That though the poor blind idolatrous heathens were so far from seeking and pressing after righteousness to eternal life, that they were utterly ignorant of it, and unconcerned about it, and made no pretences to it, but were filled with all manner of iniquity,

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the *Jews*, in that the generality of them would shortly be cut off, as he also doth, and had before, (*ver. 25, 26.*) of the calling of

the *Gentiles*; both of which he afterwards more plainly and professedly considers, *chap. xi. 11, &c.*

have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.

quity, (*chap. i. 29, &c.*) yet many, though far from the generality, of these have now, under a sense of their own guilt and unworthiness, and by a divine influence, arrived at righteousness for justification, even the righteousness of Christ, which is revealed in the gospel, as the object of faith, and is received by faith. (*Chap. i. 16.*) This shews that their salvation is entirely of grace: For as there was no shadow of their deserving it; so it is of faith, that it might be by grace. (*Chap. iv. 16.*)

31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

31 But, on the contrary, the greatest part of the natural seed of *Jacob*, who, with abundance of misguided zeal, (*chap. x. 2.*) pursued after righteousness to justification by their own obedience to the law of *Moses*; these have fallen short of their own end therein*; they have not arrived at, or come up to, and apprehended a righteousness which answers the demands of the law, and is necessary to procure their acceptance with God to eternal life.

32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law:

32 How, or whence, comes this to pass? It is not because they were hindered, or discouraged therein, by any secret and eternal decree of God about them, which necessitates no man's will, and continues to be hid from every one with respect to himself, till events explain it; but it is owing to their own sin and unbelief; because, through the self-sufficiency, pride, and perverseness of their corrupt hearts, they would not, like the believing *Gentiles*, take the gospel-way of seeking and attaining the perfect righteousness, which the law required, in order to their being justified, alone through faith in Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes, (*chap. x. 3, 4.*) But the carnal *Jews* who utterly rejected Christ, sought to obtain righteousness for

N O T E.

* The law of righteousness signifies the righteousness of the law, and is, in the main, of the same import with righteousness in the preceding verse; where the apostle, speaking of the *Gentiles*, only called it righteousness; because they were strangers to the law given by *Moses*, though they had some remains of the law of nature, which was the rule of righteousness to them, (*chap. ii. 14, 15.*) But here, speaking of *Israel*, he beautifully, and with great accuracy, varies the phrase, calling it the law of righteousness, or the righteousness of the law; because the *Mosaic* law, especially in its moral parts, was the rule of righteousness to them. And in representing how things stood with *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as to righteousness for justification, he uses several terms that were significant, with an allusion to racers in one of the *Grecian* games, in which,

he that was hindermost pursued, with all speed after him that was foremost, to overtake him, and get beyond him, that he might lay hold on the prize which was placed at the goal for the victor. (See *Dr Hammond* on the place.) Accordingly righteousness to eternal life is spoken of as the prize, which the *Gentiles* did not pursue, or run for; (*ἀγωνίζεσθαι*) and yet they attained, or laid hold on it, (*καταλαβέ*) by a free gift of grace: And righteousness for justification was the prize which the *Jews* did pursue, or run for; (*δωρον*) and yet, not running, or striving lawfully, (*1 Tim. ii. 5.*) in the way of God's appointment for that purpose, they miserably fell short of it, and did not reach, or come up to that righteousness which the law requires in order to justification. (*οὐκ ἐφίκατο* καὶ ἠσπασεν.)

law: for they stumbled at that stumbling-stone;

justification merely by †, and for their own obedience to, the law, which can never answer that end, (*chap. iii. 20.*) And the *judaizing* Christians were for joining *Moses* with *Christ*; and so sought to be justified, partly by the Redeemer's righteousness, and partly by their own, which was equally impossible, and was indeed seeking to be justified, in measure at least, by the works of the law, that they might have something to glory in before God, (*chap. iv. 2.*) For the carnal *Jews* took such offence at *Christ*, as utterly to reject him on account of his mean parentage and appearance, poverty and crucifixion, and the spiritual nature of his kingdom; and the *judaizing* Christians, though they professed to believe in him as the *Messiah*, could by no means brook the thought of utterly renouncing all their own righteousness for his, and of being entirely beholden to him and grace for justification and all salvation; and so both one and the other stumbled at *Christ*, and fell short of eternal life, to their own perdition, like persons that are running a race, and meet with a stone in their way, which, by hitting their foot against it †, makes them stumble and fall, to their own great hurt, and losing the prize.

33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone, and

33 And this is no more than was likewise foretold by the prophet *Isaiah*, as may be collected from his writings, where, in one place, (*Isa. xxviii. 16.*) * he brings in God the Father, as saying, *Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation*; that is, I have laid the *Messiah*, as the only foundation of my church, that it may

NOTES.

† The particle (*αὐτοῦ*) here rendered as it were, is sometimes *expletive*, and at others a particle of *confirmation*: But as it is likewise a particle of *similitude*; and as it appears from the epistle to the *Galatians*, which was wrote more directly to the *judaizing* Christians, that they, who did not pretend wholly to reject *Christ*, were nevertheless for making the works of the law to bear a part in justification, the apostle seems in this passage to glance at them, as being in the same case with the obstinate unbelieving *Jews*, with respect to justification, in so much that *Christ* would be of no effect to them, and would profit them nothing, (*Gal. v. 2. 4.*) and therefore I have formed the paraphrase to take in both.

† Here again is an allusion, in the agonistical strain, to a man's striking his foot against a stone, or other obstacle in his way, which occasions his falling, and losing so much ground, as to be irrecoverably distanced in his running a race, and which sorely wounds and bruises him, as well as makes him lose

the prize he was running for.

* The apostle having proved to the *Jews* from *Isaiah*, one of their own prophets, that God had foretold, that only a remnant of them should be eternally saved, and that, except the Lord, in the greatness of his mercy had left them a seed, they would have been universally destroyed for their iniquities, like *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, (*ver. 17. 19.*) He here proceeds to prove, from the same prophet, that God had foretold the offence, which multitudes of them would take at *Christ*, to their own utter confusion. Nevertheless, his quotation for this purpose, is not of passages as they lie in order in the prophecy of *Isaiah* itself; but it is of two places, which, compared together, fully make out the sense for which he alledged them, as they both speak of *Christ*, though in different considerations of him: One of God's direct and immediate design in sending him; and the other of the ill use that the perverse unbelieving *Jews* would make of him.

and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

may be built upon him, whom I have tried, and proved, and highly approved of, and who, being tried by those that trust in him, is also exceeding dear to them, as every way fit and qualified, like a corner stone, for uniting *Jews* and *Gentiles* in him and supporting their dependencies upon him, who is the strength, ornament, and security of all that believe in him; and *other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*, (1 Cor. iii. 11.) But as the same prophet observes in another place, (*Isa. viii. 14, 15.*) this precious stone, which is designed and suited to this excellent purpose, will, through the pride and prejudices of the *Jews* eventually prove to be a *stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, to both houses of Israel; and many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken*; that is, many of the various tribes of *Israel*, instead of making a proper use of him, in building all their salvation by faith upon him, will take offence at him, oppose and reject him, through their own obstinacy and unbelief; and so will fall in such a terrible manner, as to dash themselves to pieces to their own confusion and ruin, like a man that wounds himself to death by running against a rock. And yet this shall not defeat the gracious design of God in laying Christ, as the foundation of the church, and in saving them that rest all their hopes upon him: For, as is intimated in one of the places before referred to, (*Isa. xlviii. 16.**;) Whosoever he be, whether *Jew* or *Gentile*, a greater or lesser sinner, that quits all confidence in himself, and depends entirely on Christ for righteousness to eternal life, he shall not be ashamed of his adherence to him, profession of him, and expectations from him, as persons use to be, who are precipitate in their conduct, and whose vain confidences are frustrated and disappointed, through their over-haste in affairs of the utmost consequence; but the true believer's hopes shall be abundantly fulfilled, and more than answered, that he may have boldness in the day of judgment. (1 John iv. 17.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What exalted thoughts should we have of Christ, who, in his human nature, came of the Father's; but, in his divine nature, is God over all, blessed for ever! And how equally divine is the Holy Ghost, who sees and searches the heart, and to whom the Christians may appeal, as by a solemn oath, for the sincerity of his professions, when his own conscience bears witness to it! It is a high honour to stand in a visible relation to God, and to be partakers of the means

N O T E.

* The words in the prophet are, *He shall not make haste*: But the apostle gives us a very apposite sense of them in saying, answerable to, though not in the exact words of the *Septuagint*, which are, (*ὁ μὴ καὶ ταχέως*)

He shall not be ashamed, (*ὁ καὶ ταχέως*) because making too much haste tends to, and commonly issues in, making a man ashamed of his enterprise, and his hopes in affairs of the greatest importance.

means of grace, and the external privileges of his covenant : But ah ! What matter of exceeding grief is it, that any such, and especially that any of our own dear friends and relations among them, should fall short of eternal salvation ! Nevertheless, the word of God's promise, and the purpose of his grace, according to election, shall certainly stand, and have their happy effects, whatever appearances there may be to the contrary. And, O how free, sovereign, and endearing is electing love, which pitched upon many sinners of the *Gentiles*, as well as of the *Jews*, before either of them had done either good or evil, and designed their effectual calling, not because they willed and ran, but merely of his own free grace, who will have mercy and compassion on whom he will have mercy and compassion, among persons alike undeserving and miserable, and causes some to will and run to saving purposes, while he passes by others, and gives them up to the hardness of their own hearts. And whatever prejudices the pride and corruption of mens hearts may raise against this sovereign way of God's procedure ; yet how suitable is it to his absolute dominion, who undoubtedly has as much power over us as the potter has over the clay, to make out of the same lump, one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour ! And how consistent is this with the righteousness of God, who doth injury to none, and appoints none to destruction, but on account of sin, whereby they become vessels of wrath, and fit themselves for it ! And as his purposes are kept secret in his own breast, till events declare them, so the rule of our duty, and of our expectation and hope, is not the secret, but the revealed will of God ; and every one, without puzzling himself about secret decrees, which for ought he knows are in his favour, has all reasonable encouragement to follow after righteousness by faith, in hope of obtaining it, and thereby knowing and proving his election of God. How careful then should we be, that we neither quarrel with the sovereignty, grace, or justice of these dispensations, lest we be confounded for our insolence, in daring to reply against the great God ; nor harden ourselves in iniquity, lest God, in his righteous judgment, should give us up still to greater, and even incurable hardness of heart ; nor stumble at Christ to the rejecting of him, or joining any thing of our own with him for justification, lest it be to our own eternal perdition ! Blessed be God, there is righteousness in Christ for the justification of every true believer, though of none but such. How dreadful then is their case, who, stumbling at Christ, dash themselves against him as a rock of offence, while they follow after righteousness by the works of the law, and never attain it ? But how happy is their case, who sincerely believe in him ! They shall never be ashamed or confounded.

C H A P. X.

The apostle repeats a profession of his hearty desire for the salvation of the Jews, who had a misguided zeal for God and religion, 1,—4. Sets out the difference between the righteousness of the law, by which they thought to be justified, and the righteousness of faith which is revealed in the gospel, 5,—11. Shews that the Gentiles stand on a level with the Jews, in the great business of justification and salvation, 12,—18. And that the Jews themselves might know this from the Old Testament-prophecies, 19,—21.

TEXT.

PARAPHRASE.

BRETHREN, my
heart's desire
and

AFTER all that I have been saying, in a faithful discharge of my office, about the rejection of so many *Israelites* after the flesh, I still, my brethren, can sincerely declare, as I have done in a solemn manner already, (*chap. ix. 1, 2, 3.*) that the most benevolent and

and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

and affectionate desire (*ωσπου*) of my whole soul, and my most earnest prayer in offering up that desire to God for them is, that, if it be consonant to his will, he would please to extend his special mercy to all of them, notwithstanding present melancholy appearances in turning them from their iniquities, and giving them faith in Christ, to their present and eternal salvation, instead of executing his righteous vengeance upon any of them, to their utter destruction.

2 For I hear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge :

2 For I really think ; and how much soever the generality of them be enemies to me, I must do them the justice to acknowledge, and declare on their behalf ; and I reflect upon it, to stir up my own heart to the greater importunity and fervour in my humble pleas with God for them, that, at least, many of them are, in their way exceeding zealous for God and his law, especially for its ceremonial part, as I myself once also was, (*Acts* xxii. 3.) and as I said but now (*chap.* ix. 31.) they follow after righteousness in acts of obedience to that law, which they know was originally from God, and think they still observe to his glory : But, alas ! they are sadly misguided in their zeal ; it is all heat, without any light about the true nature and design of the law, and about the righteousness that is necessary to their acceptance with God ; and through their blind prejudices against Christ and his righteousness, their very zeal itself turns them off from him, and from the only way which God has appointed for salvation, and in which he can be really glorified in bestowing it.

3 For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness,

3 For the unbelieving and self-justiciary Jews have, through their chosen carnality and blindness, very mistaken, mean, low, and unworthy thoughts * of the essential rights of God's justice, as they are plainly discovered in his strict and high demands of universal, sinless obedience to the precepts of his holy law, in thought, word, and deed, for justification, according to its tenor, (*ver.* 5.) and in the severe curse which he has denoun-

N O T E.

* It is evident to me, that by the *righteousness of God*, (*δικαιοσύνη τοῦ Θεοῦ*) in the close of this verse, is meant that righteousness which God has appointed, provided, and exhibited in the gospel, for the justification of every one that believes : But I am uncertain whether God's righteousness, (*τὴν οὕτω δικαιοσύνην*) mentioned in the former part of the verse, is to be taken in the same sense ; tho' that is the sense in which the apostle most commonly uses it in this epistle : (see the notes on *chap.* iii. 5, 25.) Or whether it is to be understood of the *justice* of God, as de-

manding a perfect righteousness, according to the law, in order to a man's being justified in his sight. The *first* of these senses is most conformable to the apostle's ordinary use of this phrase ; and yet the *last* seems to let the gradation of thought here in the most beautiful and least coincident light, and to be correspondent to the sense in which he may be supposed to have used this phrase in *chap.* iii. 5, 25, 26. I have therefore considered the former clause of this verse in both these views, and leave every one to chuse that which he likes best.

and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

denounced by it, for every the least transgression, (Gal. iii. 10.) and they are wilfully ignorant of that perfect and glorious mediatorial righteousness of the Messiah, which he, who is God in our nature, has wrought out by his obedience and sufferings, to the full satisfaction of law and justice, which God the Father has evidently declared his acceptance of, and makes over for righteousness to the justification of every one that believes: And for want of seeing these things in a true and spiritual light, according to the clear revelation that is made of one in the law, and of the other in the gospel, they are seeking to set up (*ἐκείνους ποιοῦν*) their own imperfect, ceremonial, and external performances, and are endeavouring to make them stand, as their righteousness for acceptance with God to eternal life; as if these were sufficient to answer the requirements of his law and justice, and to atone for their numberless transgressions, though, in reality, they are utterly incapable of answering those ends: And so, partly through culpable ignorance and blindness, and partly through self-conceit and desperate pride of heart, which scorns to be entirely beholden to free and sovereign grace, they have refused to stoop, and humble themselves at the foot of God so far, as to renounce all trust and confidence in their own righteousness, and to depend entirely upon that which is brought in by Christ, and freely proposed in the gospel, for justification through faith in him; and which alone is sufficient to entitle a believing sinner to eternal life.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

4 For Christ is (*τελος*) the *perfecting* end of the moral law, for righteousness, even of that law which says, *The man that doth those things shall live by them*, (ver. 5.) as he has gone through, and fulfilled all its demands of obedience, as well as sufferings, in his life and death, to the entire satisfaction of divine justice; he is likewise the *abolishing* end of the ceremonial law, and has put a period to it, as all its typical offerings for purification and atonement are completely and substantially answered in him; and he is the grand designed *scope* and end, for which *both* those laws were given to *Israel*, as the moral law, by discovering their guilt and danger, and the ceremonial law, by shadowing out his great sacrifice, were intended to shew them their need of Christ, and put them upon flying to him for pardon and acceptance, (chap. iii. 20. and v. 20. and Gal. iii. 24.) He is, in all these senses *, the end of the law, for the bringing in

N O T E.

* Though all the senses given in the paraphrase may be included; yet I am inclined to con-

of an everlasting perfect righteousness unto the justification, not universally of all the *Jews*, nor of all the *Gentiles*, but of every one, be he *Jew* or *Gentile*, (ver. 12.) who, under a sense of his own unworthiness and obnoxiousness to divine wrath, assents to, approves of, and trusts in Christ, as the only suitable, all-sufficient, and gracious Saviour, that, through his righteousness alone, he may be accepted of God, and accounted righteous to eternal life. And it is impossible that he should be so by any legal performances whatsoever.

¶ For Moses describes the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doth those things shall live by them.

5 For, as to the righteousness of the law, *Moses* himself, in his writings, (γραφή) delineates and explains its strict demands, as a covenant of works, in order to a man's obtaining life by his obedience to it, when he brings God in as saying, (*Levit. xviii. 5.*) *Ye shall keep my statutes and my judgments, which, if a man do, he shall live in them*; and (*Deut. xxvii. 26.*) *Cursed be he that confirms not all the words of this law to do them*; that is, The man, who universally and always, without the least flaw or defect in any one instance, performs all those things which the law requires, inclusive of its moral precepts, (*Matth. xix. 16, 17.* and *Luke x. 27, 28.*) he, and he only, shall have eternal life and happiness by it. This is a condition which no man, in his fallen state, can come up to, (*Rom. viii. 3.*) and therefore it is no wonder that they miscarry, and are disappointed, who seek and hope for justification to life, in this way. (*Chap. ix. 31, 32.*)

¶ But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who

6 But, on the contrary, The language of the gospel-doctrine of justification through the righteousness of Christ, which is proposed to, and received by faith, as *Moses* himself has also hinted, (*Deut. xxx. 11,—14.*) is after this manner *, do not let discouraging thoughts of impos-

N O T E.

consider that which relates to Christ's active obedience, as most directly intended, because he was the end of that law for righteousness, the righteousness of which is described in the next words, (ver. 5.) as *doing the things* is commands, that a man may live by them.

* In this and the two next verses the apostle refers to what *Moses* said in *Deut. xxx. 11,—14.* On which place Dr Goodwin observes, (vol. IV. part. iii. pag. 41.) "That though *Moses* had most of all preached the law, and given it at mount Sinai; and had hid the gospel under the types and shadows of legal ceremonies; yet now when he was to die, he doth, through the Holy Ghost's coming upon him, preach the gospel, and deliver the covenant thereof clearly and plainly to the *Jews*: For you may read, in *Deut. xxix. 1.* that he

"calls it, the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded *Moses* to make with the children of Israel, in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which he made with them in Horeb: It is another covenant; and therefore the apostle pertinently quotes the words of this last great sermon of *Moses*, to distinguish the covenant of works and the covenant of grace." And it seems, from the beginning of the thirtieth chapter to the sixth verse, that *Moses*, in the passages referred to by our apostle, speaks with an ultimate view to gospel-days, when God would circumcise the heart of his people, and the heart of their seed, to love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, that they might live: So the learned *Ainsworth* all along expounds those verses in his notes upon them.

Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above.)

impossibility, about acceptance with God, rise in your hearts, as they are apt to do in an awakened conscience, when it is filled with a sense of guilt, and is thoroughly convinced that no righteousness of its own can avail for pardon and justification: Do not say, in a despairing manner, Who is able to climb up to heaven, and bring down from thence a Saviour to fulfil the law for us, and to expiate our sins? for Christ has already come into our nature, and our world, to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

7 Nor let any of you say, in the despondency of your minds, supposing the Messiah were to come from heaven, and die for our sins †, Who could follow him into the grave, to raise him up again from the dead, in token, of his being owned of God to have made satisfaction to his law and justice, and in order to his being recovered to a capacity of applying his redemption to us? do not give way to such distrustful reasonings as these: For as he has already died for our sins; so he is already actually raised again for our justification, (chap. iv. 25.); there is therefore no such impossibility in the way of faith's coming at a righteousness in Christ for justification, as there is in obtaining it by our own personal obedience to the law.

8 But what faith is? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach;

8 But what is the language of the gospel-declaration about this important point? why, the doctrine, which reveals and exhibits the righteousness of Christ to your faith, is no longer hid from you; nor is it far off, (*Deut. xxx. 11.*) but it is now plainly revealed in the gospel, and brought near unto you, even to your very doors in the ministration of it, that you may receive it: Yea, it is brought so near as to be in your mouth, when you read it, and speak of it in your prayers and praises to God, or in your confessions before men, (*ver. 9.*); yea, it is brought still nearer into your very heart, and makes effectual impressions there, when, in the application of the Spirit, you cordially embrace it. And this blessed doctrine, which is founded on divine authority, and holds forth Christ as the object of faith, and is the means of begetting faith in him, is that which we, his apostles and servants, explain and publish, propose and recommend to you, as a practicable and easy way of salvation, this?

N O T E.

† The expression in *Deut. xxx. 12.* is, Who shall go over the sea for us? And the *Targum* explains it thus, O that we had one, like *Jonas*, the prophet, who might go down to the bottom, or depth of the great sea! Now *Jonas*, in his descending into the deep, was a figure of Christ's lying

three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, as our Lord himself applies it, *Matth. xii. 40.* And as the sea is called the deep, and the depth, *Psalm. civ. 6.* and *cvil. 24, 26.* so *David*, prophesying of Christ, says, (*Psalm. lxxi. 20.*) God would bring him up again from the depths of the earth.

through the grace that has promised to *circumcise the heart*, (*Deut. xxx. 6.*)

o That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

9 And, in opposition to the righteousness of the law, (*ver. 5.*) the main tenor of the gospel is this, If on all proper occasions, in these perilous days, you, without fear or shame, shall make a free, bold, and open confession of Christ and shall call upon him, (*ver. 13.*) with your lips, as the only Lord and Saviour, whom you receive, and on whom you entirely depend, for all acceptance unto eternal life *; and if this be not a mere verbal profession and invocation; but, answerable thereunto, you shall believe in your very heart, with such a faith as renounces all trust and confidence in yourself, and as works by love, and overcomes the world, (*Gal. v. 4, 5, 6.* and *1 John v. 4, 5.*) If, I say, you in this manner shall believe, that God the Father delivered Christ up to death for our offences, and raised him again for our justification, (*chap. iv. 25.*) you shall certainly be discharged from guilt and condemnation, delivered from the wrath to come, intitled to eternal life, and at length, brought to a full possession of it, on his account.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth con-

10 For true and saving faith is not merely a notion in the head, nor a bare assent of the understanding to the truth of divine revelation: But it is with a man's whole heart, including the consent, approbation, and acceptance of his will and affections, that he believes in the crucified and risen Saviour, unto the obtaining of righteousness for justification, even the righteousness of Christ, which completely answers all the demands of the law, (*ver. 4.*) and is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, (*chap. iii. 22.*) And it is with his lips and tongue †, as expressing the inmost sentiments and dispositions of his heart, that he makes a noble

N O T E S.

* Dr. H. in a note on this verse, observes, "That justification is here expressly ascribed to faith, and that not as including works, but only as being that principle, which, when it is cordial and sincere, will certainly produce them: I say, not as including all those works, which by the gospel are required to salvation; for then the righteousness of faith must be described as is the righteousness of the law, viz. That the man who doth these things shall live in them, which is contrary to the words of the apostle, *ver. 5, 6.*" But if justification is by faith, as a principle of works, it, in effect, is still as much as ever by works. However, if this faith, when it is cordial and sincere, will certainly produce those good works, upon which the doctor, in a following note, rests actually and complete salva-

tion at the day of judgment; this faith must certainly bring us now into such a right to actual and complete salvation, as shall be owned in that day to have effectually justified us.

† Though confession was mentioned before believing, *ver. 9.* yet here it is put after believing; to shew that the apostle meant first a confession as is the fruit of faith: And as a man's believing with the heart is said to be unto righteousness, which intitles to eternal life; so confession is spoken of, not as any part of that righteousness which gives a title to life; but as an evidence of the truth of our faith, and one remarkable way of its operating, especially in persecuting times; and as God's appointed means and method of building us up in it, and bringing us to complete salvation.

confession is made
unto salvation.

a noble confession of his faith in Christ, publicly, cheerfully, and resolutely owning him in all his characters, notwithstanding the greatest terrors of this world that he may be exposed to for it; it is also with his mouth that he pleads what this great mediator has done and suffered, as the only ground of his hope toward God, unto the obtaining of final salvation through him, (*ver.* 13.) and that the faith, which has such powerful effects, is of a saving nature, appears from what is recorded, even in the Old Testament.

11 For the scripture faith, Who-
soever believeth
on him shall not
be ashamed.

11 For those inspired writings declare, (*Isa.* xxviii. 16.) with a view to the Messiah, as has been before observed, (*chap.* ix. 33. see the note and paraphrase there) that whoever he be, that receives and relies upon him by faith, whatever his former character and condition had been, will not be ashamed to own Christ, nor shall he ever be put to shame and confusion through a disappointment of his hope and confidence in him. And this holds equally true, with respect to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*,

12 For there is
no difference be-
tween the Jew
and the Greek :
for the same Lord
over all is rich
unto all that call
upon him.

12 For, under the gospel-dispensation, the grace of God is not confined, as it formerly was, to the *Israelitish* church and nation. No, there is now no difference, as to God's free regard to, and way of justifying and saving one, rather than another, on account of his being a *Jew* on one hand, or a *Gentile*, the most politic and learned of which are the *Greeks*, on the other: For one and the same Lord Jesus †, who, as Mediator, is given to be head over all things to the church, (*Eph.* i. 22.) and is Lord of all, (*Acts* x. 36.) is inexhaustible in the riches of his merit and mercy, and is exceeding bounteous in his saving blessings unto all sorts of persons, of what rank or nation soever they be, even to all and every one that religiously invokes and worships him, as a divine Saviour, with faith in his name; and makes a due surrender of himself up to him, and to the Father through him.

13 For whoso-
ever shall call up-
on the name of
the Lord shall be
saved.

13 For, as was foretold in a prophecy of gospel-days, (*Joel* ii. 32.) without exception against one more than another, Whoever, be he who or what he will, as to national or personal circumstances, that shall cordially accept of Christ for his Lord and Saviour, and apply in earnest prayer to him, with an entire dependence on his mediation, righteousness, and grace, to bring him into a state of favour with God, he shall be delivered from sin and wrath, and advanced to eternal blessedness.

14 Since

N O T E.

† By the same Lord seems here to be meant the Lord Christ, who, in the two following verses, is spoken of, as preached, believed in,

and called upon, in order to that salvation through him which the apostle had been discoursing of in the preceding context.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher:

14 Since therefore the *Gentiles* are included in the gospel-design of salvation, there is no room for the *Jews* to be offended at its being preached to them; and it is plain that it ought so to be: For how is it possible that they should, in a truly religious manner, invoke him to recommend them to the divine favour, whom they have not known, received, and depended upon, by faith for that purpose? And how can they, in the ordinary course of things, accept of and trust in him, whom they have not so much as heard of in his saving offices and characters, as he is set forth in the gospel? And in what manner can it be supposed that they should hear of him, according to the divine revelation that is made concerning him, unless he be some way or other manifested by a publication of the gospel to them?

15 And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

15 And what authority could any have to preach the word of faith, (*ver.* 8.) to them, unless they were either immediately or mediately, sent with a divine commission for it? And their being sent of God, on this blessed errand, is so far from being a just occasion of offence, or envy to any, that it is matter of great thankfulness and joy, according to what is written*, (*Isa.* lii. 7.) with a reference to *Israel's* deliverance from the *Babylonish* captivity, which was typical of a much more glorious deliverance from sin and wrath by the promised Messiah, *viz.* How seasonable, desirable, and welcome is the approach; and how lovely and precious are the very feet of those messengers, that in a moral sense are undefiled, though besmeared with dirt and sweat in their travails, to proclaim the glad tidings of peace with God by Jesus Christ, and to publish all the great and good things of gospel-grace, such as justification, adoption, sanctification, and eternal glory, through him? They are to be esteemed very highly in love for their works sake, (*1 Thess.* v. 13.) because they bring us a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief of them, (*1 Tim.* i. 15.) So that from these prophetic passages, and this gradation of argument, it appears

N O T E.

* The whole current of the following context in *Isaiah's* prophecy, leads us to understand his words in chap. lii. 7. as referring, not merely to the joyful messages of *Israel's* deliverance from the *Babylonish* captivity, but as looking forward to the still much happier tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ, which should be preached, and *that* to the *Gentiles*, in gospel-days: For in the following verses to the end of that chapter, he says, among

other things, *The Lord has made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God; and speaks of Christ, as God's servant, who shall sprinkle many nations, &c.* *ver.* 10, 13, 15. And all along through the next chapter he describes our Lord in his sufferings, and in their saving design, in such a clear and lively view, as looks more like a history than a prophecy of him.

pears that there was a necessity of the gospel's being preached to the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*.

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For *Isaiah* saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

16 But as the whole body of the *Gentiles* were no more chosen to eternal salvation than the whole body of the *Jews* were excluded from it: So all of them universally (*ὅλης ὁ ἀνθρώπων γενεή*) have not hearkened to the gracious calls of the gospel, to entertain it, and cheerfully yield themselves up to the authority of God in it, by the obedience of faith. And this is no more than was to be expected from what is intimated in another prophecy of *Isaiah*, which relates to the calling of the *Gentiles* by the gospel *: For, says he, by way of lamentation and humble expostulation with God, on account of the small number of persons of any character, that would then receive these glad tidings, (*Isa. liii. 1.*) Lord, how few are they, that by faith have given credit to, and cordially embraced the plain, affectionate, divinely inspired, and confirmed declarations, which we, the servants of the Messiah, have made of salvation through him, in comparison with those that have heard, and yet, thro' the hardness of their hearts, have rejected them?

17 So then, saith *concerning* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

17 It therefore appears from all this, that though many who heard the gospel shut themselves out from its spiritual and eternal blessings by their own unbelief; yet bearing it is the ordinary means of God's appointment for working effectually, by the revealing of his arm, or exerting the power of his Spirit, upon the hearts of others; insomuch that they who have believed, through grace, were brought to it at first, and are carried on, and built up in it, by this means: And hearing supposes a preaching of the gospel, which may be called the word of God, as he is the author of it, and has given commission to his servants to publish it, and as it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (*Chap. i. 16.*)

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily

18 But, still further to silence all cavils against preaching the gospel to the *Gentiles*, I would say, Is it not a plain fact, that they have heard the glad tidings of salvation, and that many of them have been captivated, by that means, to the obedience of Christ? Yes, they

N O T E.

* That this prophecy included a reference to the calling of the *Gentiles* in gospel-days appears, not only from the apostle's connecting it with what he had been saying in the verses before, about the gospel's being preached to them; but also from this passage in *Isaiah's* prophecy itself, which immediately follows what was said about Christ's sprinkling many nations, who should see and consider that which had not been told them, and which they

had not heard, *Isa. lii. 15.* and *liii. 1.* And therefore, though it might primarily relate to the almost universal incredulity of the *Jews*, it was likewise very applicable to the *Gentiles*; since, notwithstanding the greater success of the gospel among them, it was far from being received by the generality, even of them. And, for the like reason, it may be applied to all succeeding ages, down to our own days.

ally, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

they certainly have: For as our blessed Lord ordered his servants to *teach all nations; and to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature*, (Matth. xxviii. 19. and Mark xvi. 15.) this has been done in a very extensive manner, and with wonderful success, in virtue of his promise, *Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world*, (Matth. xxviii. 20.) So that what David said, (*Psal. xix. 4.*) of the *heavens* preaching the wisdom; power, and goodness of God to the heathens, which had not then the benefit of divine revelation, may now be applied to the publication which is made of the gospel to them *, viz. The voice of evangelical preachers proclaiming aloud salvation by Jesus Christ, has been heard far beyond the confines of *Judea*, in various parts of the earth, through all the *Roman* empire; and their ministrations have reached, even to the utmost bounds of that vastly wide and extended dominion, which takes in the greatest part of the known regions of this world. And God's having given the gospel such an amazing spread, to the conversion of great multitudes among the Gentiles, is an evident testimony from heaven, that it ought to have been preached to them; and that none ought to murmur, or be offended at it.

19 But I say, Did not Israel know? First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people,

19 But as some of the *Jewish* brethren may be apt to plead, in excuse of their prejudices against this gracious dispensation, that they always thought the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, were to be confined to their own nation, I would further say, could they indeed be ignorant, that God designed, in due season, to extend his mercy to the *Gentiles*? No, surely, they easily might, and could not but have known something of it, if they had attended to what their own prophets had plainly foretold about it: For, in the first place, even *Moses* himself, their great law-giver, brings God in as saying to *Israel* when they had highly affronted him by their idolatries, (*Deut. xxxii. 21.*) *I will move them to jealousy by those that are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation*; that is, I, in due season, will make them see such out-goings of my mercy and favour towards a people, that at present are strangers to my covenant, as will raise the envy of the *Jews*, and give them reason to suspect my preferring the *Gentiles* to themselves; yea, (*παρασκευάζω*) I will hereby excite them to such an holy emulation, as, were they

wile

N O T E.

* The former part of the words referred to in *Psal. xix. 4.* are *their line is gone out through all the earth*. But the *Hebrew* word (*קול*) there rendered *line*, signifies likewise a *loud*

voice, or cry. See Dr *Pocock's* miscel. c. iv. p. 48. And that is the sense in which the apostle here takes it.

ple. and by a
foolish nation I
will anger you.

wife enough to lay it to heart, would be a proper means of preventing my utterly forsaking them: And I will make such a change in my dispensations, as, through the pride and perverseness of their own spirits, will prove an occasion of sowing their minds *, and irritating their wrath and indignation against the heathens, on account of my making known the way of salvation to them, whom they always despised as an ignorant foolish nation; and who may indeed well be called a *foolish nation*, as, while destitute of divine revelation, they were without the true knowledge of God; and as, amidst all their acquirements in human arts and literature, they became vain in their imaginations, and stupidly inconsiderate and void of understanding, about their present duty and future happiness.

20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.

20 And (20) still further, another celebrated prophet of later ages, *Isaiab* by name, who said more of the Messiah and his kingdom than all that went before him, speaks with great freedom, openness, and undaunted courage, both of the *calling* of the *Gentiles* and the *rejection* of the unbelieving *Jews*, how offensive soever it might be to the people of that degenerate age. As to the *calling* of the *Gentiles*, he introduces the *Jehovah* of *Israel*, as saying, in a way of free and preventing goodness, (*Isa. lxx. 1.*) I, from motives taken merely from myself, and for the glory of mine own sovereign grace, was a God of salvation to them; and they by happy experience found me to be so, who, till I began with them by the gracious calls of my gospel, and the secret motions of my Spirit upon their hearts, did not once think of seeking, worshiping, and serving me; but instead of that, were bowing down to dumb idols of their own invention, and thereby provoking me. And I was made known, in a distinguishing and effectual manner, by the preaching of the word, attended with the illumination of the Spirit, to them who went contentedly on in the way of their own dark and foolish hearts, and had never before so much as concerned themselves about me, or inquired after me, or how they might find favour in my sight; and who never would have done it had I left them to themselves.

21 But to Israel be faith, All day

21 But, on the contrary, as to the *rejection* of the unbelieving *Jews*, the same prophet tells us, that God, speaking after the manner of men, said to the *Israelites*, (*Isa.*

N O T E.

* How sadly this prophecy was verified, in *Acts* xiii. 45, and xvii. 5, 13, and xxii. 21, 22. with respect to the rage and envy of the *Jews* at the conversion of the *Gentiles*, may be seen

day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

Isa. lxxv. 2.) * I have used all manner of endearing and persuasive methods with them, by many gracious promises, by miraculous and indulgent providences, by the importunate expostulations of my servants, and by the secret strivings of my Spirit, time after time, to invite their returns to me; yea I have continued to do this with unwearied earnestness and patience, like one that pleaded with them, and stood ready with open arms to receive them, from morning to night: But it has been to an obstinate and ungrateful, unbelieving and contradicting people, who, through the hardness and corruption of their hearts, have resisted my kindest overtures and have set themselves to oppose, and even speak evil of them, when, at last, they were made by the Messiah himself and his apostles: and therefore, the day of my patience being expired, I will no longer wait to be gracious to them.

RECOLLECTIONS.

How sincerely desirous are Christ's faithful servants of the salvation of their bearers! How earnest in their pleas with God for them! And how grieved that so few receive the gospel-report! They watch for their souls, and are willing to think and speak the best they can of them; but are troubled at heart, when they perceive that, through criminal ignorance, and pride of spirit, they have such light thoughts of the strict demands of God's justice, as to imagine that they can secure his favour by their own imperfect performances, and will not stoop so far, as humbly to depend on the righteousness of Christ alone for justification, through faith in him, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. How encouraging is it to think, that the impossibilities of the law, as requiring perfect obedience in order to eternal life, are not now enjoined as the condition of obtaining it; but that a way of free mercy is opened in the gospel for it, and is practicable and easy to every one, who, by the power of divine grace, is enabled to believe with the heart unto righteousness! The righteousness of faith is brought near to sinners in the ministration of the word; and brought home to their very hearts in the application of the Spirit: The work of salvation is already wrought out by Christ; he has come from heaven, and fully satisfied the law and justice; and has been raised from the dead in testimony of it: Whosoever calls upon him, in a way of religious worship, as a divine Saviour, and believes in him, whether he be a Jew or Gentile, a greater or lesser sinner, he shall never be ashamed of his hopes, or confounded through a disappointment of them; and whoever, from this principle of faith, makes an honest, free, and open profession of Christ, in his person and offices, doctrines and ways, whatever it may cost him, shall certainly obtain complete salvation through him. O with what hearty welcome should they be entertained, that are sent with Christ's commission to preach this blessed gospel! It brings glad tidings of peace, and is the best news that ever came to the fallen sons of men: And how great is the advantage that may be hoped for, in attendances on its ministrations! Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God: This is his ordinance for bringing souls to the obedience of faith; and the ministers of Christ ought to be faithful, plain, and

NOTE

* Here is an allusion, either to the engaging behaviour of an affectionate mother who opens her arms to embrace a froward child, and encourage its coming to her; or an allu-

sion to the lively action of an orator, who moves and extends his arms, in token of his desiring audience, and of the vehemence of his address.

and courageous in preaching the whole counsel of God, how much sorer some may be offended at it. All the wisdom of this world is foolishness, compared with that which is to be learnt by means of the gospel: But God begins with us, before we begin in earnest to seek after him. What surprising grace is this! And how amazing is the patience of God towards a provoking people! He stretches out his hands to them in the ministrations of his word and gospel, and continues long to strive with them by secret suggestions of his Spirit, though they despise and oppose him; and his long-suffering often turns to salvation, after he has waited many years to be gracious. But how should sinners dread the thought of going on still to reject Christ and his gospel, lest the time of God's patience should expire; and he should remove them from the gospel, or the gospel from them, and they, before they are aware, should wonder and perish!

C H A P. XI.

The apostle shews that the rejection of the Jews is not universal; but that God's elect among them obtained salvation by grace, while the rest, through the blindness and hardness of their hearts, fell short of it, 1,—10. That God's cutting them off as a nation, from his visible church and covenant, is not final; and that as he had over ruled their unbelief, for making the Gentiles partakers of gospel-privileges in their stead; so the Gentiles ought not to insult over them, on this account; but rather take caution from them to watch against pride and unbelief, lest God, in his righteous severity, should unchurch them, as he had the Jews, who nevertheless shall, in due season, be nationally called, and brought into God's visible covenant again, 11,—32. And the whole is closed with a solemn adoration of the profound wisdom, goodness, and justice of God, in all the forementioned dispensations, 33,—36.

TEXT.

[Say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

PARAPHRASE.

BUT from what I have been saying about God's righteous and sovereign dealing with the unbelieving Jews, shall we conclude, that, though he has said, *He will not cast off his people, nor forsake his inheritance*, (Psal. xciv. 14.) he has nevertheless universally, and for ever abandoned the whole body of this favourite nation, which has been for so many ages a people visible in covenant with him? No, by no means; ($\mu\eta\ \gamma\iota\upsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$) Far be it from any of us to impute such unfaithfulness to him: He has not excluded them *all* from eternal salvation through Jesus Christ: For even I myself am, by parentage, of the stock of Israel, being descended from Abraham, the father of the whole nation, and particularly from Benjamin, Jacob's youngest son, who it is well known was the head of one, though indeed one of the lowest and least of the twelve tribes; and yet, instead of God's casting me off, as he justly might for my former unbelief, blasphemies, and persecutions of the church, he regarded me, as a chosen vessel, (Acts ix.

15.); and the grace of the Lord Jesus has been so exceeding abundant toward me, that I have obtained mercy, through him, to eternal life. (1 Tim. i. 13, 14.)

1 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,

3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars: and I am left alone, and they seek my life.

2, 3 Whatever therefore God doth with multitudes of the *Israelites* after the flesh, and might righteously have done with them all, for their heinous provocations; yet he has not rejected those of his antient people *, whom, in his eternal counsels and designs of love and grace, he distinguished from the rest, regarded as the true spiritual seed of *Israel*, and chose, not merely to external privileges, but also to special and saving benefits; But he has effectually called these according to his purpose, (*chap. viii. 28.*): So that it is now, in this day of general revolt among the *Jews*, as it was in former times. Do ye not know, and cannot ye easily recollect, what the sacred scripture has recorded concerning *Elijah*, or, in the history of that prophet, how, in his holy jealousy for God and his glory, he is represented as mournfully complaining of the ten tribes of the children of *Israel*, and as even pleading in his prayer to God against them, (*εὐρυχανὶ κατα*) for their having generally fallen into idolatry, together with their rulers, in apostatizing days of *Ahab*? Saying, (1 Kings xix. 10. 14.) *Lord, they have forsaken thy covenant*, which thou madest with them; and their fathers have persecuted thy true and faithful prophets unto death; and, in the madness of their zeal for their idols, they have even demolished the altars † that were erected and dedicated

10

N O T E S.

* His people, which the apostle so emphatically says God *foreknew*, I think cannot mean the whole nation of the *Jews*, whom he had chosen to be his peculiar church and people, in distinction from all other nations: For it is plain from the whole tenor of his discourse, that God *had cast away* the bulk of them; and his main argument, in the greatest part of this chapter from ver. 11. to ver. 32. is to prove that God had done so. But those, *whom he foreknew*, signifies those among that chosen body of people, whom he had, in a still more distinguishing manner, peculiarly chosen, and laid out in his eternal counsels, as the objects of his special love, that he might effectually call and save them; or as it had been expressed, (*chap. viii. 29, 30.*) whom he so foreknew, as to have predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, and whom, in consequence thereof, he called, justified, and glorified. (See the note there.) And they are here spoken of, in distinction from the body of the *Jews*; and are called, in the fifth and seventh verses of this chapter, a *remnant according to the election of*

grace, which obtained, in opposition to the rest of that people, who were blinded. And this shews that in the preceding discourse, the apostle had a respect to particular persons, as well as to the *Jews* and *Gentiles* *nationally* considered, in what he had said about God's saving some among the *Gentiles*, and rejecting others among the *Jews*.

† These altars could not include the altar at *Jerusalem*; for that was out of the reach of the ten tribes, who are here spoken of: But they seem to have been those which *Saul* had erected before the building of the temple, (1 Sam. vii. 17. and xi. 15. and xvi. 1. 3.) and that which *Elijah* repaired, (1 Kings xviii. 30.) The ten tribes might probably by God's special dispensation, offer sacrifices upon these altars, when their kings restrained them from going to *Jerusalem*, and when they nevertheless would not sacrifice to calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, which God had forbid: And as the continuance of these altars was a public testimony against the prevailing idolatry in *Ahab's* days, he and the generality of the people joined in public

to thine honour and service, for offering sacrifices to thee, as the only living and true God. And so general was the visible defection of those times, that the prophet, speaking according to his own apprehension of things, said, Such is the violence of their outrage, that I, of all thy true worshippers and servants, as far as I can find, am the only one that has survived; and the apostates are also hunting after my life to destroy it. So great is their fury, and to such an exceeding low ebb is thine interest reduced among the people of this age.

3 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.

4 But what was the answer which God gave him under this melancholy appearance of things? It was very encouraging, and stands thus, (1 Kings xix. 18.) Notwithstanding all your saddening thoughts, as though there were none left among this people, whose hearts are right with me, and continue in my covenant, I have not given them *all* up to the evil ways which they have been tempted to, and which their own hearts, left to themselves, would naturally have chosen; but in my gracious purpose, and by my effectual influence, I have set apart, and reserved to myself, as a peculiar property, for the praise of mine own glory, many more than you are aware of: Though, comparatively speaking, they be but few; yet they are in themselves a considerable number, no less than seven thousand, which, even in these degenerate and perilous days, have been kept from running with the multitude to do evil; and have not fallen into the common corruption and idolatry of the age, by paying any religious homage to the image of *Baal* *.

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according

5 Now, to apply this to the case in hand; as it was then, so in like manner it is now. Though I have spoke of my being one of the natural seed of *Abraham*, whom God has distinguished by his grace among them whom he foreknew, (ver. 1, 2.) I am far from thinking, as *Elijah* did, that I am *the only one* of this sort: For notwithstanding the deplorable infidelity of the main body of the *Israelites* in this present age, there is even now a reserve, (ἄμικτα) which though it be but like a small remnant, compared with the whole, are a much greater number than may be apprehended, even many myriads

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them down, and even in digging up their very foundations, that there might be no remaining traces of them to preserve their memory.

* *Baal* was an idol of the *Sidonians* which *Ahab* set up and worshipped upon his marriage with *Jezebel*, the daughter of their king.

and to which the generality of the ten tribes of *Israel* paid their adorations, after the example, and in obedience to the authority of that wicked *Ahab* and his queen, as may be gathered from 1 Kings xvi. 31, 32, 33. and xviii. 21.

according to the election of grace.

myriads of Jews (*μυριάδες Ἰουδαίων*, *Acts* xxi. 20.) whom God has brought to believe in Christ to the saving of their souls, according to that free and eternal choice which he made of them in the riches of his own sovereign mercy and grace.

4 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it

6 And if God's choosing, calling, and saving some, rather than others, be properly the effect of his own mere favour or grace *, as it certainly is, (*2 Tim.* i. 9.) then it is neither in whole nor in part, owing to any sort of good works foreseen in them, or done by them, as if those works deserved it, or were antecedent motives to it: For to suppose otherwise, is to destroy the very idea of grace, which signifies entirely free and unmerited favour, as proceeding from the mere good pleasure of God, (*Eph.* i. 5, 6. and *Luke* xii. 32.) without any worthiness of its objects to induce it. But, on the contrary, if God's peculiar regard to them be on account of their good works, in any view or consideration of them whatsoever, as previously moving him to it, according to the fond conceit of proud self-justificaries, (*Luke*

N O T E.

* The learned Mr *Locke* supposes that this exclusion of works, from the notion of grace do not extend to all manner of difference in the persons chosen, from those that were rejected; but that God, in his choosing, preferred those who were the best disposed, and most inclined to his service; and so his grace is like that of a prince, who out of rebels, whom he has reduced under his power, chooses as vessels of mercy, those that he finds least infected with malice, obstinacy, and rebellion. And this author imagines, that without some regard to a difference in the things taken, from those that are left, it cannot be called choice. To illustrate which, he instances in a handful of pebbles, that are taken out of a heap, and separated from the rest: but if it be without any regard to any difference in them from others that are rejected, he doubts whether any body can call them chosen.—But his instance of rebels seem to be very defective; because a sovereign may spare whom he pleases, and all good dispositions in one, more than another, are of God; and it is apparent, in fact, that some of the very worst of sinners are chosen, and consequently justified, sanctified, and saved, *1 Cor.* vi. 11. while others of fairer characters are rejected, like that young man in the gospel, *Math.* xix. 16,—22.; and our apostle, in his foregoing discourse, had represented them whom God chose, and them whom he rejected, as originally, and of themselves, in all respects equal, and ascribed God's choosing some, rather than others, merely to his *having mercy on whom he will have mercy*, in opposition to their own willing

and running, as the cause of it, *chap.* ix. 11, —16. Nor is the instance of taking a handful of pebbles out of a heap, a proper illustration of this point; for it is not to be supposed that God acts at random, or takes one rather than another, without thought, or without some wise reasons in himself, though they be none in them why he should take one rather than another, since he works all things according to his purpose, after the counsel of his own will, (*Eph.* i. 11.) and he can glorify his grace most, by changing the hearts, and altering the tempers and dispositions of the most obstinate and rebellious, as he in fact doth of all those whom he chooses, to make what he would have them to be, and to fit them for answering every design for which he chose them: And as in choosing, where there was no previous difference, he pursues his great view of exalting the glory of the sovereignty, as well as of the freeness of his grace; so, were pebbles intelligent creatures, How would those of them be affected with admiration and praise of the distinguishing favour, that should take, and separate them for the noblest purposes, rather than others of the same heap, though there was no antecedent difference between them? And were there such difference as should be the cause of God's preferring some before others, in his original choice, there would surely be some sort of merit or worthiness in them, rather than in the others, as the reason of his choice; which would utterly destroy the apostle's notion of grace, and all his reasoning on this subject.

it is no more
grace: otherwise
work is no more
work.

(*Luke xviii. 11, 12.*) ; then it is no longer to be ascribed merely to the free and undeserved favour of God: For to suppose that it were, would be, in the very nature of things, to set aside all merit of works, *that* being utterly inconsistent with the notion of free and entire grace. These things are so directly contrary one to the other, that they cannot be blended together; but salvation, from first to last, must be simply of the one, to the exclusion of the other, as the proper moving cause of it. It must be either of *grace*, or of *debt*, (*chap. iv. 4.*)

9 What then?
Israel hath not ob-
tained that which
he seeketh for;
but the election
hath obtained it,
and the rest were
blinded:

7 What then, upon the whole, is the true state of the case? why it stands, in short, thus; The generality of the *Jews* have not obtained righteousness of justification, which they earnestly desire (*ἐκζητοῦν*) and endeavour to acquire; because *they seek it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law*, (*chap. ix. 31, 32.*) which shews that it is not to be had in a way of merit. But those of that elect nation, whom God has *chosen to salvation**, by a mere act of his own free will, *through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*, (*2 Thes. ii. 13.*) have obtained righteousness to eternal life, thro' faith in him *who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes*, (*chap. x. 4.*); and the rest of the *Israelites* after the flesh, that were left to themselves according to their own desires, (*ἐκζητοῦντες*) became blind and stupid †, hardened and obstinate, with regard to Christ, and the way of salvation by him; so that they stumbled at him through their own impenitence and unbelief, which leave them without excuse.

8 According as
it is written, God
hath given them
the spirit of stum-
ber, eyes that they
should not see,
and ears that they
should

8 And, severe as this doctrine may seem to some, we have plain traces of it in the scriptures of the Old Testament, where instances of this kind among the *Jews* are recorded in former days, which may be considered as examples, and prophetic hints of what would come to pass in after-ages, according to what is written in *Isaiah's* prophecy, (*chap. vi. 9, 10.*) *Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat; and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see*

N O T E S.

* The abstract is here put for the concrete, the election for the elect, as the circumcision is put for the circumcised, *chap. iii. 30.* and *iv. 9.* They might be thus called to signify, that election was the original spring of their conversion, and of all their happiness; and here is evidently one election within another; one more special, to saving benefits, out of another, more general, to external privileges.

† By the strict rule of an antithesis, it

would have been, *the rest have not obtained*: But the apostle rather chose to say, *the rest were blinded*, to intimate, that the proper cause of their not obtaining what they sought for, was not any degree of God about them; but the wilful blindness and hardness of their own minds and hearts, which made them stumble at Christ to their own perdition, *chap. ix. 31.*

should not hear,
unto this day.

see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed; and (chap. xxix. 10.) *The Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes.* These awful passages are applicable to the people of these times, and plainly amount to this, That for their resolute infidelity, God has, in a judicial manner, and in terrible righteousness, given them up to their own stupid and obdurate temper, which would not attend to his awakening and repeated warnings, but chose to sleep on, that they might take their rest, without any disturbance of their carnal security: By his thus justly withdrawing from them, and leaving them to the wickedness of their own hearts, and the power of Satan, the eyes of their minds are so blinded, that, as they would not, they shall not see the clear revelation which God has made to them of the way of their duty and happiness: And their ears are so thoroughly deafened, that as they would not, they shall not hearken to, and be reclaimed by, the loudest voice of judgment and mercies, or the most alarming and engaging messages of his servants; (see the note on chap. ix. 18.): Thus it was of old; and thus it continues to be with many of the unbelieving Jews down to this present time.

9 And David
saith, Let their
table be made a
snare

9 And the like is spoken of in a prophetic *Psal*m of the *Messiah*'s days, (*Psal.* lxxix. 22, 23.) where, to shew that it is for their own abuses of God's goodness that any are thus given up by him to the chosen way of their own perverse hearts *, *David*, speaking of the public enemies of God, and religion, and carrying his view forward to the enemies of *Christ*, says, under the form of an imprecation, not with a revengeful temper, but by way of prediction, under an impulse of the spirit of prophecy, *As they gave him gall for his meat, and vinegar*

to

N O T E.

* That this lxxixth Psalm was prophetic of the *Messiah*, appears from several passages in it; as particularly from ver. 9. and ver. 21. the verse that immediately precedes those which the apostle has quoted, as they are rendered by the *Seventy*: For the 9th and 21st verses are expressly cited, and interpreted in the New Testament, in an application of them to *Christ*, *John* ii. 17. *Rom.* xv. 3. *Marth.* xxvii. 34, 48. and *John* xix. 28, 29. Accordingly what *David* said of those that were enemies to himself, who was a type of *Christ*, may justly be applied to the unbelieving Jews, that set themselves against the *Messiah*; or he may be supposed to personate *Christ*, in denunciations of judgments against his incorrigible enemies that crucified him:

And though the royal *Psal*mist might deliver these words under the form of an imprecation; we are not to imagine that they proceeded from his own private spirit, but from the spirit of prophecy, by which he then spoke; and consequently we ought not to think ourselves warranted from hence, in using any imprecations upon others from a spirit of revenge, or under pretence of pious zeal against the enemies of *Christ* and religion. Besides, the Hebrew verbs there used, may be, and sometimes are, rendered in the future tense of the indicative mood, as well as in the imperative mood; and so may be considered rather as predictions of what would be, than as imprecations of what one would wish to be. See Mr *Wesley*'s notes on this text.

snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompence unto them.

to drink, (Psal. lxi. 21.) let bitterness and death mingle with all that they pride themselves in, and rate their happiness by; let the bountiful supplies of providence, which should have been used with temperance and thankfulness, but which they have abused to the pampering of their sensual appetites, and spoiling all taste for spiritual, holy, and heavenly things, be suffered to entangle them, like silly birds in a snare: Let all that *should have been for their welfare*, (Psal. lxi. 22.) be as a trap to catch and hold them fast, like wild beasts, in the darkness, prejudices, and carnality of their own minds: And, as they perversely stumble at Christ, let their enjoyments, through their abuses of them, be an occasion of their stumbling, like blind and drunken men, that fall to their own perdition. And let all this be the just reward of their disobedience and infidelity, according to their own deserts.

10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back away.

10 As they hate the light, and indulge to their own pride and luxury, which debase the soul; and as they resolutely persist in their rebellion against Christ, and against all the authoritative and endearing methods of providence and grace; let them, according to the natural tendency of such evil courses, be delivered up, in the righteous judgment of God, to their direful effects; even unto the blinding of their minds with respect to things which are most excellent, and which concern their everlasting peace, that they may not see the way of their escape from deserved wrath and ruin. And do thou, O Lord, in just retribution for their resolute contempt of thy Son, and of all thy mercies, keep them under perpetual bondage to the powers of this world*, and to Satan and their own corruptions, like slaves, whose backs are bent with labour, and *whose loins continually shake*, (Psal. lxi. 23.) by carrying heavy burdens under the yoke of the most oppressive tyrants: And since they are so sensual and carnal, as to seek and choose this world for a portion, let them go on to pore upon earthly things, and never have a heart given them to look up towards heaven, and converse with things above.

11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid:

11 But from what has now been said about God's having reserved only a small remnant of the *Jews*, and rejected the rest for their unbelief, which by this time is become a *national* sin, as their priests and rulers, and all ranks and orders of people among them have *generally*

N O T E.

* Here is an allusion to the state of *Israel's* Egyptian bondage, in their deliverance from which God said, *He had made them go upright*, (Lev. xxvi. 13.) And as the verb (*καμφορ*) here used, is the second person *active*, it intimates, that God had a righteous hand in inflicting this punishment of their iniquity upon them.

καμφορ here used, is the second person *active*, it intimates, that God had a righteous hand in inflicting this punishment of their iniquity upon them.

forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy,

ally gone into it, must we hence conclude, that God has suffered them to stumble at Christ to their own perdition, (*chap. ix. 32.*) to the end that the *whole body* of them, as a nation †, should fall (*in requi*) from their ancient privileges, to their utter ruin, and *that* irrecoverably and for ever? Is this God's design in so awful a dispensation? and shall this be the sad event? No, by no means, (*an ympro*) far be it from us to entertain a thought, so injurious to his mercy and his faithfulness: But we must rather conclude, as the event shews in measure already, and as in future times will more fully appear, that God graciously and wisely designed, and accordingly has ordered in his providence, that their offence, (*παρεσπον*) by falling into the sin of obstinately rejecting Christ, should be over-ruled, and turned into an occasion of the gospel's being the sooner sent to the *Gentiles*, as the means of their salvation, (*Acts xiii. 46, 47.*); and the ready reception it should meet with among that idolatrous people, which are so much the object of *Jewish* detestation and envy, and were so unlikely to receive it, was designed and ordered to be a further means of trial to the *Jews* themselves, for stirring up a noble emulation among them to equal, and even exceed, the *Gentiles* in faith and obedience, that so despised a people might not be their rivals, and carry away the gospel, and all its privileges and blessings from themselves.

12 And

N O T E.

† Here, as I take it, the apostle advances in his argument to the rejection of the *Jews*, and calling of the *Gentiles*, as *nationally* considered, more directly and fully than hitherto: For though he had interspersed some thoughts of this tendency in the preceding discourse, from the 18th verse of the eighth chapter, to the 10th verse of this, to prepare his way gradually to that point which he knew would be most of all provoking to the *Jews*, and even to some that were christianized among them; yet he there, in my humble apprehension, speaks more apparently and largely of *single* blessings, as dispensed with a sovereign distinction between God's elect and others, even among the chosen body of the *Jews*, as well as among the *Gentiles*, who were made partakers of the means of grace for bringing about God's eternal design of mercy towards multitudes of them: And he there illustrates his argument about God's choosing some and rejecting others, by instancing in *single* persons, such as *Jacob*, *Esau*, and *Pharaoh*, and by the *children of is* promise, that are accounted for the seed, which he calls a remnant, according to the election of grace, in distinction from the body of the *Israelites*, after the flesh out of which they were chosen and called. But from this verse to

the 23d, the apostle neither makes any such distinction of some from others out of the same body of people, nor illustrates his argument with such *personal* examples; but speaks chiefly, though not confinedly, of a *visible* church-state, and of *external* privileges, as means of salvation, which should be transferred from the *Jewish* nation to the *Gentile* world, and be made effectual to vast numbers of them; but which in after-ages should be restored, with glorious and extensive efficacy, to the *Jews*, when God should take away their sins; and with still greater enlargement to the *Gentiles*. Accordingly he represents the covenant church state of *Israel* under the figure of a *good olive-tree*, from which they, as a nation, had cut themselves off by unbelief, and into which the *Gentiles*, like the branches of a *wild olive-tree*, were grafted by faith, to partake of all its privileges and blessings; and speaks of the whole nation of the *Jews*, as *being* in a federal sense, and of the gracious regard God would hereafter shew to them, on account of their national election for their father's sakes: so that they, in due time, like clons of the good olive tree, should be grafted again into the old stock, to partake of all its virtue for their spiritual benefit.

12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their felicity?

12 And (δε) if the apostacy (το παυσαναι) of the Jews and their falling off from God's covenant, so as to be no longer his peculiar people, be made a proper occasion, in the counsels and methods of divine wisdom, for the sooner enriching of the *Gentile* world with the gospel-revelation, which contains the most inestimable blessings, and makes them rich toward God that by faith receive it: And if the fault of the Jews in losing their many privileges *, and the defect of believers, as to the small number of persons of that character among them, be made an occasion of bringing the unsearchable riches of Christ, the more speedily to the poor destitute nations round about them; how much more will the faith of the *Gentiles* be confirmed, and yet greater multitudes of them be converted, to their abundant joy and glory; when the time shall come for the whole body of the Jews to be nationally taken into covenant again, and restored to a complete enjoyment of the blessings which they now reject by unbelief?

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, in as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:

13 It is with the greatest pleasure that I speak of this eminent advantage, which has arose, and will still further accrue to the *Gentiles*: For I mention it particularly to you, the *Gentile* part of the church at Rome, for your comfort and joy; because I am in a peculiar manner appointed, and sent by Christ, to be the chief of his apostles, to minister the gospel to the *Gentiles*, wherever I come, or have opportunity for it: And how much soever some may envy, and others despise me, and be enraged at me for this; I count it an exceeding honourable ministry, that is committed to me, (την διακονην μου δεξαιτο) I glory in it, and glorify God for it, and for the remarkable success, which, by his grace, has already attended my discharge of it, and which will be its blessed consequence yet more abundantly, when the fulness of the *Gentiles* shall come in.

14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might

14 I mention these things to your joy; not from any disrespect or ill-will to my countrymen, the Jews, nor to encourage your insulting them; but with an affectionate concern also for them, and good design toward them; and I should heartily rejoice, if it may please God so far to own me, as that now at length by this, if not by other means which I have tried, I might stir up some of them, who are my kindred according to the flesh, to a holy desire and endeavour, by divine grace, to outstrip the *Gentiles* in their reception of Christ and the

N O T E.

* The diminishing (το νωπιμα) signifies the vi 7.) which is the only place besides this fault or defect, and is rendered fault, (1 Cor. where it is used in the New Testament.)

might save some of them.

the gospel; and whole nation I am as tenderly and warmly affected to, as tho' they were members of my own natural body : And it is my great ambition to be a happy instrument, in the hand of the Spirit, for recovering some, at least, of them, by this means, from their impenitence and unbelief; and for bringing them into the way of salvation, in order to their deliverance, through Jesus Christ, from the wrath to come, and their inheriting eternal life.

15 For if the calling away of them be the reconciling of the world; what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?

15 But to return; I say that the national conversion of the *Jews* hereafter will be an exceeding great advantage to the *Gentiles* : For if God's rejecting the *Jews*, and throwing them out of his visible covenant, for their obstinate infidelity, be turned into an occasion of his hastening to send the gospel to the *Gentiles*, for bringing them into a state of favour with him, thro' faith in his Son : What a wonderful effect will there be of God's receiving the *Jews* again into his covenant, when there shall be a general conversion of them, and he shall restore them to their original church-state and privileges, through their embracing their own Messiah by faith? 'This will be such a surprizing, delightful, unexpected, sudden, and glorious event, as will cause abundant joy to the believing *Gentiles*, and will be a means of quickening vast multitudes among them to the life of God, who, till then, remained dead in trespasses and sins; yea, it will make such a beautiful, lovely, and illustrious change in the face of the whole church as will be like a resurrection from the dead. And this general conversion of the *Jews* is by no means to be despaired of.

16 For if the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy : and if the root

16 For as the offering of the first-fruits * sanctified the whole harvest, and the offering of a cake sanctified the whole mass of dough; so if *Abraham* was visibly separated to the Lord, and became federally holy by that everlasting covenant which he established with him, to be a God to him, and to his seed after him in their generations, (Gen. xvii. 7, 19.); then, in the like covenant-sense, the whole body of his descendants are holy, as a church visibly consecrated to the Lord : And as branches partake of the nature of their root; so if *Abraham*,

N O T E.

* By the first-fruits, some understand the few *Jewish* converts which at first entered into the Christian church, and were accepted of God. But though I have glanced at this, I rather incline, with others, to take the first-fruits and the root, to mean the same thing under different allusions; and to signify the *Jewish* patriarchs, and especially *Abraham*, with whom the covenant was first made, from whom the whole nation sprung, and by whom it was consecrated to God, as the offering of the first-fruits sanctified the whole product of the harvest, and the offering of a cake, or of two wave-loaves, sanctified the whole lump

of dough, Lev. xxiii. 10, — 17. and Num. xv. 19, 20, 21. And it is evident from the then present state of *Israel*, that when the apostle speaks of the whole nation of the *Jews* as holy, it cannot be meant of a personal and inherent, but of a relative and external holiness, as persons and things that were separated to the Lord, were counted holy; and so the whole nation of the *Jews*, inclusive of their seed, were commonly styled an holy people, in distinction from the nations that were out of the pale of the covenant. Deut. xiv. 1, 27. and xxvii. 18, 19. Isa. vi. 13. Dan. viii. 24. and xiii. 2.

root be holy, so
are the branches.

Abraham, who was the root of administration to the *Jewish* church and nation, as their natural and federal father, were relatively holy by the constitution of that covenant which was made with him and his seed; then his natural posterity, considered as springing from him, and included in that covenant, must be relatively holy too. And therefore there is abundant ground to hope, that, though the generality of the present generation have cut off themselves, and their natural seed, from their covenant church state, and all its privileges, by their unbelief; yet, in after-ages, from the love which God bears to them, as a community, and from the *national* election he has made of them, for their fathers sakes, (*ver.* 28.) he will be so graciously mindful of his everlasting covenant, as to convert the body of them to the faith of Christ, and thereby bring them and their seed into all the privileges of a church state again: Some little specimen, pledge, and earnest of which he has already given, in the few of them that are already actually called, as a sort of first-fruits to God.

17 And if some
of the branches
be broken off,
and thou, being
a wild olive-tree,
were grafted in
amongst them,
and

17 And if some, (see the note on *ver.* 25.) yea, even the main body of the natural seed of *Abraham* *, that sprang from him, as branches from their root, are cut off from their covenant-claim for their unbelief; and if any of you, who are *Gentiles*, and as such were in your natural condition *strangers to the covenants of promise*, (*Eph.* ii. 12.) and like branches of a wild olive tree, were useless and unprofitable, worthy to be rejected, and fit for burning; if, nevertheless, by the wonderful kindness of God, contrary to all reasonable expectation, and to the custom of men, who use to graft the branch of a fruitful tree into a wild stock, you were incorporated into a church-state under *Abraham's* covenant, as his spiritual children, through faith in Christ, (*Gal.* iii. 29.) together with those of his natural offspring that believe; and so are like the cion of a wild stock †, that is inserted, with its buds, among the na-

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tural

* For understanding this and some following verses, we are to consider, that as God's covenant was first made with *Abraham* and his seed, he is meant by the root; and the visible church of *Israel*, as springing from him, and from that covenant made with him, is meant by the good olive tree, as it is represented under this figure, *Jer.* xi. 16. and *Hos.* xiv. 6. and by the fatness of the olive tree, is meant the blessings and privileges which belonged to their church-state, by virtue of that covenant. Accordingly the natural branches signify *Abraham's* offspring after the flesh; and the wild olive tree, signifies the *Gentiles*; and the grafting in of them that were cut out of the wild olive tree, signifies God's taking the believing *Gentiles* into his visible

covenant; and their partaking, with some of the natural branches of the root and fatness of the olive tree, signifies the believing *Gentiles* being admitted to share equally with the believing *Jews*, in all the blessings and privileges of the covenant made with *Abraham* and his seed, and of the church-state into which God had brought them.

† Grafting a branch, which is always with its buds, strongly intimates, as here applied to believing *Gentiles*, that they are brought into *Abraham's* covenant with their children, to partake of the same privileges to which the children of believing *Jews* were intitled, and from which those of unbelievers among them were cut off, together with their parents.

and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree;

18 Boast not against the branches: but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest

tural branches of a good tree: And if, with these believing *Jews*, you are made partaker of all the promises and ordinances, privileges and blessings of the gracious covenant made with *Abraham*, as though you yourself had been one of his natural and believing descendants, (*Gal. iii. 14.* and *Eph. iii. 6.*) and so are like a graft, which derives sap from the root, and is nourished by the generous juices of a good olive tree, (*ver. 24.*) to make it flourishing and fruitful: If, I say, you are thus highly favoured of the Lord;

18 Take heed of vaunting against those *Jews*, who, because of their unbelief, are cast out of God's visible church, like branches that are cut off from their own good tree; do not entertain a high conceit of yourself, as if you were more worthy than they, and might now despise and insult over them, as they formerly dealt by you: But if you find any evil disposition to haughtiness and insolence, and to a contemptuous slight of them, on this account; remember that, as the branch of a tree do not bear the root, but the root the branch; so you, of the *Gentile* race, that are but like a branch, and that an engrafted one, among the believing *Jews*, contributed nothing to *Abraham*, or his descendants, as God's covenant was made with him and his seed; but you derive all your church-privileges, through them, from him, as the father of many nations, even of all them that believe, (*chap. iv. 11, 17, 18.*) and by carrying it scornfully to them, who like natural branches sprung from him, you in a manner insult over *Abraham* himself, who, like a root, originally bore them, and now bears you.

19 But perhaps, one or another of you, *Gentile* converts, may object against what has been offered to check your vain boasting against the *Jews*, that they were cut off from their church state and privileges by the wise ordination and disposal of God, in order to the making of room for me, and other *Gentile* believers, to be inserted in their places, as a cion is grafted on a tree, to supply the place of dead, withering, or fruitless branches, that have been justly and prudently taken away from it: And therefore I may have some reason to think better of myself than of them; and to look upon them with disdain, as the most abandoned wretches.

20 Well, admitting this to be one great design of God in this dispensation; yet it is to be considered, that it was because they rejected Christ, and the way of salvation by him, through their obstinate unbelief, that God cast them out of his visible church and covenant, and

standest by faith.
Be not high-
minded, but fear.

and removed his gospel from them to you: And you should ever remember, that it is only by faith, which you credibly profess to have, in Jesus Christ, as your only Saviour, that you have been brought into their privileges, and have hitherto stood (*σταῖς*) in possession of them. Let these considerations therefore be a caution to you, that you may not give way to a conceit of your own worthiness, and a contempt of others, or to self-confidence of our own ability to persevere in your holy profession; but that you labour, in the strength of divine grace, and in the use of all appointed means, to maintain an awful reverence of God, with an humble modest diffidence of yourself, and godly jealousy over your own heart, and a holy fear of sinning and falling, after their example, by unbelief, which you are naturally as prone to as they, and of thereby offending and provoking him to cast you off likewise.

21 For if God
(spare) not the nat-
ural branches,
take heed lest he
also spare not
thee.

21 For if God, in his righteous judgment, did not think fit to bear so far with the natural seed of *Abraham*, as to cast them off for their unbelief, though they were his antient covenant people, you have just reason to fear, lest, if you indulge to pride and unbelief, he should proceed to the like extremity against you, for abusing his grace, whereby he has, so contrary to all your deserts, taken you, who were not of his people, into their privileges.

22 Behold, there-
fore, the goodness
and severity of
God: on them
which fell, severe-
ity: but towards
thee, goodness, if
thou continue in
his goodness: o-
therwise thou also
shalt be cut off.

22 Observe therefore, and seriously reflect upon, the wonderful benignity (*χρηστότης*) of God, in free vouchsafements of mercy and goodness on one hand; and upon the strictness of his justice, (*σπουδή*) in cutting off, on the other, that are displayed in this dispensation; I mean the exact and unyielding justice, which he has shewn in taking away the gospel from the *Jewish* nation, that fell from their covenant-privileges by unbelief; but the remarkable and undeserved kindness which he has extended toward you, who lay among the out-cast *Gentiles*, in sending his gospel to you, and opening your heart to receive it, as you profess to do; and so taking you into his church, and admitting you to all its glorious privileges and blessings, which will be blessings indeed, in case you, by an humble faith, shall continue within the sphere of his goodness: But if, through pride and unbelief, you abuse this merciful dispensation, God will also un-church you, together with all such nominally Christian *Gentiles*, as he has the *Jews*; and you, as well as they, shall be cut off from his visible covenant, and from all the blessings pertaining to it.

23 And they also, if they bide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.

23 And to return to what has been already suggested, (*ver. 11,—16.*) If the *Jewish* nation do not still continue resolutely to reject their only Messiah, by persisting in unbelief, even *they* shall be taken into God's church and covenant again. And it is far from being *unsupposable*, that they should be recovered from their incredulity, and so restored to their antient privileges: For how desperate soever their present condition may seem to be, like branches cut off and withered, and quite dead; yet the great God, with whom all things are possible, can as easily convert them, and so graft them again, through faith in Christ, into the covenant of *Abraham* their father, from which they had cut themselves off by unbelief, as he has the believing *Gentiles*, who formerly *were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.* (*Eph. ii. 12.*)

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a good olive-tree; how much more shall these which be the natural branches be grafted into their own olive-tree?

24 Nor is it at all *inconceivable* or *improbable*, that God, in his due time, should deal thus graciously with his antient people, the *Jews*: For if you, who was a *Gentile* by birth, were taken out from among the idolatrous nations, that never had been included in *Abraham's* covenant before; and were, by nature, as worthless, despicable, and useless as the branches of a wild olive tree; and if you, by supernatural grace, were brought into the covenant of promises, to partake of all the privileges of the church of God, which is like grafting the cion of a wild olive, directly contrary to its own nature, into a good olive tree, to mend and entirely change its qualities, and make it fruitful; how much more reasonable is it to suppose that the nation of the *Jews*, who are the natural seed of *Abraham*, shall, thro' faith in the Lord Jesus, be brought back into the covenant and church of God again, from which they had cut themselves off by their infidelity, that they may partake of all its virtue for their spiritual benefit? this will be but like cutting off the branches of a good olive tree, and grafting them again into their own natural stock, which is originally suited to convey the most agreeable nourishment to them. And this is not only probable, but will *certainly* be the happy state of that people toward the end of the world.

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, (lest ye should

25 For I would unfold to you, my Christian brethren, and particularly to those of you that are of the *Gentile* part of the church, the grand secret, with regard to this point which lay hid in the counsels of God from eternity, and has been but obscurely hinted in antient prophecy;

should be wise in your own conceits,) that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

phency; and which, notwithstanding the clear revelation that Christ has now made of it to the apostles by the Spirit, may still seem to you, according to present appearances, to be so very strange, as to exceed all reasonable expectation: Though ye may be at a loss how to account for it, I would fain have you know, and believe the truth and certainty of the thing itself; lest, while ye indulge to your own carnal reasonings, and remain ignorant of the mind and will of God herein, ye should be puffed up with pride, as if ye were competent judges of his designs, and should condemn the *Jews* from a conceited opinion of yourselves, as if ye were more worthy than they; and as if the favour of God were henceforth to be confined to you, and the whole body of them were to be utterly, and for ever, excluded from it. The grand secret, which I now mean, is, that blindness of mind and hardness of heart, have befallen, not indeed every one of them, there being a remnant, even at this present time, according to the election of grace, that have obtained righteousness to eternal life (ver. 5, 7.) but that this awful judgment is justly come upon the * far greatest part of the *Jewish* nation for their wilful infidelity; and that this will continue upon them, as a body, not indeed always, but for many generations, till there shall be, in God's own time, a more general conversion of the *Gentile* nations to the faith of Christ †, and a much greater number of them shall be brought into the church than yet has ever been.

26 And so all Israel shall be saved

26 And then, after the same manner, (εἴτε) or by a like general conversion, vast multitudes of *Israelites* after the flesh, shall be brought into a state of salvation ‡; and

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* As the apostle, to soften his representation of a subject that would be so very offensive to the *Jews*, expressed their general rejection by *some of the branches being broken off*, ver. 17. 10, for the like reason, he here speaks of blindness or hardness (*τυφλότης*) happening to them in part (*αὐτοῖς μέρος*) though he meant it of the generality of them. This phrase (*αὐτοῖς μέρος*) translated in part, is no where used, that I can find, in all the New Testament, but in this apostle's writings, who has it five times, viz. here, and chap. xv. 15, 14, and 2 Cor. i. 14. and ii. 5. In all which places, except Rom. xv. 14. and perhaps in that too, it seems plainly to signify in part, as to number, for distinguishing one sort of persons from another, and not as to measure or degree, though a similar phrase, (*καὶ μέρος*) which is likewise rendered in part, is most commonly used to signify in some measure, by way of distinction from completely, as in 1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10, 12.

† The fulness of the *Gentiles* here, and the fulness of the *Jews*, ver. 12. are to be taken in much the same sense as to each of them respectively; and therefore as the fulness of the *Jews* signifies their national conversion; so the fulness of the *Gentiles* coming in, seems to import a general conversion of the *Gentiles* through all nations of the world.

‡ All *Israel*, in this place, does not mean all God's spiritual *Israel*, inclusive of *Jewish* and *Gentile* believers, as in (Gal. vi. 16.) where the apostle prays for peace and mercy upon the *Israel* of God. But it is to be here restrained to the natural seed of *Abraham*, whom the apostle had called *Israel*, and his own flesh, ver. 7, 14. For it is opposed to the fulness of the *Gentiles*, mentioned at the close of the preceding verse; and all *Israel*, that shall be saved, answers to the fulness of the *Gentiles* that shall come in, with an intimation that one, for its universality, shall be in like manner

red: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

and that people, as a body, shall be taken into the visible church. Some hints of which were given in ancient prophecy, as it is written in *Isa. lix. 20.* which will have its complete accomplishment toward the end of the world, and is of the following purport †, The Messiah, who is the great and only Redeemer from sin and wrath, and was typified by the famous deliverers from temporal destruction under the Old Testament, shall spring out of the church of *Israel*, as deriving his human nature from them, and shall appear in the days of his flesh at *Jerusalem*, and send forth his word from thence, (*Isa. ii. 3.*); and he shall come out of the New Testament-church, which he will erect, and which will be the seat of his spiritual residence upon earth, to bless the seed of *Jacob*, who are the children of the covenant, which was made with their fathers, (*Acts iii. 25, 26.*) and by the merit of his blood and the efficacy of his grace, he shall take away the guilt, the power, and defilement, and the punishment of all their trespasses, and particularly of their having so long obstinately rejected him; and shall make such a wonderful change upon their hearts by his word and Spirit, that they, under his influence, shall turn from their iniquities to God thro' him.

27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall

27 And (*28*) still further to raise their faith and hope, that this promise shall certainly be performed, God by the same prophet says, in the very next words, (*Isa. lix. 21.*) This is the covenant which I have made with the nation and church of *Israel* †, to assure them that I will have a gracious regard to their posterity in the most distant

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ner with the other. But as it cannot be well supposed, that in latter ages every individual of the *Gentiles*, no more can it, that every individual of the *Jews*, shall be eternally saved; therefore *all Israel's* being saved, may either signify great multitudes, as the *salvages* of the *Gentiles* doth; or may relate to their being nationally brought into the gospel-church, in which salvation may warrantably be hoped for, through Jesus Christ, answerable to what shall have been done among the *Gentiles*.

† As *Sion* is sometimes taken literally for *Jerusalem*, or the mount there, which was called *Sion*; at others for the church of *Israel*; and at others for the *New Testament-church*; and as the prophet speaks of the Redeemer's coming to *Sion*, and to them that turn from transgression in *Jacob*, which the apostle, mostly, according to the *Seventy*, renders, *The deliverer shall come out of Sion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob*; I have taken all these senses into the paraphrase. But whether the last clause of the next verse, *When I shall take away their sins*, be a quotation, according to the *Seventy*, from *Isa. xxvii. 9.* or from any other part of the Old

Testament, as some think: or whether it only refers to what is here said about turning away ungodliness from *Jacob*, as others think, is so doubtful to me, that I have left it undetermined.

† The words in *Isaiah*, that follow, *This is my covenant with them*, are, *my Spirit, that is upon thee, and my words, which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* And as this was so strong a promise of the covenant, there mentioned, that God would never utterly and finally cast off the natural seed of *Jacob*, and was so much to the apostle's purpose, it seems to me, that his only mentioning this covenant, was supposed sufficient to lead our thoughts to his design, in referring to it; since, though he did not revive the promise contained therein, that might easily be supplied, by turning to the well-known place itself; and the text does not come up so clearly and fully to his point, unless we take in the whole of it.

shall take away
their sins.

distant generations, and which (how long forever I may seem utterly to abandon them) I will fulfil in a most remarkable manner to them in future ages, when in the riches of my free and sovereign grace, on the great Redeemer's account, (ver. 26.) I shall pardon all their sins, and turn them, by my promised Spirit, from them, and particularly from their unbelief, whereby they have highly provoked me, and given me just cause to cast them off for ever. All this shews that there must be a time for God's restoring this people, and bringing them into his church again: The true state then of their case is this.

18 As concern-
ing the gospel,
they are enemies
for your sakes: but
as touching the
election, they are
beloved for the
fathers sakes.

28 With respect to the gospel of Christ, and the way of salvation alone through him, they are indeed, at present enemies to it, yea, have contradicted and blasphemed it, and so cut themselves off from its privileges and blessings, as being filled with envy at its being preached to, and received by you *Gentiles*, (Acts xiii. 45.) and God, in his righteous judgment to them, and abundant mercy to you, has ever ruled it to your advantage, that the gospel might the sooner come, and have the wider spread, among you, (Acts iii. 46, 47.) and that ye might be taken into his visible church and covenant in their stead; and so all this is for your sakes, (ver. 11, 12, 15.) but with respect to that free choice*, which God of his mere good pleasure made of them, as a nation, to be his peculiar people, they are still the objects of his kind and merciful regards, on account of the special favour he had for their fathers after the flesh, even for *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*; and on account of the choice which in his love he first made of them and their posterity, to be a peculiar people to himself, above all other nations.

19 For the gifts
and calling of
God

29 For the blessings which God, according to either a *national* or *personal* election, absolutely grants in the promises of an *everlasting covenant*, like that which he made with *Abraham*, to be a God to him, and his
seed

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* The apostle had before spoke of a particular election of some persons from among the *Jews*, unto eternal life, calling them a remnant according to the election of grace, and the election that obtained, in distinction from others of them that were blinded, (ver. 5, 7.) But here, as I take it, he speaks principally at least, of a *national* election of their body, to be God's peculiar people, in distinction from the *Gentiles*: For in this foregoing context, he had been discoursing about the *Jews*, as *nationally* considered; and he here says, that according to God's election of them, as

such, they were beloved for their fathers sakes, (*δια τῶν πατέρων*.) And so it answers to what *Moses* said, Deut. iv. 37. and vii. 6, 7, 8. and x. 15. about the Lord's choosing them, and making them a special people to himself, above all people; because he loved their fathers, and chose their seed after them; and yet it can hardly be supposed, that God should chuse a whole nation to be his people visibly in covenant with him, and not have some among them, whom he chose to faith, holiness, and salvation.

God *are* without
repentance.

seed after him in their generations, (Gen. xvii. 7.) and the calling, which depends on his own mere favour, in accomplishment of his free choice and promises, are such as he neither doth, nor ever will revoke; since *the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent: For he is not a man, that he should repent* of his free purposes and promises, (1 Sam. xv. 29.) as men often do of theirs, through their own instability, or because they imprudently made, or are not able to perform them. And therefore we may depend on the infinite wisdom, power, goodness and unchangeableness of God, that, in his time and way, this chosen nation shall be called again, and many of them in such an effectual manner, as shall be to their everlasting salvation, (Isa. xlv. 17.)

30 For as ye
in times past have
not believed God,
yet have now
obtained mercy
through their un-
belief:

30 For as ye *Gentiles*, who for many ages past were *strangers to the covenant of promises*, and were not only *without Christ*, and *having no hope* of eternal life; but lived like very atheists, (*αθεοι*) *without God in the world*, (Eph. ii. 12.); as ye, I say, notwithstanding all your former hateful, helpless, and hopeless circumstances of infidelity and all iniquity, have now obtained free and sovereign mercy, in God's bringing you into his visible covenant, and making those of you partakers of its saving benefits that have *believed with the heart unto righteousness*, (chap. x. 10.) and as this wonderful grace is come to you, by means of the gospel, which, because of the unbelief of the *Jews* was preached without further delay, and with great success to you, (*Acts* xiii. 46.)

31 Even so have
these also now
not believed, that
thro' your mer-
cy they also may
obtain mercy.

31 Even so, in like manner, the generality of the *Jews* themselves have been suffered, for a time, to reject Christ and the declarations of God's grace concerning him, as being offended at your embracing him; that by means of the mercy, which ye *Gentiles* are therein partakers of, God might over-rule it in his providence, for provoking the *Jews* to a noble emulation, (ver. 11.) and for preserving the gospel in the world, as the means by which they at length shall have an opportunity of hearing it preached to them again, unto their obtaining mercy, through faith in their own Messiah, that they, as a nation, may be restored to their ancient privileges; and that those of them, which shall sincerely believe, may be eternally saved. And as this is every way *as likely*, to say the least, as the calling of the idolatrous *Gentiles* once was; so it may be as *surely* depended upon.

32 For God
hath concluded
them all in unbe-
lief,

32 For God (*συγκατατε*) has shut up all nations, in their turns, by his providential dispensations, first the *Gentiles*, and afterwards the *Jews*; he has so shut them

lest, that he might have mercy upon all.

up under the power of their own disobedience and unbelief, as to shut them out of his visible church and kingdom, to the end that, (*ver.*) in his due time, he might magnify the exceeding riches of his free and sovereign grace the more illustriously, in calling, not indeed every individual person internally, but the general bodies, first of the *Jews*, and then of the *Gentiles* externally, (see the first note on *ver.* 26.) and at length of both together, without any distinction of nations, by bringing them all into one fold under Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, (*John* x. 16.)

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

33 Lo, these are parts of God's ways; but how little a portion is heard of him! (*Job* xvi. 14.) To search further into these divine counsels and dispensations, would be to wade beyond my depth; such knowledge is too wonderful for me, (*Psal.* cxxxix. 6.); I adore and acquiesce in what I cannot comprehend; and instead of curiously prying into it, or cavilling at it, would cry out with solemn reverence*, O the awful and delightful, the amazing, bottomless, and boundless abyss of the riches of God's goodness and grace, in choosing and calling both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, under circumstances in which it was most unlikely that either of them should be regarded with any favour! And O the astonishing unfathomable depth of his manifold, excellent, and abundant wisdom, and infinite understanding, who has an all-comprehending view of the whole compass of things at once; and who orders, disposes, and overrules all events, for bringing about his glorious ends, in a manner worthy of himself, though unaccountable to us, as he has done in making the rejection of the *Jews* subservient to the calling of the *Gentiles*! How impenetrable are the reasons of the determinations of his infinite mind concerning particular persons and nations, in a way of judgment as well as of mercy! and how untraceable (*ἀνίχνιστοι*) are the methods of his Providence, for accomplishing his great designs, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, (*Isa.*

ixviii.

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* O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, (*ὡς βάθος γνῶσεως καὶ γνῶσεως Θεοῦ*) may as well be rendered, O the depth of the riches and of the wisdom and knowledge of God; and so riches may signify, not only the exceeding abundance and excellency of God's wisdom and knowledge; but likewise what the apostle calls the riches of his goodness, forbearance, and grace, in which he has abounded towards us, in all wisdom and prudence, (*chap.* ii. 4. and *Eph.* i. 7, 8.) 'His sense of the word riches, well agree with the preceding discourse;

where, among other things, the apostle had been speaking, at large, of God's sovereign mercy toward *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and toward some among them, rather than others, *chap.* ix. 23, 24. and xi. 5, 6, 30, 31, 32. And in the progress of this admiring exclamation, he takes notice of the adorable, unmerited freeness, with which God bestows the forementioned blessings, saying, *Who has first given to him?* &c. (*ver.* 35, 36.) and thence he styles the mercies of God, in his practical inference from the whole, *chap.* xii. 1.

xxviii. 29.) *whose way is in the sea; whose path is in great waters, and whose footsteps are not known!* (Psal. lxxvii. 19.)

34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

34 For (144) what mere creature has any insight into the secret thoughts of the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, and into the noble schemes and views of his infinite mind, which he is pursuing, by the most improbable means, in the unsearchable methods of his appointments and providential dealings with *Jews* and *Gentiles*? Who can find out, or account for these, any further than the *only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, has revealed them?* (John i. 18.) Or (145) what man or angel has joined in counsel with God, to assist in forming the model of his designs, or directing his way, and prescribing how he should act, for accomplishing the free and eternal contrivances and resolutions of his wisdom and will? (Isa. xl. 13, 14.)

35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

35 Or if any insolent *Jews* should dare to complain of the divine dispensations, as though God dealt too severely with some persons, and particularly with their own nation, in rejecting them, whilst, at the same time, he displays the riches of his mercy to others in choosing and calling them, especially the *Gentiles*, let me ask such bold cavillers, Who has ever been beforehand with the great Lord of the universe, to lay any obligation, or make a demand upon him, that deserves a retribution of good at his hand? If any one is to be found that can offer the least pretence of this kind, let him stand forth, and enter his claim, God will certainly repay him, and he shall never have any room to find fault, as if the Judge of all the earth did not do right, or were not just to him. But it is absolutely impossible that any creature whatsoever, and it is a shocking thought to suppose, that any of the sinful sons of men should have such a claim of debt upon the great and holy God.

36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom

36 For all things relating to the forementioned dispensations of righteousness and grace, and indeed all things universally of the upper and lower worlds, are of him, as the first former of the whole scheme, and as the Creator and efficient cause, fountain, and source of all good; they are likewise all through, or by him, as their preserving and directing, governing and disposing cause, and they are all to him, as their final cause, or highest end, that his perfections and dominion may one way or other be exalted, and may at length be seen to shine forth with unblemished and harmonious beauty, especially in what relates to salvation by a Redeemer. And so all that has been said concern-

whom be glory
forever. Amen.

ing these things must be ultimately and supremely resolved into the infinitely wise and powerful, holy and gracious sovereignty of God, who is, and cannot but be, *the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end*, (Rev. xxi. 6.) whom all his works must, and shall, actively or passively praise; and to whom, as is most fit, all his saints and angels do, and will, cheerfully and unitedly, ascribe all possible blessing, honour, and glory, both now and to all eternity, *Amen*, say all that fear and love him; thus it ought to be; thus may it be! and thus it shall be, world without end.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How melancholy is the thought, that so many of the visible church will, like the unbelieving *Jews*, be rejected of God at last! But blessed be his name, that he has always a peculiarly chosen people, whom he foreknew in his eternal designs of love, that never shall be cast off: He has reserved them for himself; and though these, comparatively speaking, are but a small remnant; yet absolutely, and in themselves, they are a great number, even many thousands more than may be commonly apprehended in the worst of times. The salvation of all these is, from first to last, entirely of grace: This is the spring of God's choosing them to it; and from hence it is that they obtain it, without the least consideration of their own works, as meritorious, or moving causes of it, which would be to destroy the very nature of free grace; and God will never revoke his absolute grants of covenant-pleasures to a nationally chosen people, or of saving covenant blessings to his more peculiar elect among them, though others, being left to themselves, are hardened, entangled, ensnared, and caught by their own corruptions, to their endless perdition.—Alas! How wild and unprofitable are we all by nature, like the poor *Gentiles*, while they remained in unbelief! If we are become better, it is because we have now obtained mercy of the Lord, according to the gracious covenant which he made first with *Abraham*, and his natural seed, and then with *Gentile* believers, who, instead of those that were cut off by unbelief, are partakers of the same privileges and blessings for themselves and their offspring, as the church of *Israel* were of old, and together with those of them that abode in God's covenant. But has the body of that people stumbled and fallen; and has God wonderfully over-ruled it, for bringing salvation to us *Gentiles*, and for erecting a church to himself amongst us, that we may partake of the covenant-root and fatness which they have lost? How humble and thankful, watchful, depending, and careful should we be, under all our church-privileges! How cautiously afraid of provoking God, lest he should no more spare us than he did his ancient people! And how should we be awed by considerations of our own weakness and unworthiness of the riches of God's goodness to us, and of the strictness of his justice towards obstinate unbelievers, to take heed of pride and boasting, and of despising and insulting, instead of pitying them, as also of giving way to unbelief, since our standing is by faith! There is indeed a ground of hope in Christ for the chief of sinners, and even for apostates, in their returning by faith to God through him; he having shut up both those sorts of persons under the power of their own unbelief, for the brighter display of the glory of his free mercy in calling and saving them: But finally abiding in impenitence and unbelief, will certainly issue in eternal destruction. How deplorable is the present state of the *Jews*! and what a happiness has God brought to the *Gentile* world by the gospel! But O! what a glorious day of numerous converts to Christ will there be, in the winding up of God's dispensation toward the church, when the fatness of the *Gentiles* shall be brought in, and all *Israel* shall be saved! As we have now obtained mercy through their unbelief, it should be our earnest prayer and concern, that they may be excited to a holy emulation by means of our faith; and it may

well be our hope and joy, that as they are still nationally beloved for their covenant father's sake, God, in due time will remember them, according to his promise. How modest and humble should we be, in all our thoughts about the unsearchable decrees of God, and the dispensations of his providence and grace, without curiously prying into his secrets, or pretending to arraign them, or prescribe to him! With what reverent awe should we adore, and acquiesce in what surpasses our comprehension, saying, *O the depth!* And, after all our thoughts about the ways of his mercy and judgment, we must ultimately resolve them into his infinite wisdom and sovereign will, that the glory of all may be absolutely referred to him, who is debtor to none, and will stand clear in judgment, with regard to all his works, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things: To whom be glory for ever. Amen.

C H A P. XII.

The apostle proceeds to a practical improvement of the foregoing doctrine, in exhortations of believers to a holy dedication of themselves to God, 1, 2. To an humble opinion of themselves, and a modest behaviour towards others, 3,—5. To a faithful use of the spiritual gifts which God had bestowed upon some of them, in their respective stations, 6,—8. And to various duties, that were incumbent upon private Christians among them, such as love and kindness, zeal, hope, patience, and prayer, 9,—12. Hospitality and meekness, sympathy and condescension, 13,—16. And an honourable and peaceable conduct towards all men, together with forbearance and benevolence towards injurious enemies, 17,—21.

TEXT.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye

PARAPHRASE.

HAVING thus represented at large, the exceeding riches of God's mercy and grace to sinners, both of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, in their free justification through faith in Christ and his righteousness; and in the glorious blessings and privileges to which they are called according to the sovereign and eternal purpose of God, let me now affectionately and earnestly intreat you, my beloved brethren, on these principles, by all the endearments and encouragements, obligations and assistances, that result from these abundant and multiplied favours, and by all your profession and hope of a personal interest in them; let me, I say, rather beseech you in love, as a brother, than command you with authority, as a father, to devote and give up your whole selves to the Lord, entirely and without reserve: Instead therefore of offering legal sacrifices, which, since the death of Christ, are no longer obligatory, I would call you to nobler oblations^a; that as those offerings were

NOTE.

^a Here is a beautiful and instructive allusion to the legal oblation of the *bodies* of beasts, or birds, in representing the spiritual sacrifices that Christians are called to offer in the solemn surrender of their own selves to the Lord. The bodies of creatures, that died of themselves,

ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

were to be made of the bodies of living animals, which the offerers had absolutely consigned over to God, according to the law, (*Lev. v. 6, 7.*) so I intreat that ye, as spiritual priests, would present, not birds or beasts, no, nor *only* your own souls, but together with them, your bodies likewise, for the discharge of all religious and moral duties; not as a propitiatory sacrifice, which would be practically to deny the perfection of Christ's atonement; but as a living sacrifice of acknowledgment, that ye are the Lord's; and as persons that are quickened by his Spirit, and vigorously determined all your lives long, even unto death, to *yield yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead; and your members as instruments of righteousness to God*, (*chap. vi. 13.*) and to *glorify him with your bodies and spirits, which are his*, (*1 Cor. vi. 20.*) And as the legal sacrifices were dedicated to the Lord, and were to be without spot and blemish, (*Numb. xix. 2.*) so it concerns you to present yourselves, as a dedicate thing to him, and as purified from those lusts and corruptions that take their rise from the body, and principally operate in, and by it: And as those offerings were a sweet savour to God, when presented according to his appointment, so ye should devote yourselves in such a spiritual manner, by faith and evangelical obedience to him, as shall be productive of *fruit unto holiness*, (*chap. vi. 22.*) yea, as shall *fill you with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God*; and so are *sacrifices acceptable to him*, (*Phil. i. 11. and 1 Pet. ii. 5.*) All this, especially considering what great things God, in the riches of his sovereign favour and goodness, has done for you, is a homage, which in reason and justice ye owe to him, and ought to perform according to his word, (*την λογικην υπηρεσιαν υμων*) a service to be performed, not like the offering up of brute beasts, but with all the powers of your rational souls, under a lively apprehension of its being fit and right, that as all is of him, it should likewise be to him, (*chap. xi. 36.*)

2 And be not
con-

2 And in order hereunto, (*μη σκεχματιζομεν*) take heed

N O T E.

themselves, were not to be eaten by the Israelites, (*Deut. xiv. 21.*) much less were they to be offered in sacrifice; but such only as were living, which the offerers presented to the Lord, and brought to the priest to put them to death, (*Lev. xvii. 5. and 2 Chron. xxix. 21, 22.*) And therefore the apostle speaks of believers, as *presenting their bodies a living sa-*

crifice, holy, and acceptable to God, though their souls were, doubtless, to be included in the offering; for *body exercise alone profits little*, (*1 Tim. iv. 8.*) and in further explaining the nature of this *living sacrifice*, the apostle immediately mentions their being *transformed by the renewing of their mind*, *ver. 2.*

conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

heed of forming your schemes for happiness, as though it lay in the things of this world, which are transitory, like a scene that soon passes away; and of symbolizing or complying with, and being moulded into, the spirit and temper, evil courses and fashions, conversation and manners of carnal and worldly men: Do not imitate and fall in with their depraved customs, who walk in the lusts of the flesh, and mind earthly things; but let it be the earnest governing desire and pursuit of your souls, in prayer to God, and in the use of all means of his appointment, and in the improvement of your Christian graces and privileges, that ye may be metamorphized, (*μεταμορφωθῆναι*) or changed into a directly contrary, better, and more glorious and abiding form, in the renovation of your hearts, yet more and more by the Holy Spirit*: Let this be your principal aim, that ye may discern the distinguishing light; may judge with approbation, and experimentally know in yourselves; (*εἰς τὸ δοκιμασεῖν*) and may be capable of proving and recommending to others, the truth, excellence, and importance, of that will of God which he has revealed in his word, with regard to what is good in itself, and for us; with regard to what is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ; and with regard to what is sufficient to make a finished Christian *thoroughly furnished unto all good works*, (2 Tim. iii. 17.) without any addition of ceremonial rites, human traditions, or heathen documents of morality to complete it†.

3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

3 The best way to understand this perfect will of God, with advantage to yourselves and others, is by an humble use and improvement of those spiritual attainments which any of you are partakers of: For, to speak with the apostolic authority which I have received by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, (*chap. i. 5.*) I now, not only beseech you in love as a brother, (*ver. 1.*) but also in my great Lord and Master's name, admonish, and charge every one of you, who is favoured with any excellent qualifications, that, whatsoever such an one's station or office may be in the church, he be not puffed up in his own conceit, to the contempt of others;

N O T E S.

* This may be called the *renewing of the mind*, because the gracious and effectual work of the Spirit first begins in the *understanding*, and is carried on by further influence, under its illumination, to the will, affections, and conversation, till there be a thorough change of the whole man into the image of God, in *knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness*,

(Col. iii. 10. and Eph. iv. 24.)

† The apostle here seems to represent the perfection of the gospel-revelation with respect to moral duties, as well as to the grounds of their acceptance with God, in opposition to *Judaism* on one hand, and *Gentilism* on the other.

others ; nor entertain a higher opinion of his knowledge and gifts, graces and usefulness, than becomes him, or than God allows him, or than the nature of his spiritual and holy endowments admits of ; and that he never pretend to be wise above what he ought to be, by intruding into things too high for him, and beyond what is written ; but that he be humble and modest in his own thoughts of himself, and behaviour towards his brethren, as remembering that, whatever he is and has, better than others, it is no more than he has received, (1 Cor. iv. 7.) and that what has been communicated to him was not according to his own deserts, but merely according to the measure, proportion, or degree of faith, and of all the spiritual gifts and graces that attend it and flow from it, which God, in his infinite wisdom and sovereign grace, has been pleased to bestow on every one who has it, both for the good of his own soul and the edification of others. And great reason there is, why he should not be lifted up with pride, and despise others, on account of what *he has received*, (1 Cor. iv. 7.) especially considering the end and use for which it was given him.

4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office :

4 For, as in the frame of one and the same human body we have many members, that are formed, and properly placed, for different uses and mutual help, and for the good of the whole, which is constituted by an apt and beautiful union of them all together into one body ; and (2^d) as all these members of the natural body neither do, nor are fitted, or designed, to perform one and the same function, or operation ; (7:25) some being to serve one sort of purpose, and others another, as the eyes to see, the hands to work, the feet to walk, and the like ; which are all very useful and necessary in their places, for the advantage of the whole body ;

5 So we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

5 So, to apply this to the present purpose, We believers, who are united by faith to Christ, and animated by his Spirit, how many soever there be of us, how various soever our gifts may be, and how many uses and offices soever we may be appointed to in the church ; none of us, apart, and by himself, but all together, in conjunction, make up one spiritual body, which is cemented or knit together, by one spirit, in Christ, and under him, as our head of influence and of government, for all the sacred ends for which he has stationed us in his church : And we all, by virtue of our union with him, are nearly related to each other, as fellow-members of his spiritual body, to serve such uses as may

be best suited to the benefit of the whole church, in our respective places, *according to the measure of the gift of Christ*, (Eph. iv. 7.) And therefore there is no room for any of us to exalt himself above, and despise another, as though he were a needless member: But every one should be desirous of filling up the proportion of service that he ought to bear in the body, the church, for the good of the whole.

6 Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy according to the proportion of faith;

6 Having then spiritual gifts of various kinds, not without measure, as Christ, the head, had them all in their utmost fulness, (John iii. 34.); but some having one sort, and others another, and *that* in different degrees, though all tending to the same ends, viz. The glory of God, and the edification of the church; and having these excellent gifts, as the fruit of God's free favour, and in such kinds and proportions as he in his good pleasure has communicated them to us, let us, by his assistance, faithfully use and improve them for the best purposes for which he has bestowed them upon us severally, according to our respective *offices* and *stations* in the church*: If he has appointed and called us to the office of preaching the gospel, by opening and applying the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, in his name, and as of the ability which he gives us; let us faithfully discharge this important trust, according to the measure of our light and faith in the mysteries of his will; and let us take special heed, that it be according to the analogy, (*κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν*) or agreeable to the rule of faith, and the plainest principles of it, as laid down in the word of God, that all may be consonant to the general scope and tenor of the holy scriptures,

N O T E.

* The generality of expositors understand the *gifts* here mentioned, as signifying only those of an extraordinary nature, with which persons were then endowed for discharging the several offices here spoken of. But I rather think, with some others, that the apostle means, not merely miraculous and extraordinary, but also such ordinary spiritual gifts, as are needful in all ages, for the edification and advantage of the church: For the offices, in the discharge of which these gifts were to be exercised, have nothing so peculiar in them but what might be fulfilled without the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, unless any should suppose that *prophecy* was of that sort. But I apprehend no necessity for such a supposition, since all the other following expressions seem to point out ordinary offices, such as *ministry*, *teaching*, *exhorting*, &c. and since *prophecy* may be sometimes used

to signify, not only interpreting the scripture by immediate inspiration, or foretelling events by a supernatural gift, but any preaching of the word by the ordinary, as well as extraordinary assistances of the Spirit, 1 Cor. xiv. 1, —5. (see the second note there) in which sense it is said of Christ's faithful ministers, who are called his *two witnesses*, and *two prophets*, that, under Antichrist's reign they should *prophecy*, or bear witness to Christ in their preaching, twelve hundred and sixty days, which are styled the *days of their prophecy*, Rev. xi. 3, 6, 10. And as preaching may be called *prophecy*, because its great business is to explain the prophets and apostles, and to declare what our future and eternal state shall be, according to the word of God; so the church of Rome were very sparingly, if at all, furnished with extraordinary gifts, as appears from chap. i. 11.

tures, and there may be no jarring or discord between *that* and our preaching: but one may cast an harmonious light upon the other.

7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministring; or he that teacheth, on teaching;

7 Or, if any of us be called to the office of deacons †, for collecting, taking care of, and distributing the church stock, and therein ministring to the poor saints, and to the support of the servants, and ordinances of Christ, let us, with all prudence and faithfulness, frugal liberality and diligence, attend to the work of serving the poor's, the minister's, and the Lord's table, as those that would use the office of a deacon well, to the honour of Christ, and the advantage of the church, (1 Tim. iii. 13.) as to the *first* of these offices ‡, (ver. 6.) If any one is called to that branch of the ministerial work, as a teacher, which principally consists in opening the scriptures, and in stating and explaining, illustrating, proving, and defending the truths of the gospel in a doctrinal way; and so instructing and establishing his hearers in the principles of religion, let him closely study the word of God, with an humble dependence on his Spirit for light and guidance, by *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*, (1 Cor. ii. 13.) scriptures with scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament; types, promises, and prophecies with their accomplishments; and obscurer with plainer passages, for interpreting one by the other; and let him seek light from such places as principally treat of any doctrine, to explain others, where it is but incidentally mentioned, that he may clearly know, and faithfully teach and labour in preaching the mind and

N O T E S.

† As all the standing offices of the church are comprehended in those of *bishops or pastors* for its *spiritual*, and of *deacons* for its *temporal* concerns, according to the account we have of these in the church at *Philippi*, chap. i. 1. so the apostle seems to intend these two general offices by *prophecy* and *ministry*, the last of which (*diakonia*) is the word that gives name to the office of those who had the care of the poor, and served tables, *Acts* vi. 1.—3. But as in large churches, when occasions required it, some parts of the work belonging to these officers, respectively, were distributed into several hands, to assist or join in them; so I am inclined to think, that, in the latter part of this verse, and in ver. 8. the apostle speaks of *him that teaches*, and *him that exhorts*, with a reference to *prophecy*, as bearing a part in that work, either under the character of a co-pastor, or of an assistant: and that he speaks of *him that gives, rules, and shows mercy*, with a re-

ference to the *deacon's* office, as bearing his part in the execution of *that*: For I take all these expressions to relate to *church-officers*; and it is to me observable, that the word (*diakonia*) rendered *ministry*, properly signifies *the office itself*; and the word (*προφητεία*) rendered *prophecy*, may very well be understood to signify *the office itself* likewise. (See the note on ver. 6.) But the following words, *he that teaches, he that exhorts, and he that gives, &c.* signify the *persons* employed in one or another *branch* of those offices respectively.

‡ Here, if I mistake not, the apostle reassumes the consideration of what belongs to the office of *prophesying*, or *preaching*, mentioned ver. 6. which consists of *doctrine*, and *exhortation*, or *consolation*, ver. 8. But a wrong division of this and the next verse, which has been arbitrarily fixed in latter ages, may have been one means of misleading our thoughts,

and will of God in his word, and speak the truth as it is in Jesus.

8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth

8 Or if any one is principally called to fulfil the other grand branch of the ministerial office, which consists in applying the word to conscience, for practice and improvement, either in a way of exhortation to duty, reproving for sin, and cautioning against snares and dangers; (or *ἐν τῷ παρακαλεῖν*) in a way of consolation, direction, and support to afflicted souls, under their various scruples, doubts, and fears, discouragements, weaknesses and burthens, temptations and troubles; let him, (*ὁ παρακαλῶν*) with earnest prayer for all needful assistance, lay their distressed case to heart, and study the different circumstances of it, together with what there is in the word of God to help and relieve under them, that he may know how to address such persons, suitable to their respective conditions, and be diligent and faithful therein; and so may approve himself to God a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving to every one his portion in due season, (2 Tim. ii. 15. and Luke xii. 42.) And as to what respects the *deacon's* office*, He, who in the execution of that, or of any branch pertaining to it, is appointed by the church to distribute its public stock, (*ὁ μετὰ δίδωκε*) in such a manner as may best answer the several purposes relating to its external and temporal affairs for which it is collected; let him do it with singleness of heart, free from all selfishness, fraud, and deceit, not for favour or affection, but † liberally and impartially according to the necessities and occasions that require it: He that is intrusted with the church stock, and with a superintendency over it, to take care that it be duly applied to all its proper uses ‡; let him attend to this

part

N O T E S.

* Here the verses might have been better divided; and the apostle's thoughts, I conceive, would have been more clearly distinguished, had the former part of this verse been added to the 7th, and the 8th begun at these words, *He that gives, let him do it with simplicity.*

† The word (*ἀπλότης*) rendered *simplicity*, is translated *liberality*, 2 Cor. viii. 2.

‡ He that rules (*ὁ προϊστάμενος*) properly signifies one that presides over any affair whatsoever; and so may relate to him that had the chief direction and management of the church stock, to see that it were duly disposed of, as well as to him that presided in matters purely spiritual, or relating to church-discipline; and yet, perhaps, this might be the pastor, the whole work and care of the church being

originally in his hands: For, as Dr Owen observes, in his discourse on the true nature of a gospel-church, pag. 182. "The apostle did not utterly forego the care of providing for the poor, which being originally committed to them by Jesus Christ, they would not wholly direct themselves of it.—And the same care is still incumbent on the ordinary pastors and elders of the churches, so far as the execution of it doth not interfere with their principal work and duty." However, as the work of this president is mentioned between other parts of the work, that belonged to the *deacon's* office, it is most natural to understand it here, as referring to one employed in that sort of service. And this sense of the expression harmonizes with, and yet preserves a proper difference between him that gives,

Sheweth mercy,
with cheerfulness.

part of his office with great application, thoughtfulness, pains, and industry, as one that desires to manage it to the best advantage, and to acquit himself with the utmost fidelity to his trust: And he, whose peculiar province it may be to visit the sick, and them that are in bonds and prisons for the sake of Christ; to relieve the poor, the fatherless, the widows, and distressed strangers; and to take care that none of them want such things as may be needful and convenient for them; let him engage and persist in these merciful works with all readiness of mind without grudging his own time and labour, or the extraordinary expence, which, on some occasions, may be requisite for the support and charitable assistance of the most necessitous and afflicted among them; and let him treat them, not in a rough and haughty, stern, or cold manner; but with all affability, tenderness, and compassion, and with such alacrity of mind and countenance, as shall convince them, that he takes pleasure in helping and comforting them.

9 Let love be
without dissimu-
lation. Abhor
that

9 As to general duties that are incumbent upon you as private Christians; let your supreme affection, in a way of desire, esteem, and delight, be placed on the Lord Jesus *, and on God through him, without hypocrisy; in heart, and not in pretence or profession only; shew forth its sincerity by keeping his commandments, and not think them grievous, (1 John v. 3.) and let your love to fellow-Christians and fellow-creatures, in the various instances to be hereafter mentioned, be unfeigned and hearty; *not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth*, (1 John iii. 18.) not in a way of mere compliment, or with hypocritical airs of pity and compassion, saying to the poor among them, *Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; without giving them those things which are needful for them*, (Jam. ii. 16.) But let your love work practically toward them in all kind dispositions and good fruits, as the circumstances of things may require. From this principle, see that ye not only abstain and depart from all iniquity, from every thing that is offensive to God, defiling to your-
selves,

N O T E S.

gives, and him that shews mercy, in the close of the verse, which seem to relate to what is done by church-officers, rather than by private Christians; because *him that rules* is placed between them; and the duties of private Christians, in distributing to the necessities of the saints, and being given to hospitality, are insisted on afterwards, ver. 13.

* Though the love here spoken of seems

most immediately to be meant of love to one another; yet it may be considered both with relation to the Lord, whom we are to serve with fervency of spirit, ver. 11. and without love to whom, no Christian duty towards others can be performed aright; and with relation to our neighbour, in the several branches of it that are drawn out in the following discourse.

that which is evil,
cleave to that
which is good.

selves, and injurious to others, and from every thing that his word and your own consciences condemn as sinful ; but, in imitation of him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, keep up the utmost detestation and abhorrence of it, as the worst of all kind of evils, in its contrariety to God, and to your own happiness, that ye may have no manner of fellowship with it, but may hate it with a perfect hatred in yourselves and others, and even in those whose persons ye most sincerely and affectionately love : On the contrary, whatsoever is holy, good, and excellent in itself, approved of God, and honourable to his name, good for yourselves, and useful to others ; let every thing of this nature be the object of your desire and pursuit, love and choice, and the matter of your daily practice ; persevere so steadily in it, and adhere, by divine grace, so closely and resolutely to it, in speech, heart, and behaviour, that no terrors, or allurements, nor any consideration whatsoever, may ever affright, entice, or draw you off from it : And above all things else, let it be your great concern to *cleave with purpose of heart to the Lord*, as your chief and all-comprehending good, and highest end. (*Acts xi. 23.*)

10 Be kindly
affectioned one
to another, with
brotherly love; in
honour prefer-
ring one another ;

10 As to the more particular and mutual duties which ye owe in common one to another, see that ye be ardently, tenderly and complacently affectionate to each other, and propense to treat one another with ingenuous friendship and kindness, by a sort of natural instinct, like that which is between parents and their children ; (*φιλανθρωπία*) and let there be reciprocal returns of love for love, the obligation being the same upon you all, as brethren in Christ, who should *endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, and are *taught of God to love one another*, (*Eph. iv. 3.* and *1 Thess. iv. 9.*) and let your love be as *respectful* as I trust it is sincere, each one thinking and speaking more honourably of another's gifts, graces, and services, than of his own, and casting a mantle over his faults, instead of magnifying and exposing them ; and so in all *lowliness of mind*, let each esteem another better than himself, (*Phil. ii. 3.*) as being conscious of more iniquity and disorder in his own heart, to keep him bumble, than he can see in others, to degrade them ; and yet let none under pretence of giving way to others, as more eminent, neglect, or think themselves excused from such duties as they are called to.

11 Not sloth-
ful in business ;
servant

11 Let them take heed of an idolent and careless, lazy and sluggish temper and behaviour, with respect

servent in spirit;
serving the Lord;

to the affairs of the civil and religious life, and with respect to their being useful in their several stations, as tho' they were to do nothing at all, because they apprehend, that they cannot do so much, or so well as others; but let them engage in every service with an active vigorous spirit, and with all the fervours of love to God, and sacred zeal for his glory, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, as doing the will of God from the heart, that *whatsoever their hands find to do for God, themselves, or others, they may do it with their might*, (Eccles. ix. 10.) as knowing that they are thereby serving the Lord Christ, in obedience to his commands and for his honour and glory.

12 Rejoicing in
hope; patient in
tribulation;
continuing in-
tance in prayer;

12 And, to animate them herein, let them go forward in God's way and work with alacrity and delight, as those who, through grace, are well assured of, and rejoice in hope of eternal salvation, to crown all their labours of love, and make them completely happy for ever: With this view and hope, let them be meek and patient towards each other, and submissive, calm, and resigned to the will of God, under their present provocations, trials, and afflictions, and sustain them with an abiding and holy courage: And as nothing of this kind can be done without help from heaven, let them be earnest and importunate in humble supplication and prayer to God, with faith in the name of Christ, for all seasonable assistances of his Spirit; and whether they receive immediate answers to their prayers, or not, let them persevere therein, (*Luke xviii. 1,—8.*) and not give over till they have *obtained mercy, and found grace to help them in every time of need.* (Heb. iv. 16.)

13 Distribu-
ting to the neces-
sity of saints;
given to hospita-
lity.

13 And that there may be no defect in your *Christian charity*, (ver. 10.) let those of you, that are capable, show your love and compassion to Christ's poor, to such as make a credible profession of being sanctified and formed into his holy image, by readily communicating to their use, for the relief of their wants, and refreshing their bowels, like persons, who have a fellow-feeling with them in all their straits and exigencies; that whilst, as ye have opportunity, ye make conscience, as ye ought, of *doing good unto all*, ye may especially abound therein *to the household of faith*, (Gal. vi. 10.) and when any honest, religious strangers, that are poor and destitute, come among you, or any persecuted ministers, or Christians, that are driven from house and home, are with you; seek and pursue (*διωκτε*) all ways, means, and opportunities of entertaining them hospitably, without grudging or backwardness; but with a
laudible

laudable liberality, according to your circumstances, and with the greatest freedom and delight, after the examples of *Abraham* and *Lot*, who, by *entertaining strangers, entertained angels unawares.* (Gen. xviii. 1, &c. and xix. 1, &c. compared with *Heb.* xiii. 2.)

14 Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not.

14 And as ye have *enemies*, as well as *friends*, to deal with, Take heed that ye do not misbehave toward them; but while they are maliciously abusing and persecuting you, for righteousness sake, either with their tongues or hands, or both; instead of returning the like injuries to them, do ye speak civilly to them, and as well of them, as the nature of things admits of; (*vouloir*) cordially wish their happiness, and endeavour to do them good; and, according to the command and example of the meek and humble Jesus, (*Luke* vi. 28. and xxiii. 34.) pray for the blessings of grace and glory, and for the blessings of Providence too, as far as may be for their real good to come down upon them: Beg of God to convince them of their errors, to forgive their sins, and to bless them in turning them from their iniquities: And let not blessing and cursing proceed out of the same mouth and heart, (*Jam.* iii. 10.) *Never render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.* (1 Pet. iii. 9.)

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

15 Whether ye have to do with enemies or friends, endeavour to maintain a sympathizing spirit, with humanity towards all men, as partakers of the same common nature with them; and with brotherly affection toward your fellow Christians, as members of the same spiritual body with them, (1 Cor. xii. 26.) instead of envying and repining at the happiness of those that are surrounded with mercies, and enriched with blessings, whether temporal or spiritual, rejoice with them therein; that ye may share in their just and lawful, and especially in their religious joys, by *taking pleasure in their prosperity*, as God doth in that of his servants, (*Psal.* xxiv. 27.) and as, speaking after the manner of men, God's own love and tenderness to his people is expressed by his being *afflicted in all their afflictions*, (*Isa.* lxiii. 9.) so be ye touchingly affected with the losses and miseries, fears and dangers of them that are in any trouble, relating to this world or the next: Endeavour to soothe and soften their griefs and tears, by condoling with them, and shewing your compassionate concern for them, and readiness to do what in you lies, by prayer, counsel, and all possible means, to assist and comfort them; considering that ye yourselves are in the body,

body, and might have been, or soon may be; in the like deplorable circumstances, (*Heb. xiii. 3.*) and that your own iniquities have deserved them.

15 Be of the same mind one towards another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

16 Whatever difference there may be in your outward condition as *men*, or in your inward attainments as *Christians*, or in your professions as *Jewish* or *Gentile* converts, labour to be as harmonious as possible among yourselves: Whether ye can think just alike in *lesser* matters, or not, Be sure to cultivate a mutual friendly disposition of mind, and sameness of affection towards one another; every one striving, by divine grace, to keep up the same charitable temper towards his brother in the Lord, and to wish as well to him, and shew the same willingness on all occasions, to do him good, as he desires and expects, that his brother should shew to to himself: Neither affect pre-eminence over others; but treat inferiors with condescending kindness; nor aspire after great things in this world; but rather look upon them with an holy indifference and disdain: If the providence of God bring any of you into strait and necessitous circumstances*; learn to submit with all humility and cheerfulness of mind to them, that your spirit may not be above your condition: but may be brought down to a contented acquiescence in it: And if any of you are raised to temporal estates and dignities, take heed of setting your hearts upon them, and being puffed up with them; and see that ye carry it with the greatest affability, courteousness, and freedom to persons of the lowest rank: Do not be ashamed to stoop to any proper office of brotherly love and kindness to the poorest, and most despicable saints upon earth; but be ready to treat them with benevolence, and to converse familiarly with them, that, like *David*, though a king, ye may be *companions of all them that fear God*: (*Psal. cxix. 63.*) and in whatever situation the Lord has placed you, as to worldly, or spiritual endowments; have a care of entertaining a high opinion of your own wisdom, on any account whatsoever, (*Prov. iii. 7.*); and particularly of being so vain as to imagine that ye have no further need of divine direction and influence; or as to conceit that, if ye are richer and greater in this world, ye are therefore wiser and better than others, and have no need of any assistance, counsel, or advice from them.

17 Whe-

N O T E.

* What is here translated, *to men of low things*, (*τοῖς ταπεινοῖς.*) Accordingly I have taken both senses into the paraphrase.

27 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

28 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

29 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it

17 Whether a man be your friend or foe, a Christian or a heathen, that has acted an unrighteous and injurious part toward you; Take heed of giving way to revengeful or passionate resentments, or of going into any iniquitous or hurtful practices, by way of retaliation upon him, which would be to imitate his evil example, and make yourselves sharers in his guilt. Whatever others do, let it be your conscientious care and concern, by divine assistance, to contrive, and go into such measures of conduct, as shall be (*ver. 20.*) good, generous, and honourable in themselves, and every way becoming your Christian characters, not only in the sight of the Lord, but in the judgment of all the unprejudiced part of mankind, (2 Cor. viii. 21.) that none, no not the worst of your enemies, may ever be able to upbraid you with having done an unworthy or indecent thing. (*Phil. iv. 8.*)

18 In this manner, study the things which make for the peace and welfare of all mankind, that, were it possible, there might be no scuds or quarrels, jars or uneasinesses between you and others, in any circumstances or relations of life: And how impracticable soever, in some situations, this may be with persons of an unhappy temper, and amidst all the disorders of this sinful and ill-natured world; yet let nothing be wanting on your part, that may contribute towards it; but as far as is consistent with truth and faithfulness, honour and conscience, and with your duty in other respects, labour, to the utmost of your power, to cultivate a peaceable and quiet temper and deportment, in your dealings with persons of all ranks, professions, and characters; since the beauty and happiness of all society, whether civil or sacred, your own comfort, and the credit of religion very much depend upon it, and cannot subsist without it.

19 That no provocation may ever transport you so far, as to abate your concern for peace, let me intreat you, my dearly beloved friends and brethren, who have known and experienced so much of the merciful kindness and forgiving grace of God toward you, to keep so strict a watch over your angry passions, as not to go about to do yourselves justice, in a way of private and personal revenge upon your enemies, (*ver. 20.*); no, nor to seek satisfaction from them, in a due course of law, from a litigious spirit, instead of doing it from a desire of preserving the peace and order of society, and of obtaining justice to yourselves for any affronts or injuries, that ye may have received from them: But, as is most eligible, honourable, and comfortable to your

it is written, Ven-
geance is mine;
I will repay, saith
the Lord.

own souls, labour rather, on the contrary, so far to suppress the heat and resentment of your own temper, as to turn away * their wrath with a soft answer, (*Prov. xv. 1.*) and to pacify it by yielding to it, instead of irritating it yet more and more, by intemperately and unseasonably setting yourselves to oppose and resist it, (*Eccles. x. 4.*) or else endeavour to get out of the way of their fury, that its torrent may run off, without doing you any hurt: And when ye have done all that becomes you, to divert it, if they still continue their rage against you, calmly leave them to the impartial judgment of God, who best knows how to deal with them, and will one day right your cause: For it is recorded, (*Deut. xxxii. 35.*) to the encouragement of his people, and restraining their fretful impatience, under the oppressions of his and their enemies; It is my supreme right and prerogative, says the infinitely wise and holy Lord, ruler and judge of the universe, who can do no wrong, to inflict deserved punishments; and it belongs to me to order how and when it shall be done. I will render tribulation and wrath to evil doers, either by my immediate providence, or by the equitable laws of civil government, or by some other means in this world; or at farthest, by terrible executions of vindictive justice on incorrigible sinners, in the great day of retribution, in the world to come: leaving therefore the matter in God's hand, be ye ready to do all offices of kindness and compassion, even to the worst of your enemies, instead of avenging yourselves upon them.

10 Therefore
if thine enemy
hunger, feed
him: if he thirst,
give him drink:
for in so doing
thou

20 If therefore any of your adversaries, that have been most injurious to you, and have even violently persecuted you, be ready to perish with hunger, do not neglect, much less insult, reproach, and censure him, as receiving the due reward of his evil deeds against you; but, to shew your compassionate and forgiving spirit, cheerfully and tenderly supply him with necessary and convenient food for his refreshment, (see *Prov. xxv. 1, 22.*) according to your ability and his wants, even as one would feed and nourish an infant, or sick person, that is not capable of helping himself. (*ἰσχυρὸς ἄνθρωπος*) If he be uneasy, and in danger of fainting, for thirst, afford him seasonable relief, by giving him something to drink, that shall be most proper for him, according to the opportunities you may have of doing it: For in this way of kind and friend-
ly,

N O T E.

* Giving place to wrath, may relate either to the wrath of our enemies, or to the wrath of God, with whom it is a righteous thing to

thou shalt heap
coals of fire on
his head.

ly, merciful, and beneficent conduct towards him, you will either mollify his spirit, and make him your friend, by melting him down into the most ingenuous confusion and relentings, at the thought of all the injuries that he has been guilty of against God, and you his generous benefactor; and so your favours to him will answer their direct and desired end, even as the artificer dissolves hard metal, by heaping coals of fire upon it: Or else, if, after all, he shall remain so ungratefully and obstinately perverse, as not to be won upon by all your generous and endearing treatment, it will consequently aggravate his guilt and ruin, and bring the heavier vengeance from the righteous God upon him, which will be like coals of unquenchable fire heaped upon him; and which, though you ought not to desire it, will be such a terrible retribution of his evil, that you need not meditate any revenge of your own for it.

21 We not overcome
of evil, but
overcome evil
with good.

21 Upon the whole then, let no ill treatment, you meet with from others, get an inglorious mastery over you, so as to discompose your spirit, and inflame your angry, malicious, and impatient passions, or so as to make you weary of shewing love and kindness to your enemies, (*ver. 20.*) or desirous of returning evil for evil, (*ver. 17.*) this would be really to enslave your own mind, and give your adversaries the greatest opportunity of triumphing over you. But, on the contrary, labour, by the grace of God, to exercise all meekness, kindness, and forbearance, under the highest provocations; and in that manner pursue the noblest of all victories over your enemies and over your own resentments too, by returning good for evil: *For he that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that rules his spirit, than he that takes a city.* (Prov. xvi. 32.)

RECOLLECTIONS.

How should a consideration of the endearing mercies of God engage us to yield up ourselves, as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to him! This is every way a most reasonable service. And how should our hearts be loosened from this world, and from all its sinful fashions, customs, and practices; and how desirous of such a renovation of our minds, by the blessed Spirit, as shall transform us into the image of God, and give us an experimental, practical, and approving acquaintance with every thing that is good in itself, pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, and agreeable to his holy will! But, be our gifts, graces, and services ever so great, we should keep up modest and humble thoughts of ourselves, and not be wise in our own conceit, or despise others; since all that we receive, is according to the measure of the gift of Christ to us, as his members, for the good of the whole body. Wonderful is the grace and care of the great Head of the church in providing for it. He has furnished it with such gifts and officers, as are necessary for its spiritual edification, and for managing its temporal concerns; and has ordered all his servants to attend to their charge with integrity, diligence, and cheerfulness, according to the grace given

given to them, and the rule of his word.—And, as to the duties of private Christians, they are called to the sincerest love, the most affectionate deportment, and honourable regards, one towards another; to detest every thing that is sinful, and cleave to all that is good; to be vigorously active in the business of their civil and religious stations, and fervent in every service, as doing it to the Lord; to rejoice in hope of eternal life, and to be patient and resigned to the will of God, under all their trials and afflictions, and persevering in earnest prayer. How amiable are the Christian morals founded in evangelical love; and how far surpassing all that was ever practised or taught, by the most refined heathens! This love, which has such an influence upon, and gives such a beautiful turn to all morality, is without dissimulation: It is liberal to the necessitous, especially to the poor that bear the characters of holiness; and is hospitable to good and honest strangers, especially those that suffer for righteousness sake: It inspires us with such a fellow-feeling with others, as makes us rejoice with the happy, and mourn with the afflicted: It is humble and condescending to men of the lowest degree, and benevolent to our very enemies: It implores blessings upon the heads of those that persecute, abuse, and curse us: It chuses to refer an injured cause to the righteous judgment of God, rather than render evil for evil, or seek private revenge: It endeavours to live peaceably with all men, and behave with honour toward them: And it takes pleasure in giving food and drink to poor necessitous enemies, in melting them with kindness, and overcoming evil with good.

C H A P. XIII.

The apostle lays out the duty of subjection to civil government, with several reasons to enforce it, 1,—7. And then returns to his exhortations to mutual love, 8,—10. And goes on to temperance and sobriety, 11,—14.

TEXT.

LET every soul
be subject un-
to the higher
powers.

PARAPHRASE.

LET every person *, whether he be a Jewish †, or Gentile convert, ecclesiastic or lay-man, take heed of imagining that he is under no obligation to own the authority of civil government in all lawful things

NOTES.

* As in chap. xii. 1. the apostle had put the body for the whole man, the better to compare with his allusion to the legal sacrifices, whose bodies were offered up to God; so he here puts the soul for the person, to intimate that it is by the soul that we are proper subjects of civil and moral government, and that this, as well as the body, is to be engaged in the obedience due to magistrates.

† The Jews having a proud conceit of themselves, as the only people of God, pretended that they ought not to submit to any civil governors, and pay tribute to them, unless they were of their own nation and religion, and were set over them by the special appointment of God, their supreme Lord and King; and so they were prejudiced against the Roman power, as unlawful, because it was both foreign, and heathen: And as the apostles and many Christians in those days,

were of the Jewish nation, they were stigmatized by the Romans, as a rebellious people, that were enemies to the public peace and order of the civil government, Acts xvi. 20, 21. In opposition therefore to this error of the Jews, and in vindication of Christianity from all imputations of that kind, the apostle, with a special eye to judaizers, represents the duty of all Christians, owning and submitting to any civil government, under which the providence of God cast their lot, even though it were heathen, as the Roman empire then was under which the people lived to whom the apostle now wrote. And lest from what he himself had said about Christian liberty, and against persons avenging themselves, or rendering evil for evil, chap. xii. 17, 19. any should infer that the civil magistrate ought not to avenge injuries, nor be applied to, for the redressing of wrongs in a legal way; he

powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

things relating to this present world; though in matters of faith and practice, relating to another world, he is indeed accountable to none but God, who alone has dominion over any man's conscience. But as Christian religion makes no alteration in natural and civil rights; let every one sincerely, dutifully, and voluntarily, as from his very heart and soul, pay a reverential and peaceable obedience to the supreme magistrate, as ruling according to the laws and constitution of the government; and by consequence, to those that are of an inferior and subordinate rank *, which is, in effect, the same thing as paying it to himself, while they legally act under him, by and according to their commission from him, for whatever be the particular form of any political government † that men agree to live under, or in whose hands soever it be lodged, the supreme Lord and Ruler of the universe, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, (Prov. viii. 15.) has appointed it to be set up for the good of communities, that the order and peace, rights and liberties, lives and properties, of the subject may be preserved, and defended against the private or public quarrels, injuries and outrage which the corruptions of mankind would naturally carry them into against one another. And those very governors, that now reign over the Roman empire, even *Cæsar*, and such as rule under him, though strangers to the faith of Christ, are raised to their authority by the providence of God, who, according to the nature and design of government, has ordered that they should exercise it for the common welfare of every peaceable subject: And remember that, if they would abuse their power, they can do nothing against you, but by divine permission; or, as our Lord in his own case said to *Pilate*, the Roman governor, *except it were given them from above.* (John xix. 11.)

2 Whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the power, reſiſteth

2 So that, (2nd) whoever he be, of what religious profession, or worldly circumstances soever, that in his private capacity opposes any legal command of the government, which is providentially set over him, or that in

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insists on the necessity of government for that, as well as other purposes, and enjoins Christians to submit themselves conscientiously and peaceably to it, as the ordinance of the God of nature and of providence; though it were not by so immediate and express institution, as the Jewish state was of old under him, as their political sovereign.

* This answers to the apostle Peter's saying, *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether to the king,*

as supreme, or to governors, that are sent by him, (1 Pet. ii. 13.)

† The apostle does not here determine that any particular form of government, whether monarchy, a mixed monarchy, aristocracy, or a commonwealth, is one more than another of God; but only that civil government, for the good of the community, is his ordinance, whatever may be the particular form of it, so far, and no further than as it is fit and proper, and is managed to answer that end.

eth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

in a seditious and treasonable manner, endeavours to disturb, defame, and subvert it; or whoever, to gratify his own resentments, attempts in any capacity to fling all things into anarchy and confusion, he is disobedient to the authority of God †, who has ordained the magistratic power for the protection, safety and welfare of mankind: And they that rise up in rebellion against it, while the fundamental laws, and principal ends for which it was instituted, are pursued in its administration, and while nothing is enjoined repugnant to the commands of God, who is to be obeyed, rather than man, (*Acts* v. 29.) such persons will incur, and bring upon themselves condign punishment, even the severest judgment (*κρίμα*) either from the hands of their rulers, who *bear not the sword in vain*, (ver. 4.) or else from that God, who has ordained them to be guardians of the public peace and liberty, and will righteously animadvert upon the iniquity of rebels, in vindication of his own ordinance, either in this world or the next.

‡ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which

3 For temporal princes, (*αἱματωτοι*) according to the end of their institution, for which they must give an account to God, are obliged, not to punish men for any works that are good in themselves, (like those which the Christian religion enjoins toward God and man) and that are useful to the community, in which they behave as quiet and regular subjects; but they are appointed to restrain and correct actions that are immoral in their own nature, and are injurious and disturbing to the peace and safety of the commonwealth; and to cut off those persons, by banishment, or death, that are capital criminals, for the caution and preservation of others. If therefore there were no other reason for your orderly and dutiful subjection to the civil government, under which you live, than your own personal interest, would you not be afraid of provoking its terrible authority, and powerful indignation, which you must expect will fall upon you in case of disobedience and rebellion? But if you would have no cause of fearing any evil from the government, take care to lead a quiet

N O T E.

† The apostle Peter speaks of civil government, as the ordinance of man, (*1 Pet.* ii. 13.) because it is settled, as to its form and powers, and the persons that shall possess it, by the implicit, or explicit agreement, or consent of men: But our apostle here calls it the ordinance of God, because God, in the intimations of his providence, and in the natural reasonings and inclinations of mankind, has ordered that, by the intervention of men, some form of government should be establish-

ed in the hands of some person or persons among them, for the benefit of public society, and for the punishing of offenders against it, whose corruptions are too strong to be restrained by the fear of God, which they have put away from them. And that this is the view, in which the apostle speaks of government, as the ordinance of God, which ought not to be resisted, appears from what he adds in the following verses about the valuable ends of its institution.

which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same :

4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil be afraid ; for he beareth not the sword in vain : for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.

quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty, (1 Tim. ii. 2.) and to do that which is morally and politically good ; and then you may ordinarily hope for, and indeed ought to enjoy, the protection and favour, commendation and encouragement of public authority, instead of coming under its severe resentments.

4 For the civil magistrate, by the nature and constitution of his office, is God's deputy, whom he has authorized to suppress vice, immorality and prophaneness, to keep the public peace, to maintain natural, civil, and religious rights, and to encourage every thing that is virtuous and praise-worthy, for the advantage of all his good subjects : but if you violate the moral and political laws of his government, by doing any thing that has a tendency to dishonour, weaken, or destroy it, consider the dreadful consequence to yourself, your family and posterity, as well as to the whole community ; what miseries it may bring upon you and them ; and let the thought of that deter you from it, as ever you would be concerned for your own, and their prosperity and safety : For the sword of justice, to punish offenders, is not put into the magistrates hands by providence, like a mere glittering ensign of authority, to no manner of purpose, as though it were not to be used against the turbulent and disobedient : For he is ordained and deputed of God, not only for the praise of them that do well, but likewise for the punishment of evil doers, (1 Pet. ii. 14.) according to the commission which God, to whom vengeance primarily belongs, (chap. xii. 19.) has given him to support the authority of government, and inflict pains and penalties in executions of justice upon criminals, as far as any are found to be so by overt-acts, which are the only ones that can fall under the magistrates cognizance ; it being God's peculiar prerogative, to know, judge of, and punish for evil thoughts, as they lye merely in the heart.

5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

5 Ye are therefore obliged, not only in point of interest, to pay all due subjection to the magistrates authority, for fear of the punishment which he is able, and concerned to inflict upon the injurious, the refractory, and rebellious ; but also from a principle of religion, and conscience toward God, as acting in obedience to his ordination of magistracy for the preservation of common rights ; to his providence, which has lodged it in the hands of those that are set over you ; and to his demand of your dutiful subjection to them, as they are the public guardians of the state.

6 For, for this cause pay you tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

6 For this is the reason why ye also pay taxes and duties, that are laid upon you by the legislative power; and why every subject is bound, according to his station and circumstances, to contribute, by these means, to the support and dignity of the government, in return for the necessary care and pains, solicitude and fatigues, expence and dangers of those, that are employed in managing it to the advantage of the public: For they are God's vicegerents, by whom he rules nations and kingdoms, and whose very business it is, by virtue of their office, to lay themselves out continually, to the utmost of their power, for securing the rights and liberties of all their good subjects, and for punishing those that would invade them, or would injure the legislature, or their neighbours.

7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

7 Upon the whole then, See that ye make conscience of paying to all mankind, to supreme and subordinate magistrates, as well as others, whatsoever is due to them by divine and human laws, and by the just reasons of things, which require suitable compensations for value received: And as our Lord, in answer to those that asked him, *Whether it were lawful to give tribute to Caesar?* said, *Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's*, though he were neither of the *Jewish* nation, nor of their religion, (*Matth. xxii. 17, 21.*) so ye should not make any scruple, but think yourselves obliged, to pay such taxes, imposts, rates, and customs, without fraud or deceit, as are legally charged upon your persons, commodities, or estates, and are in right owing to him for his great expence and trouble in executing his high and important trust: And as, in this manner, ye are honestly and readily to contribute to the support of his government; so, that ye may think and speak of him suitable to his exalted station, Be afraid of provoking his anger; and labour to cultivate a becoming reverence and esteem of him in your minds; and, not only so, but honour him likewise in all outward expressions of respect, on account of his authority and dignity; this sort of homage being due to him, under the character of your political father and lord, as it is to your fleshly parents and masters, and indeed to every superior, in their respective places.

8 Owe no man any thing, but to love

8 Let none of you be backward, or behind hand, in paying the several debts of money, respect, or service, but now mentioned, (*ver. 7.*) or that are owing from you to any persons whatsoever, according to your various concernments with them, whether they be superiors, inferiors, or equals, and according to what has been already

love one another:
for he that loveth
another hath ful-
filled the law.

already insisted on, (*chap. xii. 9, 21.*) But, after all that ye have done, or can do, in equity toward them; remember there is one important, delightful, and comprehensive debt, which ye are always to be paying, and still owing, and never to think yourselves discharged from; and which, conscientiously attended to, will effectually dispose you to render to every one all his dues, according to the utmost of your power; and *that* is, to maintain a sincere and cordial love one to another, as becomes men and Christians, that ought to be ever desiring, consulting, and promoting each other's good by all proper means, and in all circumstances, as long as ye live: For the nature of love to fellow-creatures, in its due latitude and fervour, and as founded upon, and springing from our love to God, and from a sense of his love in Christ, to us, (*1 John iv. 7,—21.*) is so excellent, and sweetly powerful and engaging, that, as far as any one feels it glowing in his own bosom, and is found in the exercise of it, unto the producing of correspondent effects towards another, whom he considers in a view of kindness as his neighbour, (*ver. 9. 10.*) he has, so far, filled up (*παραπληροῖ*) the requirements of the second table of the moral law: And, were your love to one another perfect, your obedience to all its commands of that sort would be so too.

g For this,
Thou shalt not
commit adultery,
Thou shalt not
kill, Thou shalt
not steal, Thou
shalt

g For, to specify its principal duties in the following negative precepts, which include their contrary affirmatives, the tenor of them runs thus; You shall not be guilty, in heart or behaviour, of fornication, adultery, unnatural mixtures, or any sort of uncleanness; nor entice or draw others into them; but shall maintain an entire chastity and modesty in thoughts and desires, looks, words, and actions: You shall not unlawfully take away your own, or others lives; nor do any thing that tends towards it, by indulging wrath, envy, malice, and revenge, or any exorbitant passions; by intemperance in meats and drinks, or excess of any kind; nor by violent provocations, quarrels, duels, and causeless fightings, that may hurt, wound, and destroy yourselves or others; but shall carefully study and endeavour to do all that you justly may and can, to preserve, cherish, and defend your own and their lives, health, and strength, by a meek and patient, sober and peaceable, contented and beneficent behaviour: You shall not injure the property of others by forcible robbery, or secret theft, or purloining; by encouraging any to steal, or by knowingly receiving stolen goods; by fraud, cheating, knavery in contracts and commerce;

shalt not bear false witness; Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

by oppression, extortion, or unnecessary and vexatious law-suits; nor by any covetous desires or attempts to take, or withhold from others what is their right and due; but you ought to be faithful and just in all your dealings with mankind; and labour, by all lawful means, to procure, preserve, and promote their temporal prosperity, as well as your own: You shall not do any thing that is prejudicial to veracity and integrity between man and man, or to your neighbour's reputation or interest, by equivocations, lies, and slanders, backbiting, tale-bearing, or reviling; and especially not by perjuries and false depositions in courts of judicature; nor by concealing such truths as may be to the advantage of his character, and to the procuring of justice to his cause: nor shall you admit of any grudgings, envyings, or grievings in your heart at his credit, honour, and good name in the world; nor any way contribute to, no, nor so much as secretly wish, or take pleasure in, a blast upon them; but you must have the strictest regard to truth in all that you think, say, and do towards every one, whether friend or enemy; must entertain as charitable an opinion of him as the nature of things admit of; must freely own all that is good in him, and gently cover his infirmities, and faithfully vindicate his innocence under false accusations; and sincerely and heartily do what in you lyeth, to favour and support his good name, and righteous cause; to discountenance every false and injurious report, and to receive and spread, as occasions require, every good report concerning him, as you would concerning yourself: You shall not murmur, or be dissatisfied at those stations and worldly circumstances in which the providence of God has placed you, or for want of any good things that others are possessed of; nor repine, or be envious at any of their agreeable accommodations; nor ought you to have covetous and uneasy cravings in your own mind after their affluence, or any of their enjoyments, as wishing that, instead of being theirs, they might be your own; but you should humbly, quietly, and thankfully acquiesce in the wise and good, sovereign and holy disposals of Divine Providence toward yourself and them, and rejoice in your neighbour's prosperity, how necessitous and afflicted soever your own condition may be; and, instead of desiring to lessen his circumstances, you should be ready to do every thing you are capable of, to preserve and enlarge them, as if they were your own. And whatever other precept might be mentioned, as relating to second table duties,

and

and particularly to those that the *fifth* commandment* enjoins inferiors to pay to all their superiors, some of which were taken notice of but now, (*ver. 7.*) All these, put together, are summarily comprehended in, and may be reduced to this one head of account, (*ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ ἀλλήλου καὶ τοῦ πλησίτου*) You shall love all your fellow-creatures, and especially those that fear God, as sincerely and truly as yourself; and, from this generous principle, you should conscientiously act in all things toward them, as you would wish, and think reasonable for them to do toward yourself, were you in their circumstances, and they in your's.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

10 Where undissembled and fervent love reigns in the heart, it sweetly and powerfully restrains the man from desiring or designing, and from knowingly and willingly doing any thing that is mischievous to another; and it constrains him to perform the kindest offices to all, as occasions require, like the good *Samaritan*, who had compassion upon the wounded traveller, and treated him as if he had been his nearest friend and neighbour, though he was both a stranger, and a man of a different religion from himself, (*Luke x. 33, &c.*) we may therefore well conclude, that love to our neighbour, and especially to the household of faith, as resulting from love to God, is in its genuine nature, and correspondent actions, radically, intentionally, and constructively a compliance with, and will bring on an unreserved respect unto, all the duties of the second table of the law, which requires that no evil, but all good, should be done to others, even as to themselves.

11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for

11 And (*καὶ νῦν*) this comprehensive duty of love to our fellow Christians, and to all mankind, is to be cultivated with diligence, and without delay, as knowing, observing, and bearing in mind, that now, under our present trials, and under the light and grace, assistances and encouragements of the gospel, the proper time and hour, opportunity and season of our day is come, and is but short, in which we are loudly called to shake off sloth, indolence, and carnal security, and to rouse out of a supine, careless, and drowsy frame of spirit, and to be upon our watch, that we may not be found asleep when the Bridegroom comes, (*Matth. xxv. 5.*); but may awake to righteousness, and not sin against God, or others, (*1 Cor. xv. 34.*) directly contrary to that great principle

N O T E.

* What the apostle says, *ver. 7.* about paying tribute, custom, fear, and honour, to those to whom they are due, comes under the obligation of the *fifth* commandment, and

ibid., added to those which are recited in this ninth verse, takes in all the duties of the second table, as laid down in the decalogue, *Exod. xx. 12, &c.*

for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

principle of love, which is *the fulfilling of the law*, (ver. 10.); for we, who are true believers, shall not only be soon freed from the persecutions which the carnal *Jews* stir up against us; but a much greater salvation *, of which all temporal deliverances of the people of God are figures and emblems, and which they are looking, longing, and hoping for, draws on apace: Even a complete deliverance from all the imperfections and troubles of this present life, and from the wrath to come, together with an endless advancement to all possible blessedness and glory in the heavenly state, hastens towards us, or rather we are hastening towards it, so as to be every day approaching nearer and nearer to it, than we were when we first believed in the Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life; and therefore we should be the more patient and watchful under all our present trials, and the more vigorous and cheerful in dispatching our Christian course, as knowing that all its fatigues will soon be over-past, and crowned with immortal honour, rest, and joy.

11 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

12 The time, not only of *Jewish* persecutions, and of our various afflictions and trials; but also of our ignorance, unbelief and sinful ways, which on account of its uncomfortableness and unsuitness for service, may be compared to the darkness of the night; this deplorable night, some shadows of which will stretch over us, as long as we are in this imperfect world, is well-nigh wearing off; its former and worst part, which lay upon us, during our state of unregeneracy, is already past and gone; the day of gospel-light and holiness to *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, has begun to dawn in our souls, like the morning light, which shines more and more to the perfect day, (Prov. iv. 18.) and the day of our complete redemption from all darkness, sin, and sorrow, and of unclouded light and glory in a better world, is ready to break upon us, as well as the day of freedom from *Jewish* troubles, which will soon appear; that nation

N O T E.

* If, as some suppose, here is any reference to the deliverance of Christians from the persecutions of the *Jews*, that should cease at the general destruction which was soon coming upon that people, I would rather consider it as emblematical of a greater salvation than-as what is chiefly intended: For though by the national desolation which was brought upon them, they lost their power and influence for exciting troubles against the professors of Christ's name; yet the *heathen* persecutions, were afterwards as violent as that which had been stirred up by the *Jews*; and the apostle concludes his argument on

this head with an exhortation, ver. 14. to *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, &c. which must certainly have a respect to the spiritual and eternal salvation they were looking for: And as he had before represented the gospel-salvation, as already come to the *Gentiles*, to enrich and reconcile them, chap. xi. 11,—15. I cannot but apprehend that they too much narrow his design, who understand him only to mean, that a fuller spread of the gospel in the conversion of the *Gentiles* was at hand, through the near approach of the destruction of the *Jewish* church and nation.

nation being just on the point of falling into ruin, let it therefore be our care, that, by divine assistance, we may have no more fellowship with; but may utterly abhor and abandon, divest ourselves of, and put far away from us, all those sinful practices which may well be called works of darkness, as they proceed from the benighted obscurity and deep corruption of human nature, and tend to everlasting darkness and misery, and are so vile and shameful, as to be commonly transacted in the night, because they are not fit to be seen in the day-time: And as we profess ourselves to be Christians, that are *renewed in the spirit of our mind*, and engaged in a holy warfare, (*Eph. iv. 23. and vi. 12.*) let it be our great concern to put on such graces, and live in the daily exercise of them, as are grounded in knowledge, (*Col. iii. 10.*) and are like a robe of light for purity, excellence, and splendor, fit for the children of light to wear, when they go abroad in the day-time, and are exposed to open view; and which, like the bright and glittering armour that warriors put on, will be our defence in the day of battle, and will shine, at length, in all the lustre of the light of glory.

13 Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

13 In this view and prospect *, Let us take heed that our whole conversation and behaviour in the world be constantly, uniformly and progressively, (*1^{ου} γυμνασιον*) well adjusted in a decorous and becoming manner, answerable to the character of Christians, who have the advantage of the light of the gospel, and of the Spirit of God, to direct us in our way and walk, and whose actions will bear the severest examination and observation of others, and of our own consciences, as in the light of noon-day; let us labour, by the grace of God, that none of our time be spent like theirs, who are *drunken in the night*, (*1^η Θεσ. v. 7.*) or in any excess of eating and drinking, feasting and carousing, which inflame the blood, intoxicate the mind, and often carry people into all manner of revellings and debaucheries; nor let us ever be guilty of any sort of whoredoms, that are wont to be committed in bed chambers; or of any kind of immodest looks, words, gestures, actions, or dress, that have a tendency to excite impure desires, and unlawful propensions in ourselves, or others; nor let us ever suffer ourselves to give into angry contentions, quarrels, and scoldings with any one whomsoever, much less with our Christian brethren;

N O T E.

* The famous *Augustine*, as is remarked by several commentators, was converted by reading, and reflecting, upon this text.

ren; nor into grudgings or repinings at their prosperity and happiness; or secret wishes, much less endeavours, to lessen them. As these are all *works of darkness*, (ver. 12.) the former of which naturally lead on to the rest; and as they are all forbidden in the law, (ver. 9.) let us never give way to either of them.

13 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

14 But, on the contrary, as ever ye would live like children of the day, that are awakened out of sleep, and would expect the salvation that is continually approaching to believers, (ver. 11.) see that ye be all over covered with Christ, as with a garment, and be found in him: Put on his righteousness, by daily renewed acts of faith, for your discharge from all transgressions of the law, and title to eternal salvation; put on also his holy image, by suitable exercises of every grace, and by a religious walk and conversation, in imitation of him, to prove the sincerity of your faith, and to make you meet for the inheritance of the saints in light; and put on a becoming profession of Christ, that shall be visible to all around you. In this manner, be ye continually receiving, owning, honouring, and making use of the Lord Jesus Christ, in all his offices, as anointed of God to guide and govern, as well as save you; *Be diligent herein, that ye may be found of him in peace*, (2 Pet. iii. 14.) And take heed that ye never inordinately consult, care, or provide for the body, to the neglect of the concerns of your precious souls; much less forecast in your minds to do any thing, that may minister fuel for the corruption of your hearts, to promote, indulge, and gratify their sensual and sinful inclinations and desires, or to *fulfil the lusts of the flesh* in any instance whatsoever. (Gal. v. 16.)

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What a wise and important appointment of Providence is civil government, for the good of mankind; for a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well! And what a friend is Christian religion to its happiness, peace, and order! It directs rulers how to answer the valuable ends of the high trust which God has committed to them; and teaches subjects to yield all dutiful obedience to them, for conscience sake, as well as for escaping the vengeance of the sword of justice, and reaping the benefits of government. While magistrates rule for the general good of the community, according to the laws and constitution of the state, we ought to reverence and honour them in their public character, as the ministers and ordinance of God for good, and to pay the customs and tributes that are their due, as an equitable and grateful return for their care, trouble, and expence in protecting us, and our rights and properties: Public as well as private debts, ought to be faithfully discharged; only we are never to think that we have so fully paid the debt of love one to another, as to be under no further obligations to it. What an amiable and constraining principle is true Christian love! It inclines and engages us to fulfil all the duties of morality towards our neighbour; it restrains us from adultery, murder, theft, falsehood, and lying, and

and from all covetous desires of any man's goods and enjoyments; and it obliges and disposes us to a performance of all the contrary duties, yea, of every thing contained in the second table of the law. But, alas! how imperfect is the present state of things! The best that can be said of it is, that the night is far spent, and the day is at hand; and that complete salvation is continually approaching nearer and nearer to every true believer. How should these thoughts excite Christians to shake off sloth, and renounce all works of darkness; such as rioting and drunkenness, uncleanness and wantonness, strife and envy; and to walk honourably, as becomes children of the light and of the day, and as those that put on Christ, and the illustrious armour with which he has furnished them, to guard against all evil; and that are careful never to do any thing to indulge the flesh, and fulfil its sinful desires!

C H A P. XIV.

The apostle cautions Jewish converts against judging, and Gentile believers against despising, one the other, on account of their contrary opinions and practices relating to such indifferent things as ceremonial meats and days, 1,—13. and exhorts the Gentiles to take heed of giving offence in their use of such things, 14,—23.

TEXT.

HIM that is weak in the faith receive you, but not to doubtful disputations.

PARAPHRASE.

WHEREAS there are different opinions among you, about some rites and institutions of the Mosaic law, insomuch that Jewish converts look upon them as ordinances of God, that are still to be observed, because they were formerly of his appointment, and they themselves have been taught, and used to practise them from their childhood up; and Gentile believers, being led further into their Christian liberty, are persuaded that the gospel-dispensation lays no obligation upon them to pay any regard to those things, especially considering that they never were under that law. This being the state of the case between you, I earnestly intreat the Gentile converts among you to bear with, and condescend to the weakness, prejudices, and scruples of your Jewish brethren, that are not so well satisfied about the nature of Christian liberty, and the abolition of those antient rites; and not to object against them on this account; but to receive them into your friendship, affection, and communion, without any coolness, or disrespect, for their different thoughts and reasonings about things, which, for the present, may be left as matters of indifference, while their temple is yet standing; and without troubling them with perplexing disputes of little moment, such as relate to ceremonial meats and days, and things of a like trivial nature, which tend rather to puzzle and disquiet their minds, than to godly edifying.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another who is weak, eateth herbs.

2 As to *meats*, the *Gentile* convert indeed, (*μ.*) who is well grounded in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, is satisfied in his own conscience, that there is now no religious distinction of them, as of old among the *Jews*, and that he may lawfully, and without scruple, eat any kind of food that is sold in the market, and set before him, (*1 Cor. x. 25, 27.*) *. But (*β.*) another, who was converted from among the *Jews*, and through the prejudices of education, and the obscurity of his light, is defective, and mistaken in this point of Christian liberty, and is even offended, and stumbles at it; he thinks it unlawful for him to eat any sort of food that was forbidden by the law of *Moses*, or any meat that was not killed in a legal manner, by pouring out the blood, (*Lev. xvii. 10,—14.*); and lest he should sin unawares, by partaking of such entertainments, as are promiscuously used among the *Gentiles*, without any regard to the different sorts of flesh, or different manner of dressing it, which are allowed, or disallowed, by that law; he confines himself, especially when he takes a meal with *them*, to the eating of herbs, as *Daniel* and his companions did, in *Babylon*, to the eating of pulse. (*Dan. i. 12.*)

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

3 In this case, let Christian charity and forbearance be exercised on both sides. As persons of superior light are too prone to despise others; let the believing *Gentile*, who, being fully instructed in his Christian liberty, can, with a good conscience, eat any thing that Providence affords for the sustenance of nature, be upon his guard, lest he pride himself in his knowledge, and think meanly of his brother, and treat him with contempt, as a poor, superstitious, over-nice, humourfome and weak creature, that, needlessly indeed, and yet conscientiously, abstains from such meats, as were deemed unclean under the law: And, on the contrary, as persons of weak, narrow, and prejudiced, though honest minds, are most apt to be severely uncharitable to others, that differ from them, though but in trifling matters; let the believing *Jew*, who, for want of better light, about the liberty of the gospel-state, scruples eating some kinds of meat, take heed that he be not censorious of his brother, who, with a good conscience, freely eats them, and

N O T E.

* That thought they might eat all sorts of food, which is here meant by *all things*, were, doubtless, mostly converts from among the *Gentiles*; and they, who scrupled it, were mostly those that were converted from among the *Jews*: Though it is not im-

probable, but that some of the *Jewish* believers might be so far enlightened in the doctrine of Christian liberty, as to eat them; and some of the *Gentiles* might be persuaded by *Jewish* exiles to think it unlawful so to do.

and that he do not condemn him, as a loose, unguarded, irreligious professor, though he maintains all the essential and important articles of the Christian faith, and has a sincere respect to every moral precept: For, whatever others may judge of him †, God has made him accepted in the Beloved, has taken him into his favour and family, and admitted him to all the privileges and blessings of his church and people, without any regard to ceremonial observances.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth: yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

4 Since God has received him, who art thou, a poor sinful, ignorant, and fallible mortal, that you should assume to yourself an authority of sitting in judgment upon his conscience, and of passing a sentence of condemnation upon his state, for using a liberty which he is satisfied his Lord allows him, as tho' you were to determine, whether he is sincere, and shall have the privileges of Christ's house, as one accepted of him here, and whether he shall be acquitted and owned of him in the great day of account, or not? (This would be like taking upon you, to judge whether the domestic servant, (*οικετης*) who is not your's, but another man's property, shall be approved of by him, as one of his family, or not, which you have nothing to do with:) He is accountable, not to you, but only to his own Lord and Master, even Christ, (*Matth. xxiii. 10. and John xiii. 13.*) whose judgment alone he must abide by: Nor is his state to be decided by your opinion of him; but he must be acquitted, or cast, at Christ's bar, who, in opposition to men, has the sole right of judging him; and (*sc*) God having received him, (*ver. 3.*) whatever you may think of him, (*σαινους*) he shall be established in the faith and fellowship, hope, comfort, and holiness of the gospel, and shall stand with boldness in the day of judgment: For that God, who has taken him into his house and covenant and will faithfully perform his promises to every true believer, is able to keep him from falling, and to present him faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. (*Jude, ver. 24.*)

5 One man esteemeth one day above

5 Again, as to ceremonial days *, that were ordered to be kept holy under the *Mosaic* dispensation, such as the

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† God has received him, some think relates to him that eats not, as well as to him that eats. But I apprehend that the thread of discourse carries it only to him that eats: For he is the nearest antecedent; and the expositulation in the next verse is with him that judgeth; which plainly points out the believing scrupulous Jew, whom the apostle here cautions against

judging him that eats; and so he goes on to speak to the Jewish converts.

* We are not to suppose, that what is here said about the distinction of days, is to be understood as if it were an indifferent matter, whether any weekly sabbath were to be regulated, and preferred to other days, or not: For this I take to be of moral obligation, not

above another : another esteems it every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

the merely *Jewish* festivals; one person indeed, (ver. 5.) as is mostly the case of the *Jewish* converts, accounts and determines in his own thoughts, that these are sacred, and ought to be religiously observed, in distinction from common days, according to the *Levitical* law : (See the note on ver. 2.) But another person (ver. 6.) thinks, with the *Gentile* converts, that, under the gospel-state, no days are to be ceremonially distinguished from others, as they were under the typical dispensation, which is now at an end ; but that, in the ordinary course of things, every day, which Christ has not distinguished for sacred use, is to be esteemed and employed, one as much as another, for fulfilling the various civil, moral, and religious duties of common life. Now as to such sort of things as these, upon which no great stress is to be laid at present, considering all circumstances on both sides ; let every one seriously weigh them, and determine for himself about them, according to the best light he can get from the word of God ; leaving others to judge for themselves, and to do what their consciences tell them is their duty.

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord : and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that

6 To dispose you to a becoming Christian temper one towards another, under your different sentiments and practices, with relation to all these ceremonial observances, it is to be considered, and charitably to be believed, that the converted *Israelite*, who thinks himself obliged to keep any of the *Jewish* festivals, doth it from a principal of conscience toward God, in obedience

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the foot of the fourth commandment, which enjoins, in general, that a *weekly sabbath* be kept holy to the Lord, as well as that the *seventh day*, in particular, should continue to be observed by the *Jews* to that purpose throughout the *Mosaic* dispensation, to which the delivering of the law at mount *Sinai* belonged : And as what Christ, the Lord of the sabbath did, in transferring it from the seventh, to the first day of the week, made no alteration of the general command, *Remember the sabbath-day to keep it holy*, (Exod. xx. 8.) so neither the *Jewish*, nor *Gentile* Christians denied the obligation to observe a weekly sabbath ; and therefore it could not be said of either of them, that they *esteemed every day alike*, though the *Jewish* converts might be for retaining the *seventh*, and these of the *Gentiles* were for celebrating the *first* day of the week, as the Christian sabbath. This was accordingly the usual day of their stated assemblies for the worship of God, and was known among them by the name of the *Lord's day*, in like manner, and for like rea-

sons, as the ordinance of breaking bread was called the *Lord's supper*. (see the note on Acts xx. 6.) Nor are the days here referred to, to be understood of religious fasts, whether public or private, on special important occasions : For it is not to be supposed, that either of these parties of Christians thought, that no difference was to be made between those solemn days and others ; since the *Pharisees* and *John's* disciples fasted often, and our Lord himself not only gave directions to his disciples for fasting, but said, that, after his departure from them, they should be obliged to such religious exercises, *Math. vi. 16. — 18. and ix. 15.* The days therefore here intended, relate to the *Jewish* festivals, so far forth as they were of a ceremonial and typical nature, but were still thought to be obligatory by many of the believing *Jews*, while the *Gentile* Christians took them to be abolished : Accordingly the distinction of days is here annexed to, and put in the same rank with that of meats, which were prohibited by the ceremonial law.

that eateth, eateth to the Lord; for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

ence to what he takes to be still his command, that he may thereby glorify him, and particularly in honour to our Lord Jesus Christ *; as supposing that he has confirmed all his antient institutions which he delivered to *Israel* by the hand of *Moses*: And on the contrary, the converted *Gentile*, who doth not observe any of those days, proceeds upon a like principle of conscience toward God, with a view to his glory, and particularly to the honour of the Lord Christ; as believing that, by his authority, the obligation to keep such days is now laid aside; and that to think otherwise would be a practical, though undesigned, denial of the liberty of the gospel-state, and of Christ's having come to put an end to all typical and ceremonial rites. In like manner, it is to be remembered, that the *Gentile* believer, who, having received light concerning his Christian liberty, eats any sort of meats, without scruple, doth it with a sincere aim at the glory of God, and particularly of Christ, who is Lord of all; as believing that he would have him assert this privilege: For, in testimony of his being well satisfied that he herein doth right, he religiously asks a blessing on his food, of what kind soever it be, and gives thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Father by him, for the great goodness that has provided it, and allowed him freely to eat of it, as may be most suited to the necessity, convenience, and innocent delight of life: And the less enlightened Christian, who scruples eating indifferently all sorts of meat, abstains from those that were prohibited in the law of *Moses*, with an upright intention of glorifying God, and our Lord Jesus, the immediate giver of that law, by submitting to his authority, who once forbade the use of some meats, and seems, to him, not to have revoked the prohibition; and as an evidence of his sincerity herein, he praises the name of the Lord for giving him enough of other sorts of food, and for preserving him from eating such as he thinks would be a defilement to him; and he thankfully accepts, and begs of God to bless those provisions to him which he is allowed to eat of: and so they both, aiming at the glory of God, and of the great Redeemer, ought to bear with one another, in their different opinions and practices, as to these little points, and receive each other as brethren.

N O T E.

7 For

* To the Lord seems here, and in ver. 8, p. to mean to the Lord Christ; and as he, appearing under the character of the *Jehovah* of *Israel*, delivered the law to *Moses*, (see the note on *Acts* xii. 39.) to God and the Lord, in this

verse, may be considered as terms of the same import, to signify the only true God, and both of them as applicable to Christ, who is the God to whom Christians give thanks, as well as to the Father by him.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

7 For as no one ought, so none of us, who are true believers in Christ, dares to live, as if he were his own lord and master, so as to make his own humour, or private views, in these, any more than in other cases, the governing end of his life; no, nor to give way to influence from such mean, low, and selfish motives in religious concerns: And as no man ought, so no real Christian desires, to die, merely to get rid of present troubles; nor doth he aim at only leaving a good name behind him, among his friends and party, at death; no, far be it from Christians of any denomination, to think of living or dying at such a rate.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord: and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

8 For whether we, who are real converts, live a longer or shorter time, it is, as it ought to be, in obedience to the will and command of our Lord and Saviour, and with an aim at his glory, that we may serve and honour him, in all that we think and say, suffer and do: And whether we be cut off by a natural, or violent death, it is with resignation to the will and appointment of the Lord Christ, who died for us; with a fiducial commitment of our departing spirits into his hands; and with a desire that we may glorify him, and leave a testimony to the truth and excellence of Christian religion, and to the power of his grace, in our dying moments, and may go to be with him, to behold his glory: Whether therefore we continue to live in this world, or be called, sooner or later, in any manner whatsoever, to die out of it, we are Christ's property and devoted servants, at his dispose; and are enabled to rely entirely upon him, to approve ourselves to him, and to glorify him with our bodies and spirits, which are his; and so whether we be *Jewish* or *Gentile*, weaker or stronger believers, it hereby appears whose we are, and whom we serve, and that for us to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

9 For this is the very end which our Lord Jesus had in view, and which was designed of God the Father, to be answered by him when he laid down his life as an atoning sacrifice for sin, and rose from the dead to be exalted to his throne, and when he accordingly lived again (*anastasis*) in the heavenly state to secure his purchase, and take possession in human nature, of that glory which he had with the Father before the world was, (*John xvii. 5.*); the very end, I say, of all this was, that he, in his office-capacity, as head over all things to the church, might have an absolute, universal, and sovereign dominion over them that are dead, and them that are, or ever shall be alive upon earth,

and might have the ordering of all things that relate to every ones living and dying, and to the eternal consequences of both; and especially that he might maintain his peculiar property, and be glorified, in those that the Father has given him, by supporting them under the *stroke*, and delivering them from the *sting* of death, and by receiving their souls, and afterwards raising their bodies, to an immortal state of blessedness; as well as by influencing, governing, and disposing of them for his own glory in this world, and reaping the everlasting honours, that are due to him from them, and on their account, in the world to come.

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

10 But still further to enforce the caution that has been already given, (*ver.* 3.) Why should any of you, who cannot get over your scruples about meats and days, judge and condemn your Christian brother, who can, as though he were a mere libertine and presumptuous professor, only because he is satisfied that he need not make any difference in these things? Or, on the other hand, Why should such of you, as think it your duty to make use of your Christian liberty, with respect to these things, despise any one of your brethren in the Lord, whose conscientious scruples about them still hang upon him? Why should you disdain him, as though he were a poor deluded bigot, not worth your notice? What room can there be for either of these unfriendly and unchristian ways of treating one another; Ye certainly therein go beyond your sphere, and take a judgment upon you, which do not belong to you; and which ye ought to be afraid of rashly going into: For both the strong and weak, the despiser and the despised, the censurer and the censured; yea, whatever our character and conduct be, all and every one of us must ere long be brought before the awful tribunal of Christ, to take our trial at his bar, where all things will be called over again; and he, as Lord and Judge of all, will set them in a just light, and pass a decisive sentence for, or against us, accordingly, to our inexpressible happiness, or confusion for ever.

11 For it is written,

11 For in an antient prophecy of Christ, (*Isa.* xlv. 23.) where he is introduced under the character of *Jehovah*, to assure us of his being a divine person*, we find

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* The apostle here plainly intimates, that what was said in *Isa.* xlv. 23. is to be applied to Christ. And if we look into the prophecy itself, we shall find that in the next preceding, and the two following verses, the very person, who is brought in as making this so-

lenn declaration, speaks of himself in distinction from all idols, as the only true God, who says, to all the ends of the earth, *Look unto me, and be ye saved*; and is spoken of under the character of that *Jehovah* in whom we have righteousness and strength, even in him.

ten. *As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.*

find words to this effect, which are recorded, as uttered by, and with relation to himself, I, speaking after the manner of men, have sworn by myself, to shew that the decree is irreversible, that as surely as I am the only living and true God, who necessarily, essentially, and eternally have life in myself, and am the fountain and author of all life to others, the whole human race shall be brought into such an entire subjection to me, whether they will or not, in their final appearance at my bar, as is signified by bowing the knee, in token of humble homage, and by swearing to me, and thereby owning me with the tongue, as the great God and judge of all, to whom they are accountable, and by whom their eternal state must be decided.

11 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

12 From hence then it plainly appears, that as every individual of mankind, of what character, nation, or profession soever he be; so every one of us, in particular, must be called to an account, not for the mistakes or miscarriages of others, but for his own faith and practice, which he shall be obliged to answer for at the judgment-seat of Christ, (2 Cor. v. 10.) who himself is God, and by whom, in his office-capacity, God the Father will judge the whole world.

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that

13 Let none of us therefore presume any longer to invade Christ's prerogative, or anticipate his judgment, by taking upon us to censure and condemn one another. But †, to lead you into a much better way of judging, let those of you, that can use your Christian liberty with a good conscience, think and determine (*examine*) in your own minds, that no one ought to indulge to so free a use of what may be in itself lawful, as thereby to grieve, ensnare,

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him to whom it is said, *Men shall come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed*; and in this Lord, or *Yehovah*, all the seed of Israel shall be justified, and shall glory. All which passages are to exactly answered in the New Testament-account of the characters sustained, and benefits brought in by Christ, and of the regards that are to be paid to him, as to leave no reasonable ground to doubt but that they belong to him. (See my Discourses on *Jesus Christ God-Man*, pag. 59, —55, &c.) And so, taking the whole together, we have here a strong attestation to the proper divinity of this great Judge of the world, who *swore by himself*, which is, in effect, the same thing as swearing by his life, or saying, *As I live, unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear*, by way of confession or acknowledgment of his absolute sovereignty and supreme dominion, that is, every one, either freely, or by constraint,

shall pay him divine homage, which is signified by *bowing the knee*, and *swearing to him*; and this will be most eminently, publicly, and completely verified in the universal subjection of all mankind to Christ at the day of judgment. Let me also take this occasion to observe, that as God's swearing by himself, is often expressed by his saying, *As I live*; they approach too near an oath, peculiarly proper to God, who in common conversation say, *As I live*, or *as I am alive*, or *as I am a living man*, or the like, to gain credit to their words.

† This ought to have been made the beginning of a verse: for here the apostle enters upon his caution, particularly of the *Gentile* converts, against an unguarded and unseasonable use of their Christian liberty, to the offence of their *Jewish* brethren, that would be stumbled at it.

no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is nothing unclean of itself*: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

ensnare, and lay an obstacle in the way of his Christian brother, who would be offended at it; or to draw him into sin by tempting him, either to go into uncharitable censures, or to take a liberty of doing that with a doubting conscience, which another doth with a well satisfied mind.

14 For my part, I clearly understand, and am thoroughly persuaded upon the authority of the Lord Jesus, (*Mark vii. 19.*) and from the nature and design of his death, which was to reconcile both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to God, and take away all religious distinction between them; and to remove the curse that the fall had brought upon creature-enjoyments, in token of which the use of some meats was forbidden in the ceremonial law; and I am fully assured, by special revelation from Christ to me, that now, under the glorious liberty of the gospel, *every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving*, (*1 Tim. iv. 4.*) and that no sort of food is, in its own nature, morally unclean, no, nor any longer ceremonially so; Christ having put an end to the distinction of clean and unclean meats, to signify that all things are now pure to him that believes, (*Tit. i. 15.*) and I am satisfied, that there is now no distinction, as there was under the Old Testament-dispensation, between clean and unclean nations; as if either of them, as nations, were to be excluded from God's covenant, while others of them are admitted into it. Yet as, in certain circumstances, there may arise a moral defilement to a man's conscience, even by doing what is in itself lawful; so if any one really thinks in his heart, that this of the other sort of food is still forbidden, and ought not to be received, he, by eating it, would violate the dictates of his own conscience, and so defile it, by doing what it tells him is offensive to God.

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

15 But, on the other hand, supposing that any of you are ever so well satisfied, on the gospel-principles, that you may innocently eat of any sort of food that comes in your way, provided *it be received with thanksgiving, and be sanctified by the word of God and prayer*, (*1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.*) yet if your Christian brother, tho', through *Jewish* prejudices, he be ever so weak and mistaken in his conscientious scrupulosity, is troubled and offended at your eating it, and you, knowing this, will nevertheless persist in the use of your liberty, and *that* in his presence; you therein do not behave with such tenderness and condescension towards him, as the great law of love requires; but you live and act in direct contradic-

contradiction to it, as that obliges you to do all you can for your neighbour's good, especially in spiritual and eternal concerns. Let this thought prevail upon you to wave the unreasonable use of your liberty in such circumstances, that you may not stagger the faith^a, and wound the conscience of your Christian brother, nor destroy his peace and comfort, or draw him into sin, and so do what has a direct moral tendency, in its own nature, to bring everlasting perdition upon one to whom Christ has shewn such superlative love, as to lay down his own life, which he did as a ransom for the weakest, as well as strongest believers.

16 Let not
then your good
be evil spoken of.

16 'Take heed then that your liberty, in eating formerly forbidden meats, though it be good and allowable in itself, and in some cases may be justly insisted on, be not exposed to censure and reproach, and stigmatized as mere licentiousness, or made a bone of contention, and an occasion of speaking evil of Christianity, itself, thro' the imprudence, unseasonableness, and mischief of your using it, to the scandalizing of your weaker brethren.

17 For the
kingdom of God
is not meat and
drink, but righte-
ousness and peace,
and

17 For after all, the nature, glory, and blessedness of the gospel-dispensation, or of that kingdom of grace which God has now erected in the hearts of his people, in order to his training them up for his heavenly kingdom, do not consist of such circumstantial, external, and carnal things, as using or refusing different sorts of meat and drink, according to the settlements made in the *Mosaic law*, which were to be observed only *till the time of reformation*, (Heb. ix. 10.): No; but it is of a much more excellent, pure, and spiritual constitution, which consists of the righteousness of faith, and true holiness in heart and life; and of a solid peace in our own souls, and a peaceable temper and carriage towards

N O T E.

^a Some who understand this passage, as relating to eternal destruction, suppose, that by him, for whom Christ died, is meant only a professing Christian, who, in the judgment of charity, is to be deemed one for whom Christ died; and that such an one may be destroyed, though our Lord says of his sheep, for whom he laid down his life, *they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand*, (John x. 28.) But the destruction here spoken of, seems rather, from the context, to relate to the destroying of a brother's peace, than of his soul: For, in the former part of this verse, it is called *grieving him with meat*; and in ver. 20, 21, it is represented, as doing things, whereby *he stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak, and so destroying the work of God*, in opposition to follow-

ing after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another, (ver. 10.) And, if we compare this with the apostle's discourse in a somewhat parallel case, 1 Cor. viii. 8, — 13. we may observe, that his argument, about eating things offered to idols, turns just in the same manner there, as it doth here, upon mistaking and wounding the conscience of a weak brother: But, even admitting that he had a reference in both these places to eternal destruction, his caution may be understood only as levelled against doing what, in the nature of things, has a tendency to the ruin of a soul for whom Christ died, and what would hinder it, were not the grace of God to prevent the natural effect of such an uncharitable behaviour towards him.

and joy in the
Holy Ghost.

towards others, under a sense of God's being at peace with us, through the blood of Jesus; and of those supernatural and divine consolations which the Holy Spirit is the author of, as he *spreads abroad the love of God in our hearts*, and *witnesses with our spirits, that we are the children and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*, (chap. v. 5. and viii. 16, 17.)

18 For he
that in the things
serves Christ, is
acceptable to God,
and approved of
men.

18 For whatever a man's opinion, and correspondent practice may be, about meats and drinks, and things indifferent, he that, with a due regard to these substantial points of vital religion, behaves as a faithful servant of Christ, in subjection and obedience to him, in a dependence on him, and with a view to his glory, is, both as to his person and services, (*εὐαριστος*) well-pleasing to God, in and through the Son of his love; and one of such an evangelical spirit and conversation is both (*δοκιμος*) proved to be a sincere Christian, and approved of, as such, in the judgment of all good and wise men of every denomination, whether he observe ceremonial rites or not.

19 Let us there-
fore follow after
the things which
make for peace,
and things where-
with one may e-
dify another.

19 Since therefore all ceremonial things are but of trifling account, in comparison with these great importances of Christianity: Let us, instead of laying any stress upon them, or going into uncharitable heat, feuds, and disputes about them, and practices of them, study and pursue such things as, in their own nature and circumstances, tend to cultivate spiritual peace and prosperity in our own souls, and an amicable temper and conduct towards our brethren in Christ; and let it be our great concern and care to propagate such opinions and practices, as may be for the building up and strengthening and encouraging one another in faith and love, and in the hope and holiness of the gospel.

20 For meat
destroy not the
work of God.
All things indeed
are pure; but if it
evil

20 Take heed that for the sake of so inconsiderable a thing, as eating certain sorts of meat, you do not obstruct and ruin that harmony, love, and peace, spiritual edification and comfort, (see the note on *ver. 15.*) which are noble branches of the work of God's Spirit and grace, and which he delights in, and produces by means of, and according to the great design of the gospel. If any of you are so stiff as to insist, that it is not fit or reasonable for you to abridge yourself of a liberty in this case, which Christ has given you: I grant indeed, as may be seen from what has been already said, (*ver. 14.*) that every kind of food may now be eaten without defilement to the conscience, provided it be done in a lawful manner: And I farther own, that to the true believer in Christ, they are all cleansed from
the

evil for that man who eateth with offence.

the curse which sin had brought upon earthly enjoyments. But yet it is a plain abuse of Christian liberty, and is very sinful and injurious in that man who has so little love and compassion for a tender spirited brother, as to indulge himself in eating one or another sort of meat, when he knows that his so doing is matter of grief and stumbling to him.

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

21 In such circumstances, it is kind and prudent, commendable and right, well-pleasing to God, and shews an excellent spirit, and is indeed a fulfilling of the great law of love, so far to wave a liberty, which is allowable in itself, as not only to abstain from such meats as were formerly forbidden, but even from any sort of flesh, while other convenient food may be had, and not to drink wine without a necessity for it; no, nor to do any thing whatsoever, that they may be avoided without violating some law of God and nature: It is morally good, I say, to refrain from all these things, when by indulging to them your Christian brother would be hindered, thrown down, and wounded, in his way and walk before God, like one that has a stumbling block laid before him*; or would be discouraged and troubled, and brought into danger of being prejudiced against the pure unmixed gospel itself, on that account; or would be enfeebled and staggered in his faith and hope, and be tempted to sin, either by rashly condemning others for doing what he takes to be unlawful, or by doing the same thing himself, with a doubting conscience, under the influence of their example.

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God.

22 Upon the whole then, is one or another among you fully persuaded in your own mind, on the foot of the gospel-revelation, that you may lawfully eat of every kind of food, and are not tied to Jewish ordinances about meats, any more than about days? this persuasion of your Christian liberty is right: Hold it fast†, with respect to yourself, and your own use of it, on all proper occasions, to the glory of God, with a sincere conscience

N O T E S.

* Dr Whitby, in his notes on this verse, and others there referred to, would have it, that the words (*ἵνα οὐκ ὀνειδίζῃς τὸν ἀδελφόν σου ὅτι ἐσθίει καὶ πίνει*) here rendered *stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak*, signify to stumble and fall to one's ruin, or to perish. But though some times they may be, they are far from being always used in that sense, as appears from ver. 1, 2. and chap. iv. 19. *Matth.* iv. 6. and xxvi. 31. *John* xvi. 1. *2 Cor.* xi. 29. and xii. 10. and xiii. 3, 4, 9, with several other places. See also the note on ver. 15.

† To thyself, (*καὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ*.) The preposition here used, rarely signifies so, but very

often concerning, as concerning, as pertaining to, or in respect of, and thus it is rendered, *Rom.* i. 3. iv. 1. ix. 5. and xi. 28. *2 Cor.* xi. 21. *Phil.* iv. 11. and in several other places. And after this manner it might have been rendered with the greatest propriety and advantage here: For I can scarcely think, that the apostle advised *Gentile* believers to conceal their sentiments about Christian liberty, and keep them entirely to themselves, as according to our translation of this passage, the generality of interpreters have been led to understand it.

God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

science towards him, as in his sight and presence, and as a rule to you, though not to them that are otherwise minded. That Christian is happy indeed, he possesses his own soul in peace, and is acceptable to God, in his conduct, whose own conscience do not reproach and condemn him, but is clearly satisfied, both as to the lawfulness and expediency of what he allows himself to do in every instance, and particularly in this of eating, or not eating what is set before him.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

23 But on the contrary, he who, in his own opinion, discerns a difference between meats that are lawful and unlawful *; nay, he that staggers in his mind about eating them, and is doubtful whether it be lawful or not, is condemned in his own conscience, and by the word of God, with relation to what he doth therein, if notwithstanding this persuasion, or these scruples, he ventures to eat of it; the reason is, because he is far from being satisfied that God has given him any warrant for so doing, or that it is not displeasing to him: For, in all matters of a religious nature, whatever we do not believe has a foundation in, and is authorized by, the word of God, is very sinful for us to practise or comply with, as it is a contempt of his authority; a disregard to what we profess to be our only rule of faith and duty; and a violation of those sacred dictates of conscience, which ought to restrain us from every thing that we fear will not be approved of in the day of judgment.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

How ready should Christians be to hold communion one with another, notwithstanding little differences between them, like those that relate to ceremonial days and meats which are set aside by the gospel-dispensation, and does not affect the vitals of religion! They should take heed of an uncharitable, disdainful, and censorious spirit; but the sincere believer may comfort himself in this, that God has received him, and is able to make him stand, though others may despise, or judge him. How much better therefore is it to approve ourselves to God and our own consciences, than to be approved of men! For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. And O what awful thoughts should we have of the Lord Jesus, as the great God, as well as Judge of all, who has sworn by himself, that every knee shall bow to him; and to whom every one must give an account.

N O T E.

* The word here used for him that doubts, (ὁ διακρινόμενος) is sometimes rendered to discern, or to make a difference, as in *Matt. xvi. 3.* and *Jude, ver. 22.* and at others to stagger or waver, as in *Rom. iv. 20.* and *James i. 6.* Both these senses may be taken in here; though the last seems to be principally intended, as it stands opposed to him that has faith, *ver. 22.* and is the same with him that is weak, in opposition to those that are strong, *chap. xv. 1.* And the word, (κατακρινεται) translated is damned, properly

signifies is condemned, that is, by his own conscience, when he doth what *that* tell him, or at least suspects, is wrong. But this has no reference to eternal damnation, any further than all assents against conscience exact one to it: And though many serious Christians have raised discouraging scruples to themselves, by applying this passage to the Lord's supper, it is undeniably plain, that it has no relation to that ordinance, but only to eating such meats as the apostle had all along been discoursing about.

count of himself ! And in view of an impartial and decisive judgment to come ; how tender and condescending should we be to our brethren, that are apt to be offended on every little occasion for want of better light ! It is an high aggravation of guilt to do any thing, that, in its own nature ; tends to the discomfort and ruin of the weakest of those for whom Christ died, and to the disconcerting of the work of God in them ; since they have as sure an interest in the Redeemer as the strongest saint upon earth. The weak believer should not judge the strong, nor the strong despise the weak ; each remembering that what is not of faith is sin : Nor should either of them behave so imprudently as to give occasion for their good to be evil spoken of ; but happy is he, who condemns not himself in that which he allows himself to do. How concerned should Christians of all ranks and denominations be, to act upon principles of faith, and a good conscience, in all things, and to promote each others edification and peace ! O how excellent are the blessings of Christ's kingdom, which consists, not in external ritual things, like meats and drinks, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, And how preferable is his service to all others ! It is acceptable to God, and approved of all good men ; and, in the performance of this, we are called to live and die, not to ourselves, but to Christ, whose we are, and whom we ought to serve, in consideration of his having died and rose, and now living in heaven, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living.

C H A P. XV.

The apostle gives directions to stronger believers how to behave toward the weak, 1,—6. And to all of them to receive one another as brethren, 7,—12. And draws to a conclusion of the main body of his epistle, 13,—33.

TEXT.

WE then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

PARAPHRASE.

FROM what has been said, in the foregoing discourse, about the charitable and cautious use of Christian liberty, relating to *Jewish* meats and days, it plainly follows, that those of us who, like the believing *Gentiles*, are established in the faith of the gospel, with respect to the whole of that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and who have arrived to any considerable measures of knowledge and grace, are bound in duty to have a compassionate and tender regard to our Christian brethren, whose faith is staggering, and whose judgment and other spiritual attainments are but small. We should be meek, forbearing, and patient toward them, and should make kind allowances for, and endeavour to relieve them under, their prejudices, doubts, and fears, rash censures, and conscientious scruples, which, like those that are found in some *Jewish* converts, proceed merely from honest, though misguided zeal, and want of better light. And as we ought not to live to ourselves, (*chap. xiv. 7.*) ; so it by no means becomes us to aim only at gratifying our own inclinations, much less to indulge our own humour, pride, and passions, and contemptuous thoughts of others ; nor ought we to resolve

solve upon having our own way and will in every thing, that we apprehend to be barely in itself lawful, though offensive and injurious to the tender minds of others.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

2 Let each of us therefore study and labour, and beg of God to enable us, to behave in the most condescending, engaging manner towards our fellow-Christian, who, notwithstanding his weaknesses, is undoubtedly to be deemed our neighbour, that ought to be loved as ourselves; let us yield, as far as lawfully may be, to make him easy, and endeavour to soften his temper, and gently to instruct and win upon him, with a view to what is, by way of eminence, *good*, (*εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν*) that his soul may grow in grace and knowledge, comfort and holiness, to complete salvation; and that the whole church may be edified in love, to the glory of God.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

3 For our great and blessed Lord himself, who was under no obligation to any of us, nor had the least need of us, did not indulge his own ease or pleasure, nor seek his own safety or honour, to the neglect of others, when he was here upon earth; but he waved all gratifications of nature, condescended and denied himself in numberless instances, and freely submitted to all manner of hardships, sufferings, and disgrace for our sakes, and for his Father's glory, according to what is recorded, *Psal. lxi. 9.* and was most eminently fulfilled in him *, whom *David*, his type, personated, as saying to God his Father, The reproaches, that were cast on thy name, by those that spoke evil of, and vented their rage against the methods of thy providence and grace, sensibly pierced my heart with grief; yea, those reproaches fell with all manner of indignity and cruelty upon me, and I willingly sustained them for thy glory, while I endured the cross, despising the shame, and endured the contradiction of sinners against myself, (*Heb. xii. 2, 3.*) † And the transgressions of thy people, whereby they have highly dishonoured and affronted thee, were in a judicial manner, laid upon me, that I might be smitten and wounded for them, (*Isa. liii. 5, 6, 8.*); and I bore the punishment, due to them, in mine own body on the tree, when I suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that I might bring them to God. (*1 Pet. ii. 24.* and *iii. 18.*)

4 We

N O T E S.

* As the last clause of *Psal. lxi. 9.* is here applied to Christ, so is the former part of that verse in *John ii. 17.* and ver. 21. of that *Psal.* is said to be fulfilled in him, *John xix. 28, 29.*

† The reproaches of them that reproached thee, may refer either to the opprobrious and blasphemous speeches of the wicked, that re-

flect upon God and upon his dispensations, such as the Jews went into in their reviling his Son, as if he, whom God had sent, were an impostor; or it may signify the dishonour that all sin, in its own nature, brings upon God, as it is a reproach to his name and image, law and government.

4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning: that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope.

4 We are not to suppose that this antient passage, though primarily meant of *David* himself, had no reference to our Lord; or that it is of no use to teach us the duty of bearing with the infirmities and ill treatment of others, and denying ourselves for their good: For this, and all things else, in general, that stand on record in the Old Testament, were written, by inspiration of God, so long ago, for our instruction and practical improvement, that by means of the types, prophecies, histories, and examples, as well as every other part of those sacred writings, we might be excited and animated to the exercise of long-suffering, patience and forbearance, under all our trials, provocations, and reproaches; and might be made partakers of those divine consolations which consist in the joys of faith, the peace of a good conscience, and the comforts of the Holy Ghost, to relieve and encourage us under all the difficulties of this imperfect state, and to raise and confirm a well-grounded hope of all needful assistance and support under them, and of eternal glory to crown them.

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus:

5 But as an effectual improvement of the holy scriptures, and of every consideration whatsoever, to these noble purposes, depends on gracious influences from above, may that God, who exercises all long-suffering and forbearance towards us, and comforts them that are cast down; and who is the author, fountain, and giver of all Christian patience, and of all the spiritual consolation, that we either have in ourselves, or are the instruments of promoting in others; may this Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, give you an harmonious, tender, and peaceable disposition towards each other, that whether ye be united in sentiments, or not, as to lesser matters, ye may nevertheless be intirely so, as affectionate brethren, in heart and design, with regard to these and all other doctrines and duties, that belong to your Christian state and character, according to the example, will, and commandment of the anointed Saviour; and according to the truth, as it is in Jesus, and as may be most for his glory, and acceptable to God through him.

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the

6 My heart's desire and prayer, on your behalf, is for all this, (*scilicet*) to the end that, with united hearts and voices, as though ye were all animated by one soul, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, ye may cordially agree and concur, in your religious assemblies, in common conversation, and in spirit, temper, and behaviour, to shew forth the praises of God; and may ascribe the honours to him that are his due; even to the eternal

the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the center of all our union and communication with God, and with one another.

7 Notwithstanding therefore the different opinions that may be among you about matters of little importance; see to it, that there be no breach of charity between you, but that ye receive one another into your brotherly affection, friendly converse, and holy communion; and let the endearing example of our great Lord and Saviour himself influence you hereunto. As he, in his wonderful condescension and grace, bears with our infirmities, and has visibly taken all of us who credibly profess his name, and has actually and effectually received every one of us, who are true believers, into his favour and family, and into the nearest union and communion with himself, whether we be weaker or stronger believers, of *Jewish* or *Gentile* extract; and as he has done this, that God might be glorified in the manifestation of his truth to the *Jews*, and of his mercy to the *Gentiles*, (ver. 8, 9.) and that both might glorify him, and be brought to his eternal kingdom and glory: Even so do ye cordially embrace one another, as brethren, without distinction of nations, or parties, that ye may glorify God by your harmony and peace, and by walking together in faith and love, and in the fellowship of the gospel, till ye arrive at all possible perfection in his glorious presence for ever.

8 Now I say, that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

8 Now, to shew how Christ has admitted both *Jewish* and *Gentile* believers to equal privileges and blessings, without distinction, under the gospel-state, I would, in the first place, observe, on behalf of the *Jews*, to take off prejudices from *Gentile* converts against them; that Jesus, the Messiah, took upon him the form of a servant, and appeared under that character, in a special manner, to the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*; and that he was circumcised, came under their law, and personally ministered to them, for displaying the glory of God's truth and faithfulness, by what he taught, did, and suffered, to ratify, establish, and give efficacy to those promises of the covenant of grace which were made to the patriarchs, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* *, and

N O T E.

* Christ's being styled a minister of circumcision, with respect to his confirming the promises made to the fathers, naturally suggests, that he has confirmed the covenant of promises which circumcision was the sign and seal of, and that this covenant had a relation to spiritual benefits, as included in the promises,

that God would be a God to Abraham and his seed in their generations. (Gen. xii. 7.) and that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed, (Gen. xii. 3. and xviii. 18. and xxi. 12. which was repeated to *Isaac*, chap. xxvi. 4. and to *Jacob*, chap. xxviii. 14. See Dr Owen's volume of sermons printed in

and of which circumcision was the visible sign and seal that they might be primarily fulfilled to the spiritual seed, which should be raised up from among their natural offspring; and then to all others, of what nation soever, that should be the children of *Abraham*, by faith in Christ Jesus, (*chap. iv. 16, 17, 18. and Gal. iii. 7, 8, 9, 28, 29.*) And therefore *Gentile* believers ought, by all means, to shew the greatest tenderness and love to those of the circumcision, since they are only grafted in among them, to partake of the privileges of the covenant together with them, (*chap. xi. 17.*)

9 And that the *Gentiles* might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the *Gentiles*, and sing unto thy name.

9 And, to engage the brotherly regards of *Jewish* converts to the believing *Gentiles*, I would observe that, according to the tenor of the covenant, and the most extensive meaning of those promises which Christ confirmed, salvation is now come to the *Gentiles*, that they, who, for many ages past, were *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise*, (*Eph. ii. 12.*) might have occasion, and hearts given them to magnify and shew forth the praises of God, on account of the exceeding greatness of his sovereign, free, and tender mercy toward them, in, at length, looking with an eye of pity upon them, under all their deplorable circumstances of sin and misery, and bringing them into a state of acceptance with God, through faith in the Lord Jesus. And this is no more than was foretold in ancient prophecies; as for instance, what Christ, personated by *David*, his type, is introduced as saying to his Father, is written (*Psal. xviii. 49.*) to the following purport †, Because, in the exaltation and enlargement of my kingdom, thou hast constituted me Head over heathen nations, and brought multitudes of them into a willing subjection to the scepter of my grace, I will publish thy praises, and extol thee among the *Gentiles*, that shall be converted to thee; and I will advance the honours of thy name, by declaring it to them, and by animating them to offer thanksgivings to thee, for thy wonderful mercy toward them. (See *Psal. xxii. 22.*)

10 And

N O T E S.

Clark, p. 577, 578.) And these I take to have been the two grand promises of the covenant of grace, under that dispensation, which had circumcision for its initiating sign and seal.

† For this cause, or, as it is in *Psal. xviii. 49.* Therefore will I give thanks, or confess unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, has a manifest reference to the verses which went before in that *Psalms*; and which, as appears from the application of this verse to Christ, are likewise ultimately to be understood of

him; where, among other things, he is brought in as saying, (*ver. 43, 44, 47.*) Thou hast made me the head of the heathen; a people whom I have not known shall serve me; as soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me; strangers shall submit themselves to me; it is God that avenges me, and subdues the people under me: And so the connection stands with great propriety, Therefore, or for this cause, will I give thanks, or confess to thee, among the heathen, or the *Gentiles*.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

10 And in another prophecy, applicable to gospel-times, which was exhibited in the song of *Moses*, (Deut. xxxii. 43.) the Spirit of God, who inspired the sacred writers, and carried his view to the enlargement of the Messiah's church and kingdom, says to this effect, Delight yourselves abundantly, and be exceeding glad, O ye *Gentile* nations, together with his people *Israel*, under a grateful sense of the surprising mercy and free favour that is shewn to you, in making you one spiritual body with them, and taking you into all their privileges and blessings.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and laud him, all ye people.

11 Again, in another prophetic passage it is said, (*Psal.* cxvii. 1.) Bless and magnify the Lord, and make his name glorious, in ascriptions of divine honours to him, for his great mercy to you, O all ye people of the earth, whether consisting of *Jews* or *Gentiles*, that are called by his grace.

12 And again *Esaias* saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in

12 Once more, to wind up this argument with another famous testimony, which is still more obvious and express, the prophet *Isaiah*, (*chap.* xi. 10.) says, with a special reference to the time of Christ's appearing upon earth; In that day the Messiah, who, like a noble branch, shall spring from *Jesse** through *David's* loins, shall sustain and invigorate his own family, and the whole church of God, and make them fruitful, as the root doth a tree and all its branches: And this divine Saviour, who, according to the flesh, shall arise in that family, at a time when it shall be in as obscure a state as in the days of *Jesse*, before it was ennobled with regal dignity; and who shall rise from the dead, and be advanced to his throne, that he may reign by the power of his word and Spirit over *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*; to him shall the ends of the earth, even *Gentile* sinners, seek and look by faith, that they may be saved, and in him

N O T E

* *There shall be a root*, or rather *the root* (*ῥιζα*) of *Jesse*, is a phrase so very singular and emphatical, as seems to be applicable with no propriety to any but the Messiah: For of the very person of whom this is affirmed, *Isa.* xi. 10. from whence this passage is quoted, it is said in the first verse of that chapter, *There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his root.* These compared together, intimate that he, who in his human nature sprang from *Jesse*, the father of *David*, is in his divine nature, and mediatorial office, the root, life, and strength of the family; and so, in different views of him, is both *the root and offspring* of *David*, as he is styled, *Rev.* xxi. 16. The remaining part of this citation is exactly in

the words of the *Seventy*, correspondent to the sense of the *Hebrew* text, which runs thus, *In that day there shall be the root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek.* Christ's standing for an ensign, banner, or standard of the people, is emblematical of their lifting under him, as their Lord and sovereign, and of his reigning over them; and the *Gentiles seeking to him*, is supposed to be in a way of hope and trust in him: So that the sense is much the same; and the apostle's speaking of Christ, as the object of the *Gentiles* faith or trust, supposes him to be a divine person; and so doth his representing the supernatural and living effects of his own ministry, as what Christ wrought by him, *ver.* 26.

in him shall the
Gentiles trust.

him shall they be brought to place their dependence and hope for a whole salvation. All these testimonies put together, evidently shew, that there was to be a time when the *Gentiles* should be fellow-heirs with the *Jews*; and the middle-wall of partition between them should be taken down, as it is at this day: And therefore the *Jewish* converts ought to receive *Gentile* believers with all readiness of mind, as their brethren in Christ.

13 Now the
God of hope fill
you with all joy
and peace in be-
lieving, that ye
may abound in
hope, through
the power of the
Holy Ghost.

13 Now, laying aside every distinction of parties, my most affectionate prayer for you all is, that the blessed God, in whom is my entire trust and confidence; and who in Christ is the object, ground, and author of all the hope which *Gentiles*, as well as others, have of spiritual and eternal blessings, may plentifully enrich and satiate you with all sorts of divine consolation and rapturous joys; and with all abiding, solid, and evangelical peace, to the utmost degree, in your own souls, and with one another, as the result of lively exercises of faith on an unseen Jesus, and on the promises of the everlasting covenant, and of realizing views of invisible glory; that ye may not only have good hope, through grace, of future blessedness, but even a full assurance of it, and the most settled establishment and humble confidence in believing, to the suppressing of all doubts and fears, through the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, by his enlightening your minds, strengthening your hearts, witnessing with your spirits that ye are the children of God, and giving you the earnestness of the eternal inheritance *.

14 And I my-
self also am per-
suaded of you, my
brethren, that ye
also are full of
goodness, filled
with all know-
ledge, able also
to admonish one
another.

14 And as this is my fervent prayer for you; so I myself, judging of you upon the foot of moral evidence, am well satisfied concerning you, my dear brethren in the Lord, that ye are endued with such benevolent graces of the Spirit of love and peace, as dispose you to mutual kindness in your temper and behaviour one towards another, as fellow-Christians, notwithstanding the little differences of sentiment and external circumstances between you; and I am persuaded that ye are abundantly replenished with the knowledge of all things necessary to salvation, and that to such a degree as to be capable of instructing each other in the most important points of the gospel, and of quickening and

N O T E.

* The power of the Holy Ghost here, and the power of the Spirit of God, ver. 19. make a plain distinction between the Holy Spirit himself, and the power which he exerts, and shew that he is a divine person: (See my Sermon on this text, p. 49, 50, 51.) And as,

in these passages, things peculiar to God are said to be performed by the power of his Spirit, or of the Holy Ghost, it is manifest that the power, which the Holy Spirit exerts, is no less than the power of God.

and exciting one another, with relation to every thing that is good, and particularly to your duty in cultivating a cordial friendship among yourselves, as becomes those that are agreed in the fundamental articles of the Christian faith.

15 Nevertheless, I have written the more boldly unto you, in some sort as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God.

15 But notwithstanding your excellent qualifications, and the good opinion I have of you, who are exceeding dear to me as brethren, I have taken the liberty of writing with the greater freedom and plainness in some things to you, especially to the *Gentile* part among you, (see the note on 2 *Cor.* ii. 5.) with reference to your Christian liberty and obligations, and your equal share with the believing *Jews* in the blessings of the gospel, as designing to be your remembrancer in those particulars which ye indeed already know; but, considering the imperfection of this present state, ye may need to be reminded of, both for your caution, quickening, and consolation: And this I have been emboldened, and thought it my duty to do, because of the apostolic authority, with the endowments answerable to it, that is conferred upon me by the free and sovereign favour of God, who disposes of his gifts, graces, and benefits to whom he pleases, and who has bestowed this honour upon me.

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the *Gentiles*, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the *Gentiles* might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

16 That I might be the servant of Jesus Christ, sent forth with his commission, to proclaim his name, and to publish, propose, and recommend his unsearchable riches, especially among the *Gentiles*, (*Acts* ix. 15. and *Eph.* iii. 8.) officiating (*ὑπηρετῶν*) with assiduity, labour, and zeal, in holy ministrations of that gospel, which is of divine original *, (*vs.*) to the end that heathens themselves, being converted by this means, might be devoted as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable to God, (*chap.* xii. 1. compared with *Isa.* lxi. 20.) and that their spiritual offerings of prayer, thanksgiving, and praise, and of charitable benevolence, might be presented to him, as an odour of a sweet smell, (*Phil.* iv. 18.) with acceptance through Jesus Christ, (1 *Pet.* ii. 5.) far beyond all the oblations that were ever made at the temple; they and their services being purified and consecrated to God, not by legal libations, but by an

N O T E.

* Here, as is observed by several commentators, is a plain allusion to the *Jewish* priests officiating at the altar, and to the sacrifices which they offered with such libations as were appointed to be poured upon them, that they might be acceptable to God: Accordingly the apostle speaks of himself as ministering like the priests of old; but the sa-

crifice he offered to God was not that of slain beasts, but of men made spiritually alive, even of the *Gentiles*, that were turned from idols to serve the living and true God; and as all legal offerings were purified, so this was sanctified by the Holy Ghost, as an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, *Isa.* lxi. 20.

an effusion of the gifts, graces, and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit.

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory thro' Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

17 This therefore being the office to which I am especially appointed, and my discharge of it having been so remarkably blessed, I have great matter of rejoicing and glorying, not indeed in myself, who am nothing but in and through Jesus Christ, *who is ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things*, (Eph. iv. 10.) and by whose grace it is that I have so abundantly and successfully laboured in preaching the gospel, and bringing multitudes of *Gentile* sinners to the faith of Christ, (1 Cor. xv. 9, 10.) that they, like the offerings under the law, may be, as dedicated things, to the praise and glory of God.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed.

18 For in this my humble and holy boasting, I will not; no, I in conscience dare not allow myself the liberty of mentioning any thing that is not strictly true, or of assuming the least honour to myself, as if it were done by any wisdom or power of mine own; but shall only take notice of those wonderful effects which have been actually wrought, and which Christ himself is the author of, and has performed, by the instrumentality of my ministrations, to bring the *Gentiles* to the obedience of faith, which is manifested in their publicly avowing Christ as their Lord and Saviour, in their speaking of him as such, and living suitable to their holy profession of his name*; and which is brought to pass by means of my preaching and conversation, labours and sufferings for him.

19 Thro' mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Je-

19 These visible tokens of divine authority and assistance that attend me, are still further sealed and attested by the power, (*τῆ δυνάμεως*) that is exerted in producing signal miracles and wonderful works, which lie beyond the reach of all operation in the ordinary course of nature; but are wrought (*τῇ δυνάμει*) by the immediate power of God's own Spirit, who comes from the exalted head and Saviour to perform them, and renders all these means effectual by an internal illumination; and impressive energy in the hearts of them that believe, whereby they are persuaded, and brought over to receive the gospel, not as the word of man; but, as it is in truth, the word of God, and to turn from idols to serve the living and true God, (1 Thess. i. 9. and ii. 13.)

So

N O T E.

* By word and deed may relate either to the obedience of the *Gentiles*, or to what was done by the apostle, for bringing them to it; and I have given such a sense of the words in the last of these views, as is entirely distinct

from what follows in the former part of the next verse, and as, together with *that*, makes a beautiful gradation, in accounting for the conversion of the *Gentiles*.

Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

so that in this manner, under the agency of the blessed Spirit, I have been enabled to publish the glad tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ, and to fulfil the ministry which I received from him in the whole compass of it, with great freedom, enlargement, and success; not shunning to declare any part of the counsel of God; but spreading the savour of the knowledge of Christ in all places where I travelled, from *Jerusalem*, the capital of *Judea*, for a great many hundreds of miles, in numerous towns and cities, through the regions of *Syria*, *Asia* the less, and *Greece*, till I came to † *Illyricum* in *Europe*.

19 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation.

20 And (so) in my fervent zeal for the glory of God, the interest of a dear Redeemer, and the salvation of perishing sinners, it has been my holy ambition (ὅτι ἐκείνη ἡ ἐπιμέλεια) and chief aim, in this vast circuit of labour, under the divine assistance before-mentioned, to preach the gospel of the grace of God among such people as were entire strangers to it, and had never so much as heard of Christ, much less been converted to him by any means whatsoever before: I was desirous of this honour, lest, if I had gone to places where other apostles, evangelists, or ministering servants had paved the way, I should have been thought to have taken my light from them, and only built upon principles which they had laid down, and to have only carried on the good work which they had begun; and so should have failed of one grand proof of my apostleship, and doctrine, as received immediately from Christ himself.

21 For, as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of they shall see: and they that have not

21 But my ministrations have been mostly among the *Gentiles*, and for some time past among the blindest, and the most idolatrous and miserable of them, according to that ancient prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom, (*Isa.* lii. 15.) where it is written, with a peculiar reference to the calling of other nations besides the *Jews*, The people that were ignorant of Christ, and to whom he never had been preached, shall see, in the glorious light of the gospel, attended with the power of the Spirit, such things as are new and strange, and of the highest importance; things which none of the philosophers, or oracles of the heathen, could ever tell them; and things which exceed all that ever had been revealed under any foregoing dispensation: And they who have never heard any

NOTE.

† *Illyricum* is a great country in *Europe*, between *Pannonia* on the north, and the *Adriatic* sea, now called the gulph of *Venice*, on the south; and is mostly comprehended under the name of *Sclavonia* or *Dalmatia*, bordering upon *Hungary*. (See *Collier's* dictionary.) And we have an account of the apostles prodigious travels, labours, and success in many of those parts, *Acts* xiii. and several following chapters.

dering upon *Hungary*. (See *Collier's* dictionary.) And we have an account of the apostles prodigious travels, labours, and success in many of those parts, *Acts* xiii. and several following chapters.

not heard shall understand.

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

23 But now, having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

24 Whenever I take my journey into Spain I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey

any thing about Christ, and the blessings purchased and brought in by him, shall consider and understand, so as to be brought to the saving knowledge of him.

22 And (xxx) these my necessary and important engagements, in continually travelling and preaching about, to plant the gospel, as Providence called me from place to place, in various distant countries, has hitherto unavoidably prevented my coming to see you; my times, work, and ways, being all in God's hands, at his direction and disposal, and it being my duty to waive an indulgence to my own private inclinations, purposes, and pleasure, for the sake of promoting the kingdom and glory of Christ among the poor heathens, that were perishing in their sins, darkness, and idolatry.

23 But as now, through the powerful operations of the Spirit and grace of God, (ver. 19.) the gospel is planted, and churches are gathered and settled, (*Act* xiv. 21, 22, 23.) in all these regions, (*ἰν τοῖς κλίμασι τούτοις*) so that there is no more room or opportunity for me to be any further employed in that sort of service here; and as I have been exceedingly desirous, for many years past, were it the will of God, to take a tour to *Rome*, not to gratify my curiosity in seeing the rarities, antiquities, and grandeur of that magnificent metropolis, and seat of the empire, or in conversing with the great and learned men there; but that I might impart some spiritual gift to you, for your edification and establishment, and we might be comforted together, by our mutual faith. (*Chap. i. 11, 12.*)

24 As the Lord, I say, seems to have done his work by me, for which he called me into these parts, I purpose, by his will, to attempt a propagation of the knowledge of Christ in *Spain*, my heart being greatly bent on still further spreading his glory among those that are utter strangers to him; and whenever he may favour me with an opportunity of setting out for that country, which is over-run with heathenism and idolatry, I design to give myself the pleasure of making you a visit by the way *: For, according to present appearances, I hope, that, by his good Providence, I shall be capable of seeing

N O T E.

* The apostle designed all this; but as many purposes of that nature were only according to present probable views of what might be best for serving the interest of Christ, and the good of souls, and were not always formed under divine suggestion; God, who sends his servants wherever he pleases, often called him to other employment, and so pre-

vented the execution of his own schemes, sometimes by the opposition of adversaries, or some unexpected turns of Providence; and at others, by immediate revelation, as in *Acts* xvi. 6,—10. and xviii. 5,—11. And whether he ever went to *Spain*, or not, is very uncertain.

ney, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.

seeing you in that intended journey; and I have such confidence in your affection, and especially in the care and kindness of my God, that I humbly trust ye will be disposed, according to the custom of other churches, (*Acts* xvii. 15.) to assist me in such a manner as may be needful for my safe conduct, and for accommodating me with proper conveniencies in my travels from you to *Spain*: This I hope for, after I shall have had the satisfaction of spending some time in personal conversation with Christians of your excellent character, and of being refreshed with your company, by hearing and seeing what God has done for you. I promise myself a great deal of pleasure in this; and yet I call it my being filled or satisfied but *in part*, (*απο μέρους*) because it is possible that I may not find equal satisfaction in every one of you, (see the note on *chap.* xi. 25.) and I shall not be able to enjoy your good company so long as I should be glad of; and because the best society that the saints can have together on earth, falls vastly short of the communion which they have with Christ; and much more of that which they will have, with still greater freedom, fulness, and duration, both with him, and one another in heaven.

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

25 But, for the present, I am engaged in a very necessary affair of another nature; being bound for *Jerusalem*, whither I am going, charged with the service of assisting in the distribution of some charitable contributions that have been generously made by several *Gentile* churches under my direction, for the relief of the poor Christians there, (*1 Cor.* xvi. 1,—4. and *2 Epist.* ix. 1,—5.) which are a body of holy professors of Christ, devoted to God, sanctified by his Spirit, and distinguished from the rest of the world, by the purity of their hearts and lives; while many of them, through violent persecutions and a famine, (*Acts* xi. 27,—30.) are reduced to extreme necessity.

26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia, and Achaia, to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

26 For the *Gentile* believers, (*ver.* 27.) in the *Grecian* provinces of *Macedonia* and *Achaia*, among whom I have been travelling and preaching for some years past, have, from their benevolent spirit, cheerfully joined together, and made a general collection for the use of the religious poor at *Jerusalem*, that they might testify their love particularly toward them, and their readiness to hold communion in all good things with them, notwithstanding their distance of place, and difference of nation, and of sentiments, about some points of little consequence.

27 It hath pleased them *verily*, and their debtors they are. For, if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

27 They have done this, I say *, not grudgingly or of necessity, like persons over-pressed, or under a force; but with the greatest freedom, liberality, and delight, like people, forward, of their own accord, to excite one another by their own example; an example worthy the imitation of all that hear of it. And this is indeed no more than what, on the foot of gratitude, as well as of common benevolence, may be deemed an equitable debt which the *Grecian* churches owe to those of *Judea*: For since, according to the disposals of God's providence and grace, they, who were sinners of the *Gentiles*, have received the gospel which at first came from *Jerusalem*, and was preached to them by apostles sent to them from among the *Jews*; and since by this means the *Gentile* converts have been brought to the knowledge of that Saviour who was peculiarly promised and sent to the natural seed of *Abraham*, and was born and raised up among them: and are now made partakers of the spiritual privileges and blessings which for many ages were confined to the church of *Israel*; since, I say, the *Gentiles* are now, in this manner, become equal sharers with *Jewish* believers in all spiritual and eternal benefits, and that at the expence of the rejection of the body of that people, thro' their own unbelief, (*chap. xi. 11. 12, 28, 30.*) It is highly fit and reasonable, and the least return that can be made to them, that they, who receive so much mercy, through them, for the salvation of their souls, should (to allude to persons that are bound (*ἀπορριπταί*) to minister to God in sacred things) conscientiously, cheerfully and thankfully honour him with their temporal substance, by communicating to their necessities for the support and refreshment of their bodies.

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have

28 As soon therefore as I have finished the journey and service in which I am now engaged, and have safely delivered the charitable contributions of the *Gentile* churches; which are the fruit of their faith and love, well-pleasing to God through Jesus Christ; and fruit which will abound to their own spiritual account, (*Phil. iv. 17.*) and to the advancement of the interest and glory of our blessed Lord, as well as to the seasonable relief of the poor saints at *Jerusalem*; and which I shall take

N O T E.

* The apostle brought this over again with such an emphasis, not only for their honour, and to shew with what satisfaction he reflected on the readiness and pleasure which they discovered in their generous contributions; but to impress the thought with the most gentle insinuation and address on the minds

of the church at *Rome*, and particularly of the *Gentile* part among them, to excite them to follow this noble example; and to recommend a cheerful liberality to all other Christians, on every proper occasion, according to their ability.

have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

29 And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

take as much care of, that it be not diminished, embezzled, or applied to any other use, as if it were a treasure sealed up in a bag, till opened for distribution: I then purpose, God sparing life, and giving opportunity, to take you in the way of my forementioned journey into Spain. (See the note on *ver.* 24.)

29 And if Providence shall enable me to bring my present design to pass, I am fully satisfied, from Christ's promise of being always with his servants, (*Matth.* xxviii. 20.) from the large experience I have already had of his powerful workings by me, (*ver.* 18.) and from what I hear of his grace bestowed on you, (*chap.* i. 8. and xvi. 19.) that, when I may make you a visit, I shall come, like a vessel richly fraught, under the plentiful anointings of the Holy Ghost, and with great liberty of spirit, in declaring to you the whole counsel of God, and particularly in further explaining, enlarging upon, and establishing you in all the great doctrines of this epistle; and shall be the means of communicating to you such an abundance of gifts, graces, and consolations, as make up the utmost fulness of spiritual blessings, that are promised and conveyed, under divine influence, by the glorious gospel, of which Christ is the author, and principle subject, and which he has ordered to be *preached to all nations, for the obedience of faith*, (*chap.* xvi. 26.)

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that

30 Now, my beloved Christian brethren, in order to the accomplishing of all these desirable designs, I earnestly intreat you, by all the obligations and endearments of the love and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he has in his heart, has demonstrated in his death, and has manifested and communicated, in distinguishing effects, to you; and by all the love which ye, in return, have, or ought to have, to his divine and glorious person, and to his cause and interest: And I beseech you, by all the love and grace of the blessed Spirit, in his coming to work effectually, and take up his abode in you*; and by all that excellent grace of love which he has wrought in you toward God, and Christ, and one another, and toward me, and all his servants

N O T E S.

* The love of the Spirit may signify either the love that is *subjectively* in him; or the love that he is the *author* of, and works in us; or the love that is carried out to him, as its *object*. It is difficult to say which of these is most precisely the apostle's meaning; they all suit the turn of the phrase, and the design of his argument, to engage the prayers of the believing Romans for him; and we may

well enough suppose, that he took in every consideration of the love of the Spirit, that was proper to strengthen his vehement attestation for their prayers.—The Holy Ghost may be called, by way of eminence and peculiarity, *the Spirit*, as personally distinguished from the Father and Son; and as properly *divine*, and infinitely superior to all created spirits.

that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

servants and people; and by all the love, which ye bear, and profess to have, particularly to the Holy Spirit himself, and to the triumphs of his power and grace in the conversion of sinners, and in the edification, comfort, and establishment of the saints, and particularly of your own souls; I beg of you, that, as ever ye would act up to these solemn and endearing considerations of Christ and his Spirit, ye would give me a fellowship in all your addresses to God, as I do you in mine, (*chap. i. 9. 10.*) joining your fervent prayers with my own, and wrestling mightily, like persons in good earnest, together with me, in your believing, importunate, and persevering supplications for my guidance and protection, and for the special presence and blessing of God with me.

31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

31 And particularly pray for me, that by an overruling providence, in my present journey to *Jerusalem*, (*ver. 25.*) I may escape the snares, and be preserved from the malicious designs, and violent outrage and persecutions (*αἰσχρολογία*) of the unbelieving, disobedient, and refractory *Jews* there; who, being a set of *unreasonable and wicked men*, (*2 Thes. iii. 2.*) are my inveterate enemies, and seek to destroy me, (*Acts xx. 22, 23, 24.* compared with *xxi. 28, 31.*) merely for my fidelity and zeal in preaching the pure doctrine of justification alone thro' faith in Christ, without the deeds of the law; and in strenuously maintaining, that this, and all the other privileges and blessings of the gospel, lye as open to the *Gentiles* as to themselves, (*chap. iii. 28, 29, 30.*) and I earnestly intreat your prayers, that when I may, by the will of God, arrive at *Jerusalem*, with the charitable contributions of the *Grecian* churches, (*ver. 25, 26.*) this noble service, which is so beneficial, brotherly, and well designed by them and me, may not be rejected or despised, thro' unhappy prejudices; but may be kindly and affectionately received by the believing *Jews*, who, though upright honest souls, are too zealous for the rights of the *Mosaic* law; too cool towards, and jealous of, the converts from other nations; and too much incensed against me, by means of false and invidious reports, as if I had absolutely forbid those believing *Jews* that live among the *Gentiles*, to circumcise their children, or to observe any antient customs of their fathers, (*Acts xxi. 20, 21.*)

32 That I may come

32 One great motive of my desiring, which should make you the more fervent in offering up your prayers for these appearances of God on my behalf, is, that, being thus prospered in my present way and work, I may

come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

33 Now the God of peace be with you all.
Amen.

be at liberty, God willing, to prosecute my intended journey to you, and have an opportunity of seeing you with the greater satisfaction and joy to us all; and that I may take some rest with you after my fatigues, (*καταπαύωμαι*) and be comforted in the enjoyment of your good company, and in our conferring together about the faith which God has wrought in us severally, (*chap. i. 12.*) and about his gracious answers to our prayers.

33 In the mean while, as the best return I can make for what I have been asking of you, my most ardent wishes and prayers for every one of you are, that, as God is reconciled to us, and at peace with us, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and is the fountain and author of all desirable prosperity; and as he delights in his peoples possessing their own souls in patience and peace, and living together in harmony and love; so he, according to this his encouraging and endearing character, would be graciously present with you, by the special influences of his Spirit, to unite all your hearts in brotherly affection one towards another, that there may be no party-temper, jars, or discords among you; and that he would bless every one of you, with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and with whatever else he sees needful and best for you, relating to this world, as well as that which is to come. Thus may it be; thus I humbly trust it will be, in testimony of which I heartily say, *Amen*.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

With what tenderness and self-denial should we behave towards our brethren in Christ! We should bear with the infirmities of the weak; study to please every one for his edification; receive into our affection and communion all that Christ has received to the glory of God; and unite in glorifying him as with one heart and voice. What a noble pattern has our Lord set us of this excellent spirit, in denying himself; in the reproaches he sustained for his Father's honour and the good of his church; and in his condescending to act the part of a minister, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, that the *Gentiles* might glorify God, rejoice in him, and praise him, for making them equal heirs of all privileges and blessings with the *Jews*. What a rich treasure have we in the holy scriptures, which were written for our instruction and comfort, patience and hope! And how should we strive together in prayer, that the God of patience and consolation would enable us to make such use of them, according to the mind of Christ, as may fill us with all joy and peace in believing, and cause us to abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost! Blessed be God for his mercy to us, *Gentile* sinners! We, by the gospel-dispensation, are brought under the Messiah's reign; and he is proposed as an object of faith to us, who were utter strangers to him before, that we might trust in him; and that *Gentile* believers, and their services, might be acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, as a pure offering, which is sanctified by the Holy Ghost. And, O what an honour doth our great Lord confer upon his servants! He puts them into the ministry of the gospel; and makes them his instruments for the conversion of sinners, and for further helping them that have believed through grace. Be our attainments

ever so great in all knowledge and goodness, so as to be capable of admonishing others; yet they ministry in Christ's ordinance, and we need it, for reviving, impressing, and improving what we already know and enjoy. And, O how delightful and advantageous is it; to have the gospel with the fulness of its blessings! And what a wide and glorious spread doth it take; and what wonderful happy effects doth it produce, when attended with the power of the Spirit, which resides in him, as a divine person, and is exerted by him! This gives the servants of Christ great occasion of glorying in the Lord: They ascribe all honour to him, and would take none to themselves; nor would they boast of any thing that he has not wrought by them; nor invade the province of their brethren: They are desirous to go and work wheresoever God calls them; and they submit all their own purposes and motions for his service, to his will; they cheerfully encourage all sorts of benevolence, by the love of Christ and of his Spirit; they take pleasure in conversing with fellow-Christians, and recommend themselves, and all their labours, to their prayers; and they pour out their own hearts to God, with fervent desire that love and unity may abound among them, and that the God of peace may be with them. Amen.

C H A P. XVI.

The apostle recommends Phebe, a member of the church at Cenchrea, to the church at Rome, 1, 2. Greets several of his friends there by name, 3,—16. Cautions the church against such as somented divisions among them, 17,—20. Mentions various persons that joined in Christian salutations with him, 21,—24. And concludes the epistle with an ascription of glory to God, for extending the gospel-revelation, with all its blessings, to Gentiles as well as Jews, 25,—27.

TEXT.

I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

PARAPHRASE.

HAVING gone through my principal design in drawing out the scheme of the gospel, with respect to its most important points, I take the liberty, before I conclude, to recommend to your most respectful regards, care, and kindness, our dear sister in the faith and fellowship of the gospel *, *Phebe* by name, who is an excellent member, and much employed in the temporal services of the church, which ordinarily assembles for religious worship and discipline, according to the appointment of Christ, at *Cenchrea*, in the neighbourhood of *Corinth*.

2 I

N O T E:

* *Phebe*, who probably was the bearer of this epistle, as the postscript avers, seems to have been a gentlewoman of considerable rank; and yet of such eminent piety, that she did not disdain to be a servant, or, according to the strictest sense of the word, (*διακονος*) a deaconess, or assistant to the deacons at the church at *Cenchrea*, a sea-port town, and one of the havens of *Corinth*, to a little distance from that city; though that office was most commonly lodged in the hands of poor and ancient widows, as may be gather-

ed from the apostle's directions about it, 1 Tim. v. 4, 9, 10. Or if (*διακονος*) a servant be taken here, as a more general term, to signify one that is staidly employed in any sort of service. She, like the good woman, that (*διακονου*) ministered to our Lord of their substance, (Luke viii. 3.) made it her business to entertain ministers and strangers at her own cost, and perhaps, at her own house, as well as to visit and relieve the sick and poor.

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever humilities she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

2 I beseech you to receive her into your Christian affection, and holy communion, in the name, and for the sake of the Lord Jesus, (*Matth. xviii. 5.*) as it is fit and becoming for one church to do toward the regular members of another, by virtue of their common relation to Christ, as their head, and to each other, as saints*; and I earnestly desire, that ye would be so kind, as to recommend and stand by her, (*παράστητε*) to the utmost of your power, in those civil affairs which she is come as a stranger to transact at *Rome*, and in which she may need your counsel, countenance and other assistance, for the better dispatching it. She is worthy of all my commendations, and of the best reception, and most friendly treatment, that any of you can give her: For she has been a generous patroness, (*προσάγει*) in hospitality entertaining, harbouring, and providing for many poor Christians and destitute strangers; and gratitude obliges me to say, that I myself have had large experience of her generosity and tenderness, in times of my exigence and distress.

3 As I have expressed my affectionate desires of the best of blessings for you all, (*chap. i. 7. and xv. 33.*) so I beg that ye would make my kindest religious respects acceptable † to such Christian friends among you as I have the pleasure of personally knowing, some of them *Jews* and others *Gentiles*, some males and others females, they being all one in Christ Jesus, *Gal. iii. 28.*; as particularly my sincerest wishes for all grace and peace to attend the pious, evangelical, and prudent *Priscilla*, (see the note on *Acts xviii. 18.*) who is also called *Prisca*, (*2 Tim. iv. 19.*) and her no less excellent husband *Aquila*; my good old friends and acquaintance, with whom I lodged some years ago at *Corinth*, and worked at their trade to earn my bread, (*Acts xviii. 2, 3.*) and found an hearty welcome for Christ's sake; and, in their private capacities, they very much subserved the usefulness and success of my ministerial labours in the Lord. (*Acts xviii. 26,—28.*)

4 (Who have for

4 Yea, over and above all this, so great was their zeal and steadiness for the cause of Christ, and so fervent

N O T E S.

* It is highly probable that *Phoebe* went to *Rome* upon some secular business of her own, which was to be managed in the city, or at court; and so their assisting her in what she needed, may relate to their doing all they could, to be of service to her in her temporal concerns, in distinction from their receiving her in the Lord, or into their Christian friendship and fellowship for spiritual purposes.

† The word (*ἀνταποδοῖς*) which is promiscuously rendered sometimes *greet*, and at others *salute*, in this and the following verse, is the same; and signifies any courteous, engaging, and respectful way of expressing, by word or action, our good wishes for the prosperity and happiness of those whom we address, either when we are present with them, or absent from them. (See the note on ver. 15.)

for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.)

vent their affection to me, that, when I was in the utmost danger, they, like persons ready to offer their own necks to the halter, to strangling, or any kind of death, instead of their friends, ventured to run all risks †, even to the hazarding their own lives for saving mine; to whom I, still retaining a most grateful and touching sense of that uncommon instance of kindness, take this opportunity of returning my hearty thanks; and not I only, but all the churches of Christ among the *Gentiles*, (whose apostle I am, and for whose conversion, settlement, and edification, I have chiefly laboured ever since) think themselves highly beholden to them on that account, and bound in gratitude to acknowledge it, which I now do in their name.

§ Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well-beloved Epenetus, who is the first-fruits of Achaia

§ In this my Christian salutation of that exemplary husband and wife, I include the whole of their religious family ‡, which, by the blessing of God on their good example, diligent instructions, and prudent regulations, is like a church of Christ, for its stated worship of God, purity of manners, and beautiful order. Next to these, I beg that my Christian respects may be presented to the dear *Epenetus*, who, according to the signification of his name, (*Επαινος*) is indeed worthy to be praised; and whom I think of with peculiar pleasure, when I reflect that, by means of my ministry, he was the first convert to Christ in all the regions of *Achaia*; and

N O T E S.

† The hazard that *Aquila* and *Priscilla* ran for the apostle's preservation, was probably at *Corinth*, when the Jews opposed themselves and blasphemed; or when they made an insurrection with one accord against him, and brought him to the judgment-seat, (*Acts* xviii. 6, 12, 13.) And as he had declared, (*ver.* 6.) that from thenceforth he will go to the *Gentiles*, it shewed an excellent spirit in a Jewish couple, that they would nevertheless expose their own lives for the rescuing of his; and the apostle here mentions the grateful sense which all the *Gentile* churches had of this, to shew how ready they were to lay aside all party-difference, and cultivate a brotherly temper toward Jewish believers; and thereby insinuates, that those of the circumcision ought to do the like toward them: examples of both which he was now himself setting in his own affectionate salutations of each of these sorts of Christians promiscuously, and without distinction.

‡ I would rather understand the church in their house to mean their Christian family, than any other religious society that usually met at their house: For it does not appear that there was more than one church, properly speaking, at *Rome*; and the church

here saluted is spoken of, as distinct from that to which the apostle was writing. Nor doth it seem likely that he should hereby mean any company of Christians, that were wont to assemble at their house for religious worship; because this stands in the list of particular persons and families, to whom he sent special salutations, and several of these might probably frequent those assemblies, if any such were held there: But as *Aquila* and *Priscilla* were persons of eminence for piety, it is to be supposed that they took great care of the religious education and government of their family; and, like *Jesus*, would admit of none to reside in it, that should not join with them in their holy resolution to serve the Lord; and therefore when they sojourned in *Asia*, we likewise read of the church in their house, (*1 Cor.* xvi. 19.) which seems to be the same that is taken notice of here. And, perhaps, wherever we read of the church in any one's house, it is to intimate that the whole family were Christians; whereas when not all, but only some in a family were converted, they are said to be of the household of one and another person, or the saints and brethren that were with them, as in *ver.* 10, 11, 14, 15.

chain unto Christ.

6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

7 Salute Andronicus and Junia my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

and so, like the first fruits that were offered to God under the law, was first dedicated as an oblation highly pleasing to him *, and had the honour of being the pledge and earnest of the great harvest of souls in that province, which have since been gathered in to the Lord. (*Acts xviii. 10.*)

6 My grateful wishes of all manner of prosperity likewise attend that *Mary* †, who has signalized herself by the great pains she has taken in performing many kind offices of love and friendship, as occasions required, toward me; and toward my fellow-labourers in the gospel, which I take as done to myself.

7 Let the same recommendations of Christian love be given to *Andronicus* ‡ and *Junia*, my kindred according to the flesh, who were converted from among the *Jews*, and so are doubly dear to me, by the bonds of nature and of grace; and they are dearer to me still, as, for their faithfulness and zeal in the cause of Christ, they have cheerfully and patiently suffered imprisonment as well as myself: I think of them with pleasure, as first-rate Christians, whose eminence for gifts, graces, heroic sufferings, and signal services, hath made them famous, and given them great reputation and esteem among the apostles of our Lord Jesus: And, as an additional honour to all this, they got the start of me, as being brought to the faith of Christ, and vitally united to him ||, before I myself was called by grace, and taken into

N O T E S.

* *The house of Stephanas is also called the first fruits of Achaia, 1 Cor. xvi. 15. because as Epeneus was the first single person, so that was the first family which embraced the faith of Christ; and, perhaps, Epeneus was one of that household, and the first converted in it. But the Alexandrian and some other copies, and several ancient versions and commentators, here read Asia, instead of Achaia. Vid. Mil. Nov. Test.*

† Some suppose that the apostle had met with this *Mary* in his travels at *Corinth*, *Antioch*, or some other place, and that she had been exceeding diligent in supplying his wants, and taking care of him, amidst all his fatigues: But others think he only meant that she had been eminently serviceable in entertaining, and shewing kindness to his Christian friends and brethren, which were embarked in the same glorious cause with himself; and that he esteemed this, as if he himself had personally received the benefit of it.

‡ As *Junia* might be the name, either of a man or woman, some take *Andronicus* and *Junia* to have been brethren; and others, to

have been brother and sister, or husband and wife, both of which were the apostle's kindred, as *Jews*, and perhaps of the same tribe with himself, or still more nearly related to him. They were likewise fellow-sufferers with him for the sake of Christ, possibly in the same prison with him, at *Philippi*, or in some other of his confinements, which he speaks of, 2 Cor. xi. 23. and they were persons of eminence, probably for their worldly circumstances, but principally for religion; and by the apostle's saying, *they were in Christ before him*, it seems that they were among the very earliest converts, either some of the hundred and twenty, mentioned *Acts i. 15.* or of the great multitudes that were converted on the day of *Pentecost*, or soon afterwards, accounts of which we have in *Acts ii. 41.* and *iv. 4.*

|| To be in Christ, is the same with being united to him; and it is plain that the apostle here speaks of this, as what commenced with believing; otherwise he could not have said that these persons were in Christ before himself; and this is the sense in which he speaks of being in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 17.

into the near and happy relation of a member of that spiritual body, of which he is the head.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

8 Salute the well-known *Amplias* in my name, whom I greatly esteem for Christ's sake, as one who belongs to him, bears his image, is beloved of him, and loves him.

9 Salute Urbane our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

9 Assure *Urbane* of my best remembrances of him, who has been assistant to me and others, in helping forward the work of Christ, and is, I make no doubt, one of his sincere members; and do the same to *Stachys*, my dear brother, whom I love in the Lord, and for his sake.

10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobolus's household.

10 Salute, in the same Christian manner from me, the excellent *Apelles*, who has been tried and proved, and justly accounted to be a judicious, faithful and zealous disciple and servant of Jesus Christ, in his labours and sufferings for his sake, and proved of God through him: Convey the like salutations to all those believers that belong to the family of *Aristobolus* *, what rank or station soever they hold in it.

11 Salute Herodian my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

11 The like holy and friendly greetings I send to *Herodian*, whom I love as my kinsman by nature, (see the first note on *ver.* 7.) but with still more abundant endearment, on account of that better relation of brethren which we now bear one to the other, through faith in Christ: My most cordial respects also attend those domestics of *Narcissus* †, that make a credible profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus, be they more or less, as if I particularly mentioned them by name.

12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

12 Let me be further remembered particularly to *Tryphena* and *Tryphosa*, those good women, who, according to their abilities and stations, lay themselves out in promoting the interest of Christ, for his glory, and by his assistance: And let the excellent *Persis*, who is beloved of God and his people, know the place she has in my affectionate desires of her spiritual welfare, who has taken still more abundant pains, and been more remarkably and extensively useful, in her sphere for helping

N O T E S.

* It is imagined by some, that either *Aristobolus* was dead, or was absent from *Rome*, or was not as yet converted; and therefore the apostle intended only such believers, whether wife, children, or servants, as belonged to his family.

† This *Narcissus* is thought by many to have been the person of that name, whom *Suetonius*, in the life of *Claudius Caesar*, speaks of as a very rich, but wicked man: And as there were Eunts in *Nero's* house, *Phil.* iv. 12.

So there were some of that character in this great man's house; which shews that grace sometimes makes a sovereign distinction on leaving the master, and calling the servant; and that when Providence casts truly religious persons under bad masters, they may, and ought to serve them, with a good conscience, in all the business of their civil relation, according to the exhortations in *1 Tim.* vi. 1, 2. and *1 Pet.* ii. 18.

12 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

15 Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

ing forward to the cause of Christ, in the fervours of her love to him, and under his influence.

13 Salute Rufus †, that eminent saint, whose rich attainments in grace, as well as gifts, render him a choice Christian indeed; and plainly shew, that he is one, who was chosen of God, in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to be holy here, and happy for ever, (*Eph. i. 4.*) Include also in this salutation his exemplary good mother, whose venerable age and accomplishments, as well as her spiritual affection, and motherly care and kindness for me, raise as endearing and respectful sentiments in my heart towards her, as if I had proceeded from her own bowels.

14 Greet likewise the following Christian friends by name ‡, whose praises are among you; as particularly *Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes*, and all those brethren and sisters in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, that belong to their respective families.

15 And, to specify but three or four more, Salute *Philologus* and *Julia*, *Nereus* and his sister, who is so, both in a natural and spiritual sense, as they are children of the same earthly parentage, and of the same heavenly Father; and add to these *Olympas*, together with all those holy professors of Christ that dwell in their several houses. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon all, and every one of the above-mentioned persons!

16 But

NOTES

† This seems to have been *Rufus*, the son of *Simon the Cyrenian*, who is mentioned *Mark xv. 21.* and when the apostle, here speaking of his mother, says, *his mother and mine*; it is not to be understood, as if they were both her sons according to the flesh: But she was *Rufus's* mother by nature, and *Paul's* by Christian love and kindness; she having probably shewn some peculiar motherly tenderness to him, and he having the affection of a son towards her, according to what our Lord had recommended to his own mother *Mary*, and the beloved disciple, saying to her, *Behold thy son*; and to him, *Behold thy mother*, (*John xix. 26, 27.*) And so our apostle exhorts *Timothy* to treat the elder women, of a religious character, as mothers, (*1 Tim. v. 2.*)

‡ In this and the next verse the apostle specifies several believers whom he saluted; but of whom we know nothing more with certainty than their names, most of which being *Greek*, it is probable that they were converts of *Grecian* extract, that lived at *Rome*. *Hermas*, who is mentioned among them, was thought by *Origen* to have been the author of an ancient book called *the Pastor*; and *Julia* is supposed by some to be the wife

of *Philobogus*: But the apostle and the church at *Rome* were so well acquainted with all these persons, that he only needed just to mention them; and we may suppose that they were people of some good note and eminence, on one account or other; and that their families were Christianized, and contained such domestics, as are called *the brethren, and saints that were with them*. But it is very remarkable, that in all this list of so many persons by name, whom the apostle saluted, he took no manner of notice of *Peter*, as must have been expected, had he then been bishop of *Rome*, as the papists pretend; and when, long after this, our apostle sent salutations from several at *Rome*, and particularly mentioned others, that were gone to one place and another from thence, in *1 Tim. iv. 10, 11, 12, 13.* (the last of his epistles, which he wrote a little before his death) he said nothing of *Peter*, either as being there, or as gone on any occasion from thence; and therefore it is highly reasonable to conclude, that all papist pretended claims under *Peter*, as bishop of *Rome*, are mere impositions on the Christian world. See *the history of Popery, with additions and improvements*, vol. i. p. 4, &c.

16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

16 But that I may not seem to neglect any of you, while I thus particularize such as are best known to me by face, or character, or both, I intreat that all of you, whether *Jewish* or *Gentile* believers, would in my name, and in imitation of that pattern of love which I have set you, shew your mutual affection, harmony, and peace, in every way that is worthy your Christian profession: And as saluting one another is customarily used in civil society, and in the churches of Christ, in token of the most hearty friendship and respect †, see that ye give this testimony of your brotherly regards one to another, by such a kiss, as is attended with the utmost chastity, sincerity, and spiritual affection, as becometh saints, that love one another with a pure heart fervently, (1 Pet. i. 22.) Still further to induce you to this, let me add, that the churches hereabouts, which are of Christ's own institution, in which he dwells by his Spirit, and is owned and honoured by their faith and love, worship and obedience, desire, in testimony of their brotherly kindness and communion, to be most affectionately remembered to you all, as fellow Christians, who cordially wish and pray for your prosperity in all things, relating to this world and a better.

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions

17 Now, in order to the cultivating and maintaining a true spirit of Christian love among yourselves, I earnestly intreat and exhort you, my dear brethren in the Lord, that, like persons standing on a watch-tower to descry their enemies, ye would take care (*ορκεν*) to observe with diligence and attention the first approaches, the management and design of those false teachers, and their adherents, who endeavour to sow the seeds of discord and contention among you, and to rend and tear you to pieces, and form parties among you; and who would lay stumbling-blocks in your way, to cast you down from your steadfastness in the faith, by their propagating

N O T E.

† Saluting one another on the face, in token of respect and friendship, was an ancient and common custom among both *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and was continued for some time among the primitive Christians in their religious assemblies, and particularly at the end of their prayers before the celebration of the Lord's supper, to testify their mutual love: And therefore it was called not only the *holy kiss* here and elsewhere, to distinguish it from that which was of the *woman*, or *merely* of the civil kind, but also the *kiss of charity*, (1 Pet. v. 14.) to distinguish it from that which was only *complimental*, or was *irreligious*, like that of *Judas*. But some think that

this religious kiss was given by the men apart, and by the women apart; and that by this symbol they shewed that Christians, as such, were equal; because among the *Persians*, and other eastern nations, equals kissed one another's cheeks, but inferiors kissed only the hand of superiors, as subjects do the hand of the prince at this day. However, as this custom among the churches of Christ had no foundation in divine institution, and was afterwards abused, it was gradually laid aside, to prevent all appearance of indecency in looser ages. See the note on ver. 3. and *Beza*, *Grotius*, *Hammond*, and *Wetley* on this place.

visions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

pagating pernicious opinions and practices, that are different from, and contrary to, the pure doctrines of the gospel, which ye have been taught, and have received by the ministrations of the inspired servants of Christ; and which are the touch-stone of truth, and the infallible rule of faith, love, and obedience; look well to those seducers, and take heed of them, lest ye be ensnared and perverted by them: And, as ever ye would preserve your own purity, peace, and comfort, shun their communion, and all unnecessary conversation with them; and keep at a cautious distance from them.

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

18 For they, that are of such a spirit and temper, and are carrying on such injurious designs, are not (whatever they pretend to) the true servants of our Lord, the only prophet, priest, and king of the church: They do not preach his doctrine, nor do they either really, or intentionally promote his interest and glory in the world; but, on the contrary, they are artful and intriguing men, that are governed by some private, sinister, and secular views, either for the avoiding of persecution, and preserving the friendship of this world; or for making a prey of you, and gratifying their own carnal appetites, like those *whose god is their belly, and who mind earthly things, and teach things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake*, (Phil. iii. 19. and Tit. i. 11.); and, to compass their vile ends, they, by smooth, flattering, and plausible words, and speaking persons fair, as if they meant the greatest kindness to them, and by making high professions of zeal for truth, and the honour of God, and for the salvation of men's souls; by these, and such like means, they impose upon the good temper and credulity of weak and incautious, through honest and well-meaning people, to the turning of them aside from the good ways of the Lord.

19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would

19 I am greatly desirous, for your own and the gospel's sakes, that none of you may be unwarily corrupted by them: * For your readily embracing the gospel of Christ, and yielding up your consciences to his authority in it, by the obedience of faith, are so exemplary and famous, that the reports of them are spread far and wide, and are every where talked of, to your honour, among the churches all around you: I therefore exceedingly rejoice on your account, in reflection, that those false teachers

N O T E.

* It is with admirable insinuation and good judgment, that the apostle, in the former part of this verse, mentions *their obedience*, - the greater force, and the easier access to their minds.

to them; and to sweeten their spirits, and give his admonition in the close of the verse, the greater force, and the easier access to their minds.

himself with them; to manifest his own love

would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

teachers have not yet been able to draw you away from the simplicity which is in Christ; and in hope that ye will still be preserved, by the grace of God, from their infection: But yet, considering the weakness and depravity of human nature in its best estate since the fall; and considering the subtilty of Satan and his instruments, that lye in wait to deceive, and how often fair beginnings have proved abortive; it may be needful for me to advise you to be so prudent and watchful, as to discern, and make a difference between good and evil, truth and error, that, having proved all things, ye may hold fast that which is good, (1 Thess. v. 21.); and at the same time, I would fain have you to be so inoffensive, (ἀκταίος) plain-hearted, and sincere, that ye may no more deceive or injure others, than be deceived or injured by them. In this manner, *Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves; men in understanding, but children in malice*, (Matth. x. 16. and 1 Cor. xiv. 20.) that are quite unacquainted with envious, spiteful, and mischievous arts.

no And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of

20 And, for your comfort and encouragement against all the adversaries that the devil can raise against you, remember that ye have the best of allies to stand by you, and that all your conflicts will soon be over; the great God himself, who is at peace with you, and reconciled to you, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (Heb. xiii. 20.) and who is the author and giver of all prosperity to his people, and delights in their being at peace among themselves, (2 Cor. xiii. 11.); this God will, in a very little time, subdue Satan under you †, according to the first promise of his gracious covenant, (Gen. iii. 15.) he will soon reduce this formidable enemy, and all his emissaries, and defeat their malicious power and subtilty, by every needful and seasonable appearance of his providence, and of his grace, which is sufficient for you, in this life, (2 Cor. xii. 9.); and will certainly

N O T E.

† Some suppose that the apostle herein referred to God's putting an end, by means of the ministry of his servants, to the seductions and divisions which were spirited up among the Christians at Rome, by the subtilty and malice of the devil; others, that he referred to the destruction of Jerusalem, when the persecuting *Judizers* would be no longer able to deceive and distress them; or that he referred to the spreading of the gospel with great success among the *Gentiles*, and thereby casting out their oracles, and vanquishing the power of Satan; and others, that he referred to the conversion of the Roman empire

under *Constantine* the Great, which would bring Satan, and all his persecuting agents, into a state of subjection to the church. But as these are all uncertain conjectures, about the particular meaning of the apostle in this passage, it appears to be most agreeable, and unexceptionable, to understand him, as intending the glorious victory, which all true believers obtain, through grace, over Satan and all his instruments and efforts, of what nature soever; which begins in this life, and will soon be perfected in their complete deliverance from all his power, and in their triumph over him for ever in heaven.

of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

certainly give you as complete and triumphant a conquest over them at death, as those captains of *Israel* had over the five kings of the *Amorites*, on whose necks *Josbua* caused them to set their feet, (*Josb. x. 20.*) After a few more weary steps, trials, and exercises, in your spiritual warfare, ye shall come off more than conquerors over Satan, and all the enemies of your souls, through him, who has loved you, and has already overcome them for you. That ye may be thus victorious and triumphant over the devil, and all your spiritual enemies, my heart's desire and prayer for you is, that the free love and favour of our Lord Jesus Christ, and all communications of grace from him, as the Saviour of his body, the church, may be continually and abundantly with you, to guide and strengthen, sanctify and comfort, defend and save you. *Amen.* So may it be, and so I firmly believe it will be *.

21 Timothy
my work-fellow,
and Lucius, and
Jason, and Sopater,
my kinsmen,
salute you.

21 Permit me yet further to add, that *Timothy*, whom I with pleasure own to be my companion in labour and travel, and who, *as a son with the father, has served with me in the gospel*, (*Phil. ii. 22.*) † and *Lucius*, that noted servant of Christ; and *Jason*, my dear friend, who suffered greatly for my sake; and *Sopater*, who has attended me in some of my journeys for spreading the gospel, have an high esteem of you: All these are my kindred according to the flesh, and now much dearer to me, on account of that better relation which we have one to the other in Christ; and they all unite in desiring me to send their most affectionate and brotherly respects to you.

22 (I

NOTES.

* Here the apostle seemed to be concluding his epistle, as he also did, chap. xv. 33. where he gave his *benediction*: But as he had still more room and time before him, and his heart overflowed in love to these *Romans*, he was loth to break off; and therefore, as is usual with friends in the familiar liberties of letter-writing, he adds a few more words, by way of supplement, to let them know what place they had in the affection of other valuable Christians, as well as in his own: Or perhaps these persons desired him to send their salutations, after he had thus far wrote his letter.

† This *Timothy* was that excellent young man, the evangelist, whom the apostle calls *his own son in the faith*, (*1 Tim. i. 2.*) and to whom he wrote two admirable epistles, for his direction in the discharge of his ministry: And as he was exceeding dear to the apostle,

so he frequently attended him in his travels and was very helpful to him in his work among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to both of which he might probably be the more acceptable, as his mother was a *Jewess*, and his father a *Greek*, (*Acts xvi. 1.*)—*Lucius* seems to have been that *Lucius of Cyrene*, who is spoken of as a prophet and teacher at *Antioch*, and one that had been brought up with *Herod* the tetrarch, and *Saul*, meaning the apostle *Paul*, (*Acts xiii. 1.*) *Tison* was *Paul's* friend, who harboured him at *Thessalonica*, and suffered great outrage from the *Jews* on his account, (*Acts xvii. 5.—7.*) *Sopater* was probably that *Sopater of Berea*, who accompanied the apostle to *Asia*, (*Acts xx. 4.*) And as he calls all these *his kinsmen*, he thereby intimates, that they were by father or mother's side, or both, of the *Jewish* nation, if not of the same tribe and family with himself.

21 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.

23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you, Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

22 (I Tertius, † who, as Paul's amanuensis have wrote out this epistle, and am allowed to add mine own Christian respects, do most heartily join with the rest of my brethren, in wishing you all manner of prosperity in the name of the Lord Jesus, and for his sake.)

23 Gaius ‡, my generous and hospitable friend, who furnishes me with lodgings and other necessities; and not only gives the church here opportunities of meeting at his house, but entertains the poor, as occasions require, together with such religious strangers as are well recommended to him; he desires his best respects may be presented to you: Erastus also, the treasurer of the city of Corinth, who, great and noble as he was, is called by sovereign grace, which makes no distinction of persons, on account of their worldly circumstances; and Quartus, a dear brother in the Lord, join in wishing all blessings, for both worlds, may attend you.

24 As to myself, such are the over-flowings of my heart, with affectionate concern, especially for your spiritual welfare, that I cannot tell how to forbear repeating my comprehensive salutation of you all, without exception; and therefore I say again, May the rich and free favour of the Lord Jesus Christ, your Saviour and mine, together with all its special fruits and effects, be with every one of you, through the whole course of your lives, to supply your wants, to guide your way, and to carry you safe through all temptations and dangers, till ye arrive with triumph at his heavenly kingdom. Amen. So I desire it may, and trust it will be.

25 Now

N O T E S.

† The apostle for saving time, and, as some think, because he wrote a bad hand, that could not easily be read by strangers to it, often made use of an amanuensis to write his epistles, either from his mouth, or from a copy that he had prepared to be transcribed; and in such cases, to prevent impositions and forgeries, he wrote his usual salutation with his own hand, as he says, 1 Cor. xvi. 21. and 2 Thes. iii. 17. His scribe, in writing this epistle, was Tertius, who is thought, by Dr Lightfoot, and others, to have been Silas, because Silas in Hebrew (שלום) signifies the third, as Tertius doth in Latin.

‡ There was one Gaius of Macedonia, who is generally supposed to be the same with Gaius of Derbe, Acts xix. 29. and xx. 4. For in both those places he is represented as accompanying the apostle Paul in his travels; and he might be a native, or inhabitant of Macedonia, though descended from a family of Derbe. But the Gaius here mentioned seems to be another of that name, whom Paul baptized at Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 14. (from

whence this epistle appears to have been written) and to be the same with the well-beloved Gaius, to whom the apostle John wrote his third epistle; for he there speaks of him with high commendation for his hospitable charity, ver. 5, 6, as the apostle Paul doth of this Gaius here, calling him his host, and the host of the whole church.—Erastus is mentioned, Acts xix. 22. as one that attended Paul in his journey to Asia; and is spoken of as abiding at Corinth, when Trophimus was left at Miletum sick, (1 Tim. iv. 10.) and as he was (οικονομος) the chamberlain, steward, or treasurer of Corinth, he was a man of the gospel, by grace. Some think that he quitted his civil honours and profits for the work of the ministry; and that he is called the chamberlain of the city, because he had been so, before he gave up that honourable and profitable place for Christ and his service.—As to Quartus, we know nothing more of him than his name, and that he was, at least, a Christian brother, if not a ministering servant of the Lord Jesus.

25 Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, (according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

25 Now to conclude this long epistle about the most important doctrines of salvation, May all possible glory redound, and be ascribed to the great and blessed God, who is able to defeat all the attempts of your spiritual enemies; to preserve you from falling into sin and error, and to settle, strengthen, and confirm you in faith, comfort and holiness, according to the gospel which by divine commission I have delivered in this epistle, and in all my ministrations; and according to that preaching which Jesus Christ began in his personal ministry on earth, (*Heb. ii. 3.*) and which I have carried on, under his light and influence, by setting him forth in the glory of his person and offices, righteousness, grace and government; which gospel, and preaching of Jesus Christ, is according to the revelation that he has made to me, by his Spirit, of the incomprehensibly glorious doctrine of eternal life, thro' him, for all sorts of sinners, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*: A blessed doctrine of grace, this is indeed, which lay concealed in God's own sacred thoughts from all eternity, and was entirely hid from the *Gentiles*, and but obscurely hinted to the *Jews*, in types, shadows, and dark prophecies, under their former dispensations, since the beginning of the world.

26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith,)

26 But now, under the gospel-state, this great and adorable doctrine is evidently and openly revealed, without a veil, in the ministrations of his servants, by the inspiration of the Spirit; and is farther illustrated by a plain explication and accomplishment of Old Testament-figures, and predictions, as they are contained in the writings of the ancient prophets, according to the special appointment and express command of God, who is as unchangeable in his counsels and purposes, as in his being and perfections; and who had ordained all this, in his gracious purposes from eternity, to continue henceforth, as his last dispensation, to the end of this world; and to abide in its happy fruits and consequences, for ever in the world to come. This is now disclosed and published with the brightest evidence, and in its full extent, not to the *Jews* only, but to *Gentiles* also, that all sorts of sinners, without distinction of nations as formerly, might, through the attending power of divine grace, be brought to submit to the authority of God, in receiving his testimony; and to perform all evangelical obedience to him, from a principal of faith in Jesus our Lord.

27 To God only

27 To this God, I say, who in distinction from, and in opposition to all the idols of the heathen, and to all creatures

ly wise, be glory
through Jesus
Christ for ever.
Amen.

creatures whatsoever *, is the only author and fountain of all the wisdom that is found in any creature whatsoever; and who alone is originally, essentially, infallibly and infinitely wise in himself, and in all his dispensations, and particularly in his contrivance of the gospel-scheme of salvation, (which I have been drawing out in this epistle) to the glory of all his perfections through a Redeemer; and in his ordering it now at length to be published in all the world, and to be made effectual to vast multitudes of all nations; and who is not only of power to establish you, (ver. 25.) but knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, (2 Pet. ii. 9.) To him be all adoration, thanksgiving, honour and blessing, through Jesus Christ, as the only mediator, by whom our praises, as well as prayers, are to be offered, and are acceptable to God, (Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5.) May this solemn tribute be paid to him through all ages, by the churches upon earth, and by saints and angels for ever in heaven! Thus it ought to be, and shall be; and thus all sincere believers heartily desire that it may be: In testimony whereof, let them join with me in adding their *Amen*.

REC O L L E C T I O N S.

What an advantage is the Christian religion to friendship and good manners! It teaches us to pay civil respect to all ranks and degrees of persons, in such chaste and decent modes of salutation as are customary in the age and country in which we live; it obliges us to be grateful for benefits, and to make the best returns of love and kindness we are capable of; it gives a holy turn to civility and genteel behaviour, and makes us sincere in wishing the spiritual and eternal, as well as temporal prosperity of our friends; and it disposes one gospel-church to receive the members of another, when duly recommended to their holy fellowship. How concerned should Christians, whether men or women, be, to excel in piety, to enter into church-communion, and to be serviceable, in their respective spheres, to the whole body! How amiable are those families that resemble a church of Christ in their worship, order, and conversation! And, O what an honour is it to be first and eminent in the faith and profession of the gospel!

How

N O T E.

* *God only wise*, is such a description of the object of religious worship, by one of his essential attributes, in opposition to all mere creatures and false gods, as plainly shews that he only is to be adored; and *Jesus Christ* is a personal denomination of our great Mediator, through whom alone our worship is made acceptable to God. Accordingly in the scheme of gospel-worship, the *only wise God* seems here to mean, either the person of the Father, or else God essentially considered in distinction from the Mediator, as considered in his office-capacity, but not to the exclusion of him from deity is his original nature; for he is not only in other places called *God*; but is, by way of eminence, styled

wisdom, and the wisdom of God. Prov. viii. and Luke xi. 49. and in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, (Col. ii. 3.) And the very same adoration which is here given to the only wise God, is paid to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. iii. 18. Yea, it seems to me, that Christ is particularly meant by the *only wise God our Saviour*, to whom like honour is ascribed, under this denomination of him, in Jude, ver. 24, 25. See this sense supported in my sermons on *Jesus Christ God-man*, p. 64, 65. And that the word *only*, when applied to God, does not exclude the Son and Holy Ghost. See Dr Whitty's note on John xvii. 3.

How careful should private Christians, as well as others, be, to judge for themselves in matters of religion, according to the doctrine which they have learnt from Christ and his apostles; and to guard against, and avoid those that would cause divisions and offences, by broaching errors among them! Whatever may be the plausible pretences, fair shews, and flattering speeches of seducers, they are secretly carrying on some selfish and carnal views, to deceive weak, though sincere souls. But it behoves us to be so wise as to know the truth, and not to be imposed upon by others; and so honest, as to act up to our knowledge, and not impose upon them. What a busy adversary is the devil in promoting pernicious principles and practices, to the disturbance and corruption of the church! But it is the comfort and encouragement of all true believers, that the God of peace will entirely subdue him under their feet shortly. How excellent is the gospel of the grace of God! It is of antient date, and of divine original; it harmonizes with Old Testament-scriptures; and is now made known in all its light and glory; according to the commandment of the eternal God. The great subject of this gospel is Jesus Christ, and salvation through him; it extends its blessings to sinners of all nations: and sovereign grace makes it effectual to some of all ranks and degrees in civil life; and wherever it is sent, by an over-ruling Providence, it ought to be received with a divine faith, that we may subject our consciences to the authority of God in it, and yield all holy obedience to him, from a principle of faith in Christ, according to it; and that we may ascribe all possible honour to the only wise God, who is able to establish us in it; to whom be glory, through Jesus Christ, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

The END of the THIRD VOLUME.